



Seattle becomes third U.S. city to ban conversion therapy for minors

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SEATTLE, WA -- The Seattle City Council unanimously voted on Monday to ban conversion therapy on anyone under 18.

"Being gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer or transgender is not an illness," said council member Lorena Gonzalez, the primary sponsor of the therapy ban. "Nor is it something that needs a cure."

The 'ex-gay' therapy, often called 'conversion' or 'reparative' therapy, is designed to turn LGBT people straight. Every major U.S. health care organization has termed the practice not only ineffective but harmful.

Seattle joins Miami Beach, Cincinnati, Washington, D.C., and five states, including Illinois, in banning the practice.

If health providers practice conversion therapy on anyone under 18 year old in Seattle, they will be fined \$500 for the first offense, and \$1,000 for every subsequent civil violation.

The city plans to spend about \$50,000 on ads and outreach so people, particularly LGBT youth, are aware that the practice is now banned.