



Telesca Center for Justice
One West Main Street, Suite 200 ♦ Rochester, NY 14614
Phone 585.454.4060 ♦ Fax 585454.2518
www.empirejustice.org

Memorandum of Support Protect New Yorkers from Discrimination Based on Gender Identity or Expression

Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA)
A.747 (Gottfried)/S.1047 (Hoylman)

Empire Justice Center wholeheartedly supports the Legislature's immediate passage of the Gender Expression Nondiscrimination Act ("GENDA"). When signed into law, this bill will provide explicit, long-overdue anti-discrimination protections to New York's transgender and gender non-conforming communities statewide. Although there has been growing visibility and levels acceptance, the vicious attacks by the Trump administration on protections that had been put in place and other barriers and disparities continue to exist. These directly impact the ability to work, learn, be safe, and fully participate and thrive in here in New York State and this must be addressed by our government leaders. We applaud both houses of the legislature for identifying this legislation as one of the first actions of the 2019 legislative session.

The 2015 U.S. Transgender Surveyⁱ released by National Center for Transgender Equality found that transgender individuals were three times as likely to be unemployed and more than twice as likely to live in poverty compared to general rates in the U.S. Their earlier report foundⁱⁱ that **90%** of transgender people suffered "harassment, mistreatment or discrimination" at work, compared to **15% - 43%** of LGB people. These communities also face discriminatory treatment in housing at disproportionately high rates. A 2013 study by the Williams Instituteⁱⁱⁱ found that in New York, **11,600** transgender people have lost a job, **21,500** were not hired for a job, **11,600** were denied a promotion, **11,000** have been denied housing and **4,600** were evicted due to anti-transgender bias. Furthermore, transgender people who were fired due to anti-transgender discrimination are homeless **at 4 times** the national rate.^{iv} These are just some of the reasons why passage of GENDA is so critical.

Economic insecurity and homelessness caused by unchecked anti-transgender bias impacts all New Yorkers. The Williams Institute estimates^v that this workplace discrimination costs the state more than \$1 million in state Medicaid expenditures and as much as \$5.9 million annually in federal and state housing program expenditures. Moreover, if employment discrimination was reduced or eliminated, transgender workers would generate millions more in income tax revenues, in addition to reducing the housing and healthcare costs caused by discrimination.^{vi}

Empire Justice Center applauds this bill and strongly advocates for its quick passage in both houses.

This memorandum was updated by Amy Schwartz-Wallace, Esq., (585) 295-5726,
aschwartz@empirejustice.org

January 11, 2019