

Sen. Wirch: Denying the chance for public input, republicans reaffirm support for “Conversion Therapy” during Pride Month

Posted on Thursday, Jun 25, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Madison – Pride Month is a time for celebration of acceptance, self-expression and love. It’s also a time to recognize the progress that has been made for LGBTQ rights while acknowledging the work that remains. Nowhere was that last part more evident this month than during today’s meeting of the Legislature’s Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules. On the agenda was approval of an administrative rule that would bar state-licensed therapists, counselors and social workers from participating in or promoting so-called “conversion therapy”. After repeatedly denying attempts by Sen. Wirch and his Democratic colleagues to allow public testimony, Republicans on the Committee voted to block enactment of the rule, allowing conversion therapy to continue in the state under the supervision of state-licensed therapists, giving it an appearance of credibility it doesn’t deserve.

“Republicans on the committee made a mockery of the process today by voting on this rule without any public input, especially when this is such a personal issue for so many. We know that the Republican committee members had their minds made up to block this rule, but it would have been good to hear from mental health practitioners and experts, as well as people who have been subjected to this dangerous practice. The fact that they chose now, during Pride Month, to do this is just more salt in the wound.”

Twenty states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and numerous municipalities and other governmental entities have some type of ban on conversion therapy. Conversion therapy has been roundly rejected as a practice by

mental health experts and can cause lasting psychological and physical harm to those subjected to it, particularly minors.