

December 20, 2017

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We members of the Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary and Intersex (TGNCNBI) community, together with our allies, family, and friends, are requesting your help in passing the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act, better known as GENDA, during the 2018 Legislative Session. We ask for a clear and emphatic call for the passage of GENDA in your upcoming State of the State address, which will set a tone of inclusion, acceptance, and importance. This needs to be heard by every New Yorker, so that awareness of our Community's lack of basic human rights protections can be known to all.

The Executive Action you issued in November 2015 granting implicit protections for TGNCNBI individuals was an important legal step to ensure all New Yorkers are treated equally. These protections were necessary to defend the community quickly and without legislative support. However, much work still needs to be done to ensure these basic human rights are codified in the text of New York State's Human Rights Law.

Recently, a nationwide transgender survey highlighted the experiences of respondents living in New York.

The following are some alarming statistics from the report:

- 37% were living in poverty
- 18% of respondents were unemployed
- 26% of those who held or applied for a job during that year reported being fired, being denied a promotion, or not being hired for a job they applied for
- 24% of those who had a job in the past year reported some form of mistreatment
- 21% of respondents experienced some form of housing discrimination in the past year
- 11% experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender
- 35% of respondents who visited a place of public accommodation experienced mistreatment

Our community contributes to the state's economy as property owners and taxpayers. We are husbands, wives, partners, mothers, fathers, parents, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters and siblings. We are veterans, children, seniors, and students. We work in every area of business and in every workplace. The acceptance of diversity has statistically shown better production results and, as a result, we all benefit from diversity in business and the workplace. Your mention of GENDA will raise awareness of TGNCNBI discrimination and remind our fellow New Yorkers that we are also citizens deserving of the basic human dignities that our neighbors take for granted.

New York historically has led the nation with its embrace of social issues. You personally have exemplified great leadership regarding Women's Rights, Marriage Equality, GENDA Inclusion within the ETE blueprint, and the Executive Action to create the regulations regarding discrimination on the basis of gender identity. However, we need GENDA to pass through the legislature to ensure that the basic human rights of our community are safeguarded in our uncertain political climate.

We call upon you to uphold your legacy of championing human rights causes and to make it clear that New York protects and ensures that every citizen's rights are protected under the New York State's Human Rights Law. This assurance will impact the lives of thousands of TGNCNBI people across the state by giving them hope that the end of harmful discrimination is close at hand.

cc: Mr. Alphonso David, Counsel to the Governor

## Governor Cuomo: Include GENDA in the 2018 State of the State address

### Supportive Organizations

- GENY -Gender Equality New York
- The Long Island Transgender Advocacy Coalition (LITAC)
- Equality New York
- Prevent Child Abuse New York
- Action Together Long Island (ATLI)
- The LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York (LeGal)
- Hudson Valley Feminists
- Legal Services Staff Association, NOLSW/UAW 2320, New York City, NY
- Long Island Housing Services, Inc., Bohemia, NY
- Callen-Lorde Community Health Center, New York, NY
- The Social Action Committee - Unitarian Universalist Fellowship at Stony Brook, Setauket, NY
- GLSEN-New York Capital Region
- The Long Island Progressive Coalition
- Morningstar Diversity Solutions, Buffalo, NY
- Interfaith Impact of NYS, Albany, NY
- Move Forward Long Island
- Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Saratoga Springs
- Hispanic Health Network
- Latino Commission on AIDS
- Oasis, Latino LGBTs Wellness Center
- Citizen Action of New York
- LGBT Bar Association of Greater New York
- TAGR, Trans Alliance of Greater Rochester
- PS261 Social Action Committee, Brooklyn, NY
- Pride for Youth, Bellmore, NY
- Long Island Crisis Center, Bellmore, NY
- Apogee711 PCB Creations, Buffalo, NY
- Translatina Network, New York, NY
- The We Exist Coalition of the Finger Lakes
- The Rock Band "Great Lakes"
- The Social Justice Action Team of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady, Schenectady, NY
- Refinery29, New York, NY
- Action Now, Brooklyn, NY
- Otsego Pride Alliance, Oneonta, NY
- Tri-County Women's Coalition, Oneonta, NY
- Open Arms Metropolitan Community Church, Rochester, NY
- First Presbyterian Church, Albany, NY
- Pride Center of Western New York, Inc., Buffalo, NY
- Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, NY
- Spectrum Transgender Group of WNY
- Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center, Kingston, NY
- The Long Island Transgender Day of Remembrance Committee