

For Immediate Release

UH Constitutional Law Expert Seth Chander Available to Explain Supreme Court's Conversion Therapy Ruling and First Amendment Implications

Houston, March 31, 2026 – In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on state and local bans targeting conversion therapy, University of Houston Law Center professor and constitutional law expert [Seth J. Chandler](#) is available to provide expert legal analysis and commentary on the decision and its broader implications.

"The Court said something simple but radical today: the government can't turn speech into conduct just by calling it a medical treatment. Words don't lose First Amendment protection because a licensing board says so," said Law Foundation Professor Chandler, adding that it's the Court telling legislatures: medical consensus can guide regulation, but it cannot become the ceiling of permitted speech.

He said the decision redefines how "professional speech" is treated under the First Amendment and draws a sharp constitutional boundary. He also highlighted the broader implications of the decision. The ruling underscores that First Amendment protections are not reserved for dominant or widely accepted perspectives, but instead protect minority and evolving viewpoints over time, especially in the context of shifting medical and social norms.

"The Court drew a clear line: the state can regulate how professionals practice, but it cannot use licensing power to enforce ideological conformity," he said. "You can require informed consent. You can impose malpractice liability. But you cannot tell a therapist which side of a medical debate she's allowed to be on."

He also emphasized the significance of the dissenting opinion.

"Justice Jackson's dissent is the most provocative part of this decision. She argues that states can restrict any professional speech that departs from the prevailing standard of care," Chandler said. "That sounds reasonable until you remember that the prevailing standard of care once endorsed compulsory sterilization, classified homosexuality as a mental disorder, and blessed the lobotomy. Her framework would have justified silencing gay-affirming therapists in 1970."

Chandler can offer valuable insights for your readers on several critical aspects of the ruling:

- How the Court is redefining the boundary between professional conduct and protected speech.
- Why the ruling is limiting the role of “prevailing standards of care” in First Amendment analysis.
- The implications for state licensing authorities and similar laws nationwide.
- What the dissent reveals about future legal battles

If you are interested in interviewing Professor Chandler as well as getting copies of the documents he has prepared, please contact Carrie Anna Criado, UH Law Center Assistant Dean of Communications and Marketing, 713-743-2184, cacriado@central.uh.edu or Rashda Khan, Communications Director, 325-656-2824, rkhan20@uh.edu.

About the University of Houston Law Center

The University of Houston Law Center (UHLC) is a dynamic, top-tier law school located in the nation’s 4th largest city. It is ranked #9 among U.S. law schools for return on investment (ROI) by LawCrossing. UHLC’s Health Law, Intellectual Property and Information Law, Legal Writing Program, and Part-time programs rank in the U.S. News Top 15. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 12 centers and institutes that fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.

About the University of Houston

The University of Houston is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter for excellence in undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city and one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse regions in the country, UH is a federally designated Hispanic- and Asian American-Serving institution with an enrollment of more than 47,000 students.

