

SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR
CITIZENS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 358

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 12, 2022

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 358.

This bill would prohibit the State's mental health professionals from engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with their adult patients. Sexual orientation change efforts, such as conversion therapy or reparative therapy, have been used by mental health professionals for decades in an attempt to change the sexual orientation of patients who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, or queer (LGBTQ), but these techniques have been found to be ineffective in achieving these goals and have been proven to be harmful to patients, sometimes even leading to fatal results.

The State of New Jersey already prohibits the use of sexual orientation change efforts on patients who are under the age of 18. However, no similar prohibition exists for adults. This is despite the fact that approximately half of the nearly 700,000 adults in the country who have been subject to sexual orientation change efforts were subjected to such efforts as adults, and not while they were children.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2022-2023 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.