



April 8, 2026

Dear Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee,

On behalf of the Minnesota Medical Association (MMA), I write to express our support for SF 4706, legislation establishing a civil cause of action for individuals harmed by conversion therapy practices.

Conversion therapy is not grounded in medical science and poses significant risks to patient health and well-being. A long list of the nation's preeminent organizations representing physicians and mental health practitioners have rightly recognized the potential dangers of conversion therapy, including the [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), [American Medical Association](#), [American College of Physicians](#), and the [American Psychiatric Association](#), just to name a few. These organizations long ago recognized that homosexuality and gender diverse identities are not pathological disease states, but rather variations of human sexuality. Conversion therapy presumes that something that is central to a person's identity is wrong or abnormal. There is no scientific evidence to support a need for conversion therapy since we are not dealing with pathological conditions. The concept of conversion therapy lacks scientific credibility and clinical usefulness.

The [research](#) on conversion therapy demonstrates its potential harms, particularly for adolescents and young adults. Conversion therapy can lead to poor self-esteem, self-harm, guilt, anxiety, depression, and possibly suicide, all while being ineffective in its intended purpose.

When adolescents question their sexual identity or gender, it is entirely appropriate for parents and guardians to seek counseling and assistance from mental health practitioners. Studies have demonstrated that gay and lesbian adolescents have higher rates of mental health concerns including depression and suicide than their heterosexual peers, and positive interventions can lead to resiliency and success in reaching stable, productive adult life.

SF 4706 provides an important mechanism to protect patients and uphold standards of care by allowing individuals who experienced conversion therapy as minors to seek accountability for resulting harm. The bill appropriately recognizes the well-documented risks of psychological injury associated with these practices, including depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidality.

This legislation reinforces a fundamental principle of medical practice. Providers must be held to evidence-based standards of care and accountable when those standards are violated. Conversion therapy falls outside accepted medical practice and is inconsistent with the ethical obligations of licensed health professionals.

The MMA urges your support for SF 4706 to ensure accountability for harmful practices and to protect the health and well-being of Minnesotans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa R. Mattson MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Lisa Mattson, MD
President, Minnesota Medical Association