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## **Utah Set to Become 19<sup>th</sup> State to Protect LGBTQ Youth from Conversion Therapy**

*Groundbreaking announcement by Governor will be “lifesaving” for vulnerable LGBTQ youth, according to Born Perfect Co-Founder Mathew Shurka, and reflects historic common ground*

SALT LAKE CITY, UT — Utah Governor Gary Herbert announced that the Utah Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing will propose a new administrative rule preventing licensed mental health professionals in the State of Utah from subjecting LGBTQ youth to the life-threatening practice of conversion therapy. The new rule will be identical to the language of H.B. 399, legislation that was introduced in the state legislature by Representative Craig Hall in February 2019 and that secured widespread public support before narrowly failing to pass.

“It is vital that our leaders support LGBTQ youth. We are grateful to Governor Herbert for his leadership and for making sure all youth know they are born perfect. It is lifesaving,” said **Conversion therapy survivor and NCLR Born Perfect Strategist Mathew Shurka.**

“Utah is once again leading the way in protecting LGBTQ youth and their families. We salute Governor Herbert for taking action on this important issue and for this historic accomplishment,” said **National Center for Lesbian Rights Legal Director Shannon Minter.**

Following publication of the proposed new rule on December 15, the rule will be subject to a 30-day public comment period and is expected to become official state law in January 2020, making Utah the 19<sup>th</sup> state to protect youth from the dangerous practice.

For more than 25 years, NCLR has been leading the fight against conversion therapy. Since 2014, NCLR’s Born Perfect Campaign has brought survivors and legal experts together to support legislation protecting LGBTQ youth from conversion therapy in 18 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 60 municipalities.

Momentum on this work continues to build, with a record-breaking number of states and localities taking action to protect youth in recent weeks, including North Carolina, Kansas City, Missouri, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. The announcement of the new rule in Utah comes less than a week after the American Medical Association (AMA) stated that it would support federal and states laws that protect youth from conversion therapy.

*passing laws across the country to protect LGBT children and young people, fighting in courtrooms to ensure their safety, and raising awareness about the serious harms caused by these dangerous practices. <http://bornperfect.org/>*