



STATEMENT ON THE CHILES v. SALAZAR SCOTUS DECISION

On March 31, 2026, the United States Supreme Court issued its 8-1 ruling in Chiles v. Salazar, effectively striking down state-level bans on conversion therapy as applied to talk therapy by licensed professionals. The Court framed this as a First Amendment free speech matter.

We disagree with that framing and with this decision.

The therapeutic relationship is not a free speech zone. It is a professional, ethically governed space in which a clinician's words carry weight precisely because of the power differential, the vulnerability of the client, and the trust invested in the process. The First Amendment protects citizens from government censorship. It was not designed to shield licensed professionals from accountability when their interventions cause demonstrable harm to the people in their care.

At Growing Hope Counseling, our position is clear:

We do not conduct conversion therapy. We do not condone it. We never will.

Every major medical and mental health authority, including the American Psychological Association, the American Counseling Association, and the American Medical Association, has concluded that attempts to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity are ineffective and harmful. They are associated with significantly elevated rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidality, particularly in youth. This is not a matter of debate within the profession. It is consensus.

We believe the Supreme Court's majority got something fundamentally wrong: clinical speech is not equivalent to casual speech. When a licensed clinician speaks to a client in a professional capacity, that speech is an intervention. It operates within an ethical framework that has always held clinicians responsible for directing their words toward the client's well-being and stated goals. Client safety is not a preference at Growing Hope Counseling. It is the floor.

Our clinicians are bound by professional ethics to do no harm, to respect client autonomy, and to practice within the bounds of evidence-based care. Conversion therapy violates all three.

We stand with LGBTQ+ clients, with LGBTQ+ youth, and with every person who deserves a therapeutic space that affirms their dignity rather than pathologizes their identity. You are welcome here. You are safe here.

If you have questions about our approach to care or our clinical values, we invite you to reach out.

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