



Equality Hub

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Jayne Ozanne

By email: jayneozanne@gmail.com

2 March 2022

Dear Jayne

Thank you for your email of 10 February, regarding the response by the EHRC to the Government's proposals to ban conversion therapy practices.

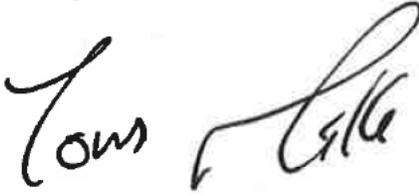
Whilst I cannot comment specifically on the EHRC's response to our consultation at this time, I can reassure you that protecting all LGBT people will be at the heart of this legislation. Indeed, as I emphasised in the recent Westminster Hall debate on the reform of the Gender Recognition Act, for me there is no LGBT without the T. We want to ensure that everyone is protected from the extensive harm that conversion therapy practices cause victims.

I can also confirm that the ban will apply regardless of the setting in which it is carried out, and regardless of who carries it out. Under our proposals individuals will still be able to access support and counsel from religious leaders. However, religious practices carried out with the intention of changing a person's sexual orientation or changing them from or to being transgender will be captured. We do not consider practices carried out with this intent to be everyday religious practices.

Our new talking therapy offence will protect children and adults who are unwillingly subjected to these practices. Children are already protected from harm from their parents by the criminal law and child protection framework. We do not intend to change this. The safety of children is paramount and conversion therapy that causes serious harm will be criminalised regardless of any apparent consent and the age of the victim. We will work with statutory services to reflect the legislative ban in relevant guidance including to raise awareness and signpost the new protections such as CT Protection Orders and the support service for victims and those at risk.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me and for your continued engagement.

I am copying this to the signatories of your letter, Prof Sir Malcolm Evans, Prof Javier Garcia Oliva, Prof Nick Grief, Revd Dr Helen Hall and Dr Ilias Trispiotis.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Freer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M" and "F".

MIKE FREER MP
Minister for Equalities