



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on February 9, 2021

Radical “Conversion Ban” Passed in Australia Poses Threat to Religious and Medical Freedom

An extreme left-wing “conversion ban” [bill](#) has been [passed](#) in the Australian state of Victoria, and will make it illegal to attempt to change or suppress a person’s unwanted sexual orientation, sexual activity, or gender identity in the state, Life News reports. The bill’s dangerous overreach could impact how parents interact with their children and may compromise religious freedom and the practices of psychiatry and psychology.

Titled “Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition,” the bill seeks to ban “change or suppression practices” directed toward a person “with or without the person’s consent” in order to change a person’s sexual orientation or “gender identity.”



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“Let’s be clear: there is absolutely nothing wrong with being who you are. And there’s everything wrong with dangerous conversion practices that tell gay, bi, and trans people they need to be ‘cured,’” said Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews when he announced the ban. “This bigoted quackery destroys lives.”

But what is being masked as a seemingly innocuous “conversion therapy” ban is actually a dangerous law that ultimately targets the Christian worldview on gender and sexuality and dictates the behaviors of spiritual leaders and medical professionals to force them to conform to the state’s philosophy. According to Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney’s Director of Public Affairs Monica Doumit, who is also a lawyer, the bill “has less to do with protecting the LGBTIQ community than it does with punishing the Christian community for ‘being who they are.’”

Doumit contends Andrews resorted to typical politicking to pass the bill by conjuring upsetting images of homosexual teens “being subjected to aversion therapy or electro-shock treatment by psychologists, or to exorcisms and ‘pray the gay away’ camps by their parents and against their will” in order to generate support for the bill. In reality, the bill’s expansive definitions target prayer and any interactions that would dissuade someone from engaging in behaviors that the state has deemed acceptable, regardless of the absence of science to support its agenda or belief system.

In a column for the *Catholic Weekly*, Doumit outlines what could be penalized under the new law as a result of its broad definitions:

A parent whose five year old son was insisting that he was a girl would be prevented from seeking any help — medical, psychological, behavioural, spiritual, social or otherwise — to assist their son in understanding and accepting that he was a boy. Anything less than affirmation of him as a girl would be prohibited.



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Christian teenagers who had committed themselves to saving sexual activity for marriage would be prohibited from gathering together to support each other to remain faithful to their commitment to chastity.

Not only would Courage, a ministry for those Catholics experiencing same-sex attraction but who want to live chastely in accordance with their religious beliefs be banned, the teaching of Theology of the Body would not be allowed, and it is even possible that preaching the same verse from Corinthians that got [Australian Rugby star] Israel Folau sacked could get a cleric imprisoned.

A man who was tempted to cheat on his wife could not go and see his priest or minister, asking for advice on how to stay true to his marriage vows, without risking the priest or minister being punished. And alarmingly, the laws as currently drafted would even prevent a psychologist from trying to “convert” the attractions of a paedophile.

Even more frightening is that a complaint does not need to be made in order to trigger an investigation into any of the so-called conversion practices. The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission can begin its own investigations at any time, which would force those being investigated to hand over documents and even religious sermons at the insistence of the commission.

Those who violate the bill could face up to 10 years in prison and fines up to \$10,000, the *Guardian* reports.

The bill does not make exceptions for practices that are sought and received consensually, prompting ire from self-identified ex-lesbian Leah Gray, who experienced gender dysphoria as a child but is now married with a child of her own. In a piece titled, “We’ve been erased by Victorian politicians,” Gray rails against the efforts by lawmakers in Victoria to prevent people such as her from seeking the same therapy she underwent prior to her transformation.

“Ten years ago I voluntarily sought counsel from Christian psychologists, ministries, support networks and people who had walked before me. It was difficult, but I found relief and happiness. Every step of my journey will become illegal under the Victorian government’s bill,” she [laments](#).

According to Life News, Gray and her organization [Free to Change](#) prepared a research paper based on the responses of 78 people who were helped by the “life-saving benefits” or counseling for unwanted gender dysphoria or homosexual desires. Gray said the paper was ignored by the government.

The law is set to take effect within 12 months.



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