

Rep. Neubauer: Remarks on AB 3 as prepared

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MADISON, Wis. — Assembly Democratic Leader Greta Neubauer (D-Racine) released the following remarks as prepared regarding 2023 AB 3:

“Mr. Speaker, this bill, and the proposed referral to committee, is a mistake.

“The Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling, and Social Work Examining Board made the decision to ban the dangerous practice of conversion therapy in Wisconsin. That decision was informed by expert recommendations and research that point to the fact that conversion therapy is a harmful and dangerous practice that jeopardizes the safety of LGBTQ+ children.

“Earlier this year, the GOP members of the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules voted to ignore those experts and the fact-driven testimony they brought to the public hearing. They voted to allow the practice of conversion therapy. They voted to open the door to a method of so called care that is proven to put kids in danger and increase rates of depression and suicide. They voted to make our state a place where LGBTQ+ kids don’t feel safe to be themselves.

“Communities across our state have already done the right thing by banning conversion therapy outright. Allowing conversion therapy in Wisconsin doesn’t make our communities more safe, and it doesn’t help our kids succeed.

“This issue is personal for me, as a member of the LGBTQ community. It is personal for my family, as I have a transgender younger sister. And it’s personal for my community, where I know many LGBTQ young people who truly struggle to make it through the day, knowing the threats they face now and that more and more policies are being proposed nationwide that discriminate against them and target

them for who they are. I know we disagree on a lot in this building, but I have to tell you that I am so disappointed that we can't agree to ban a policy that directly increases the risk of depression and suicide in children.

“Conversion therapy is wrong. You know it's wrong, I know it's wrong. And I would ask all of you to reconsider. To do better for our kids. Instead of referring this bill to a committee, where you will let it sit for the rest of session, let's take this up and vote it down unanimously.

“The vote on referral is red, Mr. Speaker.”