

100-26
x 185-1



To Saskatoon City Council
From Edwin G. Ralph
Date January 7, 2021
Re Opposition to proposed bylaw banning Conversion Therapy

Further to my earlier letter opposing your proposed bylaw to prohibit the business of providing conversion therapy in the City of Saskatoon, I expand on reasons for this disapproval.

Most citizens would support governments to prohibit force, coercion, or abuse which attempts to change someone's sexual orientation or gender identity. However, the weakness in City Council's proposal is that it is simply too broad and potentially dangerous, because it minimizes the rights of individuals who may personally choose to seek such assistance.

Has Council been pressured by a single, small sub-group who has an agenda to criminalize all legitimate medical, psychological and spiritual agents concerning individuals who may be genuinely seeking help with regard to their sexuality, their gender identity, or both?

Furthermore, the intended Bylaw is close to violating Canada's *Charter*, in that it

1. appears to impose one ideological view of sexuality and gender, which denies the fundamental freedom of Canadians to have their own thoughts, beliefs, and opinions concerning sexuality and gender,
2. seems to discriminate against persons by denying their equal right to receive the support or therapy of their own choosing concerning their sexuality, gender identity, sexual addictions, and sexual behaviour,
3. threatens to remove the ability of health professionals, and pastoral staff, and perhaps even parents to determine treatments in the best interests of children who are experiencing gender distress,
4. appears to interfere with the teaching and practice of religious beliefs regarding sexuality and gender identity, and prevents persons from receiving support in accordance with their own religious faith. Such actions violate the *Charter* freedom of religion and conscience.

I hope that Council refrains from rushing headlong into such a venture without sensible forethought.