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CAVALIER JOHNSON
ALDERMAN, 2ND DISTRICT

Shorewood ordinance takes action to ban conversion therapy

**Statement of Alderman Cavalier Johnson
June 18, 2019**

I applaud the Village of Shorewood for banning conversion therapy and commend the community leaders who advocated for this change, including the Shorewood Solidarity Network (conversion therapy is a dangerous practice aimed at changing a person's sexual orientation or gender expression).

Conversion therapy can pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay and bisexual people including depression, suicidal tendencies, substance abuse, stress and disconnection with family and friends, according to a report from the American Psychological Association. Given that June represents Pride Month, political leaders should increase efforts to protect L.G.B.T. community members from this inhumane and discriminatory practice.

In March 2018, under legislation I sponsored, Milwaukee became the first city in Wisconsin to outlaw conversion therapy practices for anyone under 18. I am grateful that Madison, Eau Claire and Cudahy have also followed suit since then. However, I continue to call for a statewide ban on conversion therapy, and strongly encourage municipalities to follow Shorewood's lead on this matter.

I am further grateful to my Common Council colleagues for today approving **Common Council File #190312**, legislation I sponsored which calls upon the U.S. Senate to vote in support of the federal **Equality Act of 2019**. The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to expand the group of prohibited categories of discrimination or segregation to include sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit and the jury system.

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