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**CASW ACTS**  
Canadian Association of  
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*Le français suit*

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July 9th, 2021

Senate of Canada  
2 Rideau Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
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Dear Speaker of the Senate Furey, Senator Gold, Senator Plett, Senator Woo, Senator Tannas and Senator Cordy,

On behalf of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) - the national association voice for Social Work in Canada, we are urging you to **reconvene the Senate as soon as possible to expedite Bill C-6: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (Conversion Therapy)**. The Social Work profession is committed to upholding the inherent dignity and worth of all persons, with CASW having a dual mandate to promote the profession and advance social justice issues. Recognizing the importance of non-partisanship to end these devastating conversion therapy practices, we are writing to you to ask the Senate of Canada **to swiftly vote in favour of Bill C-6** to ensure the safety, equality, and human rights of 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians.

**CASW unequivocally supports Bill C-6's intention to ban this abhorrent attack against 2SLGBTQ+ communities.** Bill C-6 will make a national and international stride forward for human rights. This is an issue of public safety and interest, there is no time to wait.

We have re-attached our formal Brief submitted to the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, for your review, however, the following summary highlights our rationale. Conversion therapy or conversion practices (also known as "reparative therapy," "reintegrative therapy," or "aversion therapy") are any treatment, practice, or sustained effort in denying, repressing, discouraging, or changing a person's sexual orientation. These practices attempt to alter a non-heterosexual sexual orientation, non-cisgender gender identity or gender expression, or any behaviours associated with a gender other than the person's sex assigned at birth.

All conversion practices are inherently fraudulent and proven to cause harm to their victims. Conversion therapy violates the Canadian Human Rights Act, stipulating children and young persons in Canada must be protected from discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. Over 50 professional associations have also denounced these dangerous practices. These include the CASW, Canadian Psychiatric Association, Canadian Paediatric Society, Canadian Psychological Association, College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario, Ordre des travailleurs sociaux et thérapeutes conjugaux et familiaux du Québec as well as the United Nations, World Health Organization to name a few.

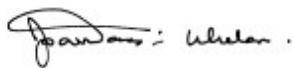
The overwhelming consensus against conversion therapy amongst Canada's healthcare professionals, expert bodies, human rights groups, and civil society is premised on the fact that there is no credible or valid scientific research that indicates you can change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. However, research does reveal how these so-called "change efforts" have devastating impacts that negatively impact our communities; disproportionate experiences of homelessness, poverty, increased anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide or suicidal thoughts, and many other lifelong psychological and social issues.

Social workers across Canada are acutely aware of these harmful consequences that have a lasting impact.

**We call on you, the Senate of Canada, to lend your voices and join the overwhelming majority of Canadians, healthcare bodies, professional experts, human rights leaders, academics, and grassroots groups throughout our civil society in condemning these barbaric practices.** There is no time to waste to save the lives of 2SLGBTQ+ Canadians and recognize the inherent rights of trans, gender diverse and gender creative children and youth in this country.

CASW thanks you for your leadership and action to end this harmful and discredited practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Davis-Whelan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Joan Davis-Whelan, MSW, RSW  
CASW President