



equal not other | égal, pas autre

July 12th, 2021

Open letter to the Speaker of the Senate, the Honourable George Furey

To The Honourable George Furey, Senator, Speaker of the Senate:

I am writing to you on behalf of Egale, Canada's national organization for 2SLGBTQI people and issues, to add our voice to those urging that the Senate be recalled this month in order to vote on Bill C-6. As you are aware, Bill C-6 would add a series of offences to the Criminal Code that would outlaw many kinds of conversion therapy. For many members of the 2SLGBTQI community, accessing the protection of the criminal law against conversion therapy is a matter of avoiding irreparable harm. As Speaker of the Senate, you have the ability to recall the Senate if the public interest requires it, and in this matter, the public interest demands that Bill C-6 be passed in the Senate as quickly as possible.

Conversion therapy, defined as the effort to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or their gender identity to cisgender has been widely discredited and denounced. Influential sources including the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims [\(2020\)](#) and the United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity [\(2020\)](#) have described conversion therapy as being contrary to international conventions against torture and degrading treatment.

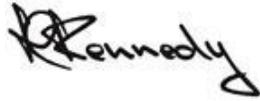
As a country that strives to position itself as an international leader in 2SLGBTQI rights, Canada has tolerated this destructive practice for far too long. Bill C-6 is a massive step forward in protecting 2SLGBTQI people in Canada and it is unconscionable to allow it to flounder in the Senate when it is so badly needed. The danger at this particular moment is that if an election is called before the Senate reconvenes, all the hard work and legislative progress in the House of Commons threatens to be undone.

Mr. Speaker, the public and, in particular, the 2SLGBTQI community are asking you to recall the Senate this month in order to pass Bill C-6. Passing this bill is a matter of the utmost importance to many people in Canada and Egale expects the Senate to take that seriously.

Yours sincerely,

Egale

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kennedy". The signature is stylized and appears to be written in a cursive or semi-cursive script.

Helen Kennedy
Executive Director
Egale Canada