



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

THE CATHOLIC CENTER
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

4 March 2021

Urban County Council
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Members of the Lexington Urban County Council,

I write to voice my support for the LGBT Youth Mental Health Protection Ordinance.

Central to the Gospel and our beliefs as Catholics is the dignity of the human person. It is our belief in the human person as created in the image and likeness of God that leads to our involvement in social issues and matters of policy. Second to the importance of human dignity is our commitment to work for the common good. Many people are familiar with Catholic moral teaching's prohibitions regarding sexual activity, less known is that the Church is insistent upon respecting the dignity of persons with a homosexual orientation and their fair treatment.

I have been informed that risks associated with conversion therapy include anxiety, depression, substance abuse, homelessness, and even suicide. In fact, according to the Trevor Project, 42% of conversion therapy survivors have attempted suicide. Saving and preserving the dignity of every life is important and this ordinance is life-saving measure.

Given the estimated 144,000 youth who identify as LGBT in Kentucky, passing the LGBT Youth Mental Health Ordinance will significantly lower the tragic risks that otherwise impact the lives of a vulnerable population whose dignity and value must be safeguarded. So-called "conversion therapy" is detrimental to the health and well-being of LGBT persons and those who are question their identity.

As you continue your work for the common good and support for the dignity of every citizen, I support a vote in favor of the LGBT Youth Mental Health Protection Ordinance for Lexington and Fayette County.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend John Stowe, OFM Conv.
Catholic Diocese of Lexington