



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

NY Senate Passes Hoylman Bill to Assist Older LGBTQ New Yorkers

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL March 17, 2021

| ISSUE: **SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, SD 27, LGBTQ RIGHTS, COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY**

NEW YORK—Today, the New York State Senate passed legislation ([S.78-A](#)) sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WF-Manhattan) that adds older LGBTQ New Yorkers and those living with HIV/AIDS to the definition of communities of “greatest social need” for the purpose of providing state services and programs for the aging.

LGBTQ elders are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19 and are already less likely than heterosexual and cisgender peers to seek support from mainstream health and aging providers. This legislation will ensure that older LGBTQ New Yorkers can receive competent, LGBTQ-affirming services and support, the exact services they need to maintain their independence.

Senator Hoylman said: “For many older LGBTQ New Yorkers, coming out decades ago may have meant losing their family, being evicted or losing their jobs. As a result, LGBTQ elders tend to be more isolated, have smaller support networks, and less financial stability than their peers. This legislation will ensure that New York prioritizes connecting LGBTQ elders to the LGBTQ-affirming services and support they need to age with dignity. I’m deeply grateful to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins specifically for her commitment

to making vital services accessible to the LGBTQ seniors who need them the most and her leadership on LGBTQ issues in general.”

Lynn Faria, Executive Vice President of SAGE, said: “SAGE congratulates Senator Brad Hoylman on his championship and leadership on behalf of LGBT older people and older people living with HIV in the great Empire State. LGBT elders experience high rates of social isolation and thin support networks and, as a result, rely heavily on home and community-based services for supports in their elder years. This legislation ensures that older LGBT New Yorkers can access welcoming services in their communities -- programs like senior centers and home-delivered and congregate meals. SAGE looks forward to working with the Assembly to pass this legislation and ensure that LGBT elder New Yorkers and older New Yorkers living with HIV can age in place with the supports they need.”

Trevon Mayers, Director of Policy & Community Outreach at NYC's LGBT Community Center, said: "Updating New York's definition of "greatest social need" to include LGBT elders will help ensure that many in our community receive the affirming services and support they need, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 health crisis. We support SAGE's work in advocating for greater awareness of this issue and thank Senator Hoylman for championing this important legislation."

In accordance with the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA), New York State’s Office for the Aging is required to administer programs and services targeting older populations in rural areas, with several disabilities, with limited English proficiency, with Alzheimer's and related disorders, those at risk for institutional placement, those with the greatest economic need, and those with the greatest social need. The definition of "greatest social need" in the OAA includes "isolation caused by racial or ethnic status," but the definition is not intended to exclude the targeting of other populations that experience cultural social or geographic isolation due to other factors. This legislation would bring New York in line with California

and Illinois in recognizing the unique social needs of LGBTQ elders and those living with HIV/AIDS population, and hold aging providers across the state accountable for meeting the needs of these New Yorkers.

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