

S.F. No. 23 (1st Engrossment) – Prohibiting Conversion Therapy with Children or Vulnerable Adults

Author: Senator D. Scott Dibble

Prepared by: Christa Danko-Schaller, Senate Counsel (651/296-0539)
Nolan Hudalla, Senate Counsel (651/296-6401)

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S.F. 23 prohibits mental health practitioners and mental health professionals from practicing conversion therapy on children or vulnerable adults, and subjects such licensees engaged in this activity to disciplinary action for professional misconduct. This bill further excludes conversion therapy practice from coverage under Medical Assistance. **S.F. 23** also prohibits the commercial advertising or offering of conversion therapy services in a misleading, false, or deceptive manner that could reasonably be interpreted as representing homosexuality as a mental disease, disorder, or illness or that guarantees to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

Section 1 [214.078] Protection from conversion therapy. Amends health-related licensing board statutes by establishing protection from conversion therapy.

Subdivision 1. (Definition) Defines conversion therapy as a practice by mental health practitioners or mental health professionals intended to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity. This definition includes efforts to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings towards individuals of the same gender. The scope of the definition of conversion therapy expressly excludes counseling that provides assistance to an individual undergoing gender transition, and counseling that does not seek to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

Subdivision 2. (Prohibition) Prohibits a mental health practitioner or mental health professional from engaging in conversion therapy with a client under 18 years old or a vulnerable adult, and provides that doing so is unprofessional conduct. This subdivision further makes such practice subject to disciplinary action by the appropriate licensing board. The board may deny, revoke, suspend, limit, or condition the license or registration of mental health practitioners or mental health professionals.

Section 2 [256B.0625, subdivision 5n] Conversion therapy. Amends the Medical Assistance statute. Provides that conversion therapy practice is not covered by Medical Assistance.

Section 3 [325F.69, subd. 7] Advertisement and sales; misrepresentation of conversion therapy.

This section amends a Minnesota consumer protection statute on unlawful trade practices. Defines “conversion therapy” for purposes of the statute as “services or products that are intended to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors and gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same gender.” Prohibits any person or entity conducting any trade or commerce from advertising or otherwise offering conversion therapy services in a misleading, false, or deceptive manner that could reasonably be interpreted or inferred as representing homosexuality as a mental disease, disorder, or illness or that guarantees to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity.