



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## LGBT Legislators Urge Gov. Cuomo to Issue Executive Order Boycotting Discriminatory Indiana Law

BRAD HOYLMAN March 31, 2015

*Senator Hoylman and Assemblymembers Glick, O'Donnell, Bronson and Titone Call New Indiana Law "Uniquely Abhorrent and Alarming"*

NEW YORK – The five LGBT members of the NYS Legislature today urged Governor Cuomo to boycott Indiana's new discriminatory law known as the "Religious Freedom Restoration Act" (RFRA), signed into law last week by Governor Mike Pence.

In a strongly worded letter, **Senator Brad Hoylman** and **Assemblymembers Deborah Glick, Daniel O'Donnell, Harry Bronson** and **Matthew Titone** called the new law "uniquely abhorrent and alarming," and asked Cuomo to "immediately sign an Executive Order barring state-funded travel to the state of Indiana."

The legislators argued that the provisions of Indiana's new bill "make clear that Indiana businesses are permitted by law to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression in matters including housing, employment, and access to public accommodations." They continued: "Employees of the State of New York should not be placed in a situation where they are required to travel to a state where they face legalized discrimination. Likewise, New York State taxpayers should not be footing the bill for such travel."

**Roberta Kaplan, who argued *US v Windsor*, invalidating the Defense of Marriage Act, said:** “In passing its marriage equality law in 2011, New York demonstrated that it is was a trailblazer among the states in terms of LGBT equality. Governor Cuomo should show that leadership once again by making it clear that any law that permits businesses to post ‘no gays allowed’ signs in their establishments is abhorrent to everything that New Yorkers believe in.”

On Monday, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee and Connecticut Governor Dan Malloy **announced** they would ban state-funded travel to Indiana.

The full letter signed by Hoylman, Glick, O’Donnell, Bronson and Titone is below:

March 31, 2015

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo

Governor

New York State Capitol Bldg.

Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write to you as the only openly LGBT members of the New York State Legislature to urge you to immediately sign an Executive Order barring state-funded travel to Indiana, in light of the its so-called “Religious Freedom Restoration Act” (RFRA), the discriminatory new measure signed into law last week by Governor Mike Pence.

Indiana's new law is uniquely abhorrent and alarming. The RFRA allows businesses to assert a right to "the free exercise of religion" – essentially giving corporations the same "free exercise" rights and defense against anti-discrimination lawsuits traditionally reserved for individuals. These troubling provisions open the door for state-sanctioned discrimination against LGBT people cloaked in the guise of religious freedom.

These provisions make clear that Indiana businesses are permitted by law to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression in matters including housing, employment, and access to public accommodations.

Employees of the State of New York should not be placed in a situation where they are required to travel to a state where they face legalized discrimination. Likewise, New York State taxpayers should not be footing the bill for such travel. We urge you to bar state-funded travel to Indiana, thereby sending a strong message that New York will not stand for legalized discrimination and injustice against LGBT people.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and your ongoing leadership on LGBT issues.

Sincerely,

Brad Hoylman

Deborah Glick

State Senator

Member of the Assembly

27th District

66<sup>th</sup> District

Matthew Titone

Member of the Assembly

138<sup>th</sup> District

Harry Bronson

Member of the Assembly

69<sup>th</sup> District

Danny O'Donnell

Member of the Assembly

61<sup>st</sup> District