



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Squadron, Community Slam Senate Committee For Blocking Basic Fairness For Transgender New Yorkers

DANIEL L. SQUADRON April 25, 2017

| ISSUE: FAIRNESS, GENDA, LGBTQ, EQUALITY, TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY



### Squadron's GENDA Would Codify Basic Anti-Discrimination Protections

ALBANY – State Senator Daniel Squadron, lead sponsor of the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act ([GENDA – S.502](#)) and advocates released the following statements in response to the Senate's Investigations and Government Operations Committee vote against basic fairness for transgender and gender nonconforming New Yorkers:

"Today, the Senate stood with Trumpian divisiveness, discrimination, and fear. As the Trump Administration rolls back basic protections for transgender Americans, the Senate Majority has an obligation to ensure all New Yorkers are protected. Today, not one Republican Senator voted to support basic fairness for all.

"The Assembly has passed GENDA 10 times, including with bipartisan support. It is appalling the Senate Majority continues to stand in the way of basic protections many New Yorkers take for granted. Thank you to Assemblymember Gottfried, Senator Hoylman, NYCLU, Housing Works, VOCAL, the GENDA 2017 campaign and the countless New Yorkers organizing for basic equality," said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**.

Squadron forced today's committee vote with a procedural motion earlier this session. GENDA has passed the State Assembly (A.3358-Gottfried) ten times, including with bipartisan support.

**State Senator Brad Hoylman** said, "It's morally reprehensible that the State Senate considers transgender New Yorkers to be second class citizens. Every fair-minded New Yorker should demand the State Senate bring Senator Squadron's GENDA to the floor for a vote and stop doing the bidding of extremists who oppose equal rights for LGBT people."

**Assemblymember Richard N. Gottfried of Manhattan, Assembly sponsor of GENDA**, said, "The Senate Republicans have let down New Yorkers who need this long-overdue protection of human rights. I am deeply disappointed that the Senate leadership does not see fit to offer all New Yorkers an equal right to fair housing, employment, use of public accommodations, and protection against hate crimes."

"We thank those members of the Investigations and Government Operations Committee who voted in the affirmative to begin the process of passing legislation that would protect

transgender New Yorkers with explicit anti-discrimination protections in our Human Rights and Penal laws," said **Juli Grey-Owens Lead Organizer, 'GENDA 2017.'** "While the Executive branch of our federal government is politically motivated to target the marginalized and at-risk transgender community, it is a crushing blow to realize that the majority of our State Senators believe that all New Yorkers are not equal. This is now the 15<sup>th</sup> year the NYS Senate, under Republican-controlled leadership, has failed to bring this vital legislation to the floor for discussion, consideration and a simple yes-no vote."

"Equality New York is deeply disappointed that GENDA was voted down in committee. New Yorkers deserve more, and in a time when minorities are under increased threat and the Trans community experiences vastly increased rates of violence and discrimination, our leaders should be taking every possible step to protect their constituents. The LGBTQI community will continue to fight, working together and with our allies to protect the civil and human rights of all New Yorkers, and to elect leaders who will protect the Trans community," said **Gabriel Blau of Equality New York.**

"This vote is a disappointment for the hundreds of thousands of transgender and gender nonconforming people in New York State who deserve freedom from harassment, mistreatment and exclusion," said **NYCLU Executive Director, Donna Lieberman.** "This legislation is more important than ever given the threat the Trump administration poses to the rights of transgender and gender nonconforming people. Passing GENDA will help ensure that all New Yorkers can enjoy dignity, respect and access to opportunity and we will continue to fight for this bill."

"This legislation codifies crucial protections for all New Yorkers especially those that are gender nonconforming. Governor Cuomo provided for these protections through Executive action in October of 2015 to ban harassment and discrimination against transgender people. This was necessary because the Republican majority in the Senate refused to afford

transgendered New Yorker's protection against discrimination legislatively. The bill has already been passed by the Assembly this year and every year for almost a decade past. We are extremely disappointed in the Senate's failure to honor their duty to protect the rights of all New Yorkers and ensure that individuals are protected against harassment and discrimination based on their gender identity," said **Charles King, President and CEO of Housing Works.**

"We are incredibly disappointed that the New York State Senate continues to deny transgender New Yorkers equal protections under the law. They are on the wrong side of history, and we will remember their lack of courage and compassion as we continue our fight for equality. We thank Senator Squadron and the transgender activists whose leadership we will continue to follow until GENDA finally gets passed," **Alyssa Aguilera, Co-Executive Director, VOCAL-NY.**

"As the parent of a transgender child, I've learned firsthand of the discrimination and adversity faced daily by transgender individuals. It's hard to believe that New York lacks explicit protections for transgender people under state law. It's even harder to accept that the Senate Investigations and Government Operations Committee voted against GENDA today, and now there is no hope of this legislation moving forward 2017," said **Terri Cook of Camillus, New York & parent of a transgender child and co-author of Allies & Angels: A Memoir of Our Family's Transition.** "The voices speaking the loudest in opposition to GENDA are the ones with the least experience understanding it. The committee members who voted against GENDA neglected their obligation, as Senators, to gain a deep understanding of this critical legislation and how it impacts New Yorkers. If they had truly done their job, GENDA would have been allowed to move forward for a vote by the full Senate."

"I am extremely disappointed that the Committee has voted against bringing GENDA to the Senate for discussion and vote," said **New York resident Owen D. Gilbo.** "As a citizen of NY, I

expect the same rights of protection as all other citizens of the State. Without those rights, my welfare and the welfare of my family – wife, son, granddaughter, and extended family are threatened.”

“As a transgender and non-binary individual, and as an employee of the Pride Center of the Capital Region (which works with thousands of NYers annually) – I am incredibly disappointed and saddened that the committee has voted against bringing GENDA to the Senate. Discrimination based on gender is unjust and un-American, and I expect more from my State Senators,” said **Kamryn Wolf of Troy, NY.** “As someone who works with trans and gender nonconforming teenagers who experience daily harassment by their educators, coaches, pastors, classmates – as someone who they themselves has been suicidal and knows many others who have attempted and considered suicide – I know the refusal to bring this bill forward will be devastating for our communities.”

In 2015, Governor Cuomo took executive action clarifying protections for transgender New Yorkers are covered under the state's Human Rights Law. GENDA would codify these protections in housing, employment, and public accommodations.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2017-S502**

- 
- Introduced
  - ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  - ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  - Delivered to Governor
  - Signed By Governor
  -

Prohibits discrimination based on gender identity or expression and includes offenses regarding gender identity or expression under the hate crimes statute

January 03, 2017

In Senate Committee Investigations and Government Operations

Sponsored by Daniel L. Squadron

Do you support this bill?