May 17, 2012

Senator
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Re: SB 1172, Sexual Orientation Change Efforts

Dear Senator,

On behalf of over 150,000 Liberty Counsel Action members in California alone, Liberty Counsel Action (LCA) would like to encourage you to vote against SB 1172. LCA is a national organization focusing on issues pertaining to the Constitution and the family unit and this bill undermines both.

SB 1172 places an undue burden on psychotherapists who, if SB 1172 passes, will be required to obtain informed consent prior to counseling a person that he can choose who to love, counseling the bill calls “sexual orientation change efforts.” SB 1172 relies on a concept that the American Psychological Association (APA) has refuted, that homosexuality is an immutable characteristic. In fact, the APA has stated environmental factors have a role in a person choosing homosexuality. Despite this admission, SB 1172 would codify the assertion that homosexuals cannot become heterosexuals and that efforts to make such a change are harmful; however, no such assertion of harm is made when heterosexuals choose to become homosexuals and nor does the bill address the harms of counseling people that they can change their genders.

Because of an assumed harm associated with choosing heterosexuality over homosexuality, the bill requires psychotherapists to obtain informed consent through the patient’s completion of a form that directly undermines the therapy. Additionally, the statute requires the form to contain specific language that is not objective and fails to reflect that, in fact, many people have benefited from reparative and similar therapies. What is even more problematic is that minors and their parents cannot consent to minors receiving such therapy; the bill specifically prohibits the provision of this therapy to minors, even when their parents consent to such efforts. This usurps parents’ rights to determine the upbringing and education of their children, a right affirmed by the Supreme Court.

SB 1172 disrupts the psychotherapist-patient relationship, creates an unprecedented burden and corresponding liability for psychotherapists, effectively burdening and chilling the free speech rights of these professionals, and usurps parental rights. Liberty Counsel Action encourages you to vote against SB 1172.

Sincerely,

Mandi Campbell
Director of Public Policy