

St. Luke's United Church

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February 3, 2021

Ms. Marilyn Gladu, M.P.
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Ms. Gladu,

St. Luke's United Church is a Community of Faith which lives God's call by:

- Being inclusive, welcoming people from all paths
- Being spiritually based and committed to worship
- Being supportive and caring of one another
- Being open to the needs of youth

This week, it was brought to our attention (Sarnia Journal) that you had presented a petition to the House of Commons requesting that Bill C-6 be amended or withdrawn. You are quoted as saying, "This petition is supported by the majority of the 91 churches in my riding." St. Luke's did not receive a copy of the petition and we are aware of several other churches which were not contacted. In light of this, we feel that your statement is very misleading. Representing our church family, we are deeply concerned that we were unable to provide a response to the petition.

St. Luke's supports Bill C-6 which will ban conversion therapy in Canada. As a Community of Faith, we strive to promote human dignity and equality of all people including the LGBTQ2+ community. Banning conversion therapy is a necessary step to promote mental well-being and to recognize the diversity of our humanity. As members of the United Church of Canada, we welcome and seek justice for people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

We fail to see how a petition with 169 signatures in a riding of 100,000 residents reflects the majority support of the faith community. We are concerned how this portrays the residents of Sarnia-Lambton. We deserve to be proud of our community and to celebrate its diversity and inclusiveness.

St. Luke's strives to support the well-being of our community; especially our youth. We welcome people of all gender identities and orientations and are committed to provide whatever support we can. Supporting Bill C-6, not amending or removing it, is most important for the mental health care in our community.

Sincerely,

St. Luke's United Church Council