

**BABETTE JOSEPHS**, DEMOCRATIC MEMBER  
MAJORITY CHAIR,  
STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE



REPRESENTATIVE OF THE 182ND DISTRICT

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
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Date: October 2, 2012

To: All House Members

From: Rep. Babette Josephs 

Subject: Co-sponsorship – Banning Gay-to-Straight Conversion Therapy in Pennsylvania

I plan to introduce legislation on Thursday that would ban mental health providers from engaging in sexual orientation conversion efforts for persons under the age of 18.

Being gay, lesbian, or bisexual is not considered to be a disease or mental illness of any sort in the United States by any major, reputable mental health association. However, attempts to “convert” the sexual orientation of individuals, particularly minors, are recognized to be damaging to those individuals in both the short-term and the long-term. These non-scientific “procedures” operate under the assumption that homosexuality is a mental disorder that can be “corrected.” As homosexuality is not a disorder, this cannot be true. The litany of proven, displayed possible negative effects of orientation conversion therapy is both lengthy and troubling, including depression, substance abuse, self-loathing, and suicide.

The very concept of “correcting” homosexuality is dehumanizing and contrary to conventional societal norms. The fact that minors are forcefully subjected to this therapy that is not substantiated by any scientific fact is unacceptable. Please stand with me in opposition to this miscarriage of human rights, because Pennsylvania’s children deserve better.

If you wish to co-sponsor this bill, please contact Kim Hileman at khileman@pahouse.net or 787-8529.