

Testimony for House Preventative Health Policy Division in Opposition to HF 2156

Dear Members of the House Preventative Health Policy Division,

My name is Dan Munson. I've been a licensed marriage and family therapist(LMFT) in Minnesota for 19 years. I have also been a co-owner of a mental health clinic with 180 employees serving 2000 people per week. I am an approved MN LMFT supervisor, an approved American Association of Marriage and family therapy(AAMFT) supervisor, an approved MN licensed Professional Counselor(LPC) supervisor and an approved MN licensed professional clinical counselor (LPCC) supervisor. I've logged in MN over 12,000 face to face counseling hours and over 10,000 face to face supervision hours with supervisees and I am very concerned about HF 2156.

Thank you for your service in the Minnesota legislature! I'm writing to you to express my opposition to HF 2156.

It is crucial that people looking to receive counseling and therapy should be free to find services and resources from their counselor to help them achieve their desired goals.

Politicians shouldn't be telling people that their counseling goals are illegal. I am concerned that this bill is extremely broad and could prevent a counselor from helping a client explore all options to address questions with regard to their lifestyle.

My licensing board has very strict guidelines on my behavior as a counselor and one of those guidelines is that it is unethical for me not to follow the lead of my client. Clients have the right to choose their objectives for any kind of counseling or treatment they seek. If I can give my client what they want and let them explore what they desire to explore then I am obligated to do so if I am so qualified. In fact not to do so would be unethical. This bill would violate the constitutional rights of free speech and freedom of religion for families and professional counselors.

A vote for HF 2156 is a vote for government controls on speech and emotional care. Clients should have access to all counseling and mental health care options.

It is important to remember that people can change. All Minnesotans should be able to explore all topics with their counselor without fear of being banned from receiving counseling, or prosecuted for having conversations about exploring making changes to their lifestyle.

Government should protect the right of individuals to achieve their desired goals from their counseling opportunities. Politicians have no business telling people that their counseling goals are illegal.

I join the voices of all others who are asking you to vote no for HF 2156 so that my role as a counselor can continue unhindered in helping my clients achieve their desired goals.

Thanks for your time. I appreciate your service to the state of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Dan Munson DMin, LMFT