



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

State House, Boston 02113-1054

Contact: Cory Azmon  
[Cory.Azmon@mahouse.gov](mailto:Cory.Azmon@mahouse.gov)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 14, 2019

## **House Passes Legislation to Ban Conversion Therapy**

*Second time in a year the bill passes in the House*

March 14, 2019 – (BOSTON) – State Representative Jon Santiago joined colleagues today in announcing the House passed legislation to prevent healthcare professionals from engaging in “conversion therapy,” including practices that attempt to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

This bill outlines and excludes from the ban counseling and healthcare practices designed to support an individual and facilitate coping.

"The House is proud to stand with the Massachusetts LGBTQ community and vote to ban the use of conversion therapy amongst our young and vulnerable residents," said House Speaker Robert A. DeLeo (D-Winthrop). "This practice is rooted in bigotry, has absolutely no scientific basis, and can impose long-term detrimental health effects. Massachusetts is against this cruel activity. I would like to thank Chair Khan for her dedication to this issue, and acknowledge the hard work of Leader Peake and Chair Michlewitz."

"I am delighted that the House is taking the lead in protecting our young LGBTQ residents and, once again, standing tall for civil rights in the Commonwealth," said Representative Aaron Michlewitz (D-Boston), Chair of the House Committee on Ways & Means.

"This is a great day for youth all across the Commonwealth," said Representative Sarah Peake (D-Provincetown), 3<sup>rd</sup> Division Chair of the House. "We continue our long and proud tradition of enacting laws that ensure the health, safety and welfare of children. We also continue our tradition of protecting LGBTQ youth and ensuring the civil rights of all people who call Massachusetts home."

"As a psychiatric nurse, the House Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities, and a longtime advocate for LGBTQ rights, I am honored to sponsor H.140," said Representative Kay Khan (D-Newton), Chair of the House Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities. "The bill is a commonsense measure to ensure medically sound, professional conduct by state-licensed health providers and to protect LGBTQ youth from being exposed to fraudulent, ineffective and very harmful practices. I thank Speaker DeLeo for his support and swiftly bringing this bill to the House floor to protect the LGBTQ youth in the Commonwealth."

According to the American Psychological Association, conversion therapy “may pose serious risk of harm,” such as “confusion, depression, guilt, helplessness, hopelessness, shame, social withdrawal, and suicidality”.

Violation of this law would result in a healthcare provider being subject to discipline from their appropriate licensing board, including suspension or revocation of their license.

###