



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Attorneys Representing Andry Hernández Romero Join Senator Hoylman-Sigal, Congressman Nadler, and Assemblymember Simone as well as LGBTQ+, Immigration & Legal Advocates to Provide an Update on their Client's Case and Demand his Immediate Release

SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL May 9, 2025

Andry Hernández Romero was sent to El Salvador after seeking refuge in the United States due to his sexual orientation

NEW YORK - State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal (D, WFP-Manhattan), Margaret Cargioli and Dan Galindo, lawyers representing Andry Hernández Romero, a gay man seeking asylum in the United States who was deported by the Trump Administration, gathered today at the Stonewall Inn for an update on Mr. Hernández Romero's legal case.

Mr. Hernández Romero left his home country of Venezuela after being targeted for his sexuality but was sent to CECOT, a notoriously dangerous prison in El Salvador, after being accused of being a member of a Venezuelan gang. Mr. Hernández Romero did not receive a trial and the only justification the Federal Government shared for his disappearance was their contention that his tattoos resemble similar tattoos that have been found on Venezuelan gang members. Mr. Hernández Romero has no criminal record and there is no credible evidence linking him to a gang.

In addition to providing more information on Mr. Hernández Romero's legal situation, the event presented an opportunity for leaders from the LGBTQ and Immigration Rights communities to come together, express outrage over the federal administration's abuses of power and demand the immediate release of Andry Hernández Romero and all those who have been wrongfully detained or deported.

Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said: "It is unamerican to deport residents of this country without any semblance of due process, and even more so to subject them to the conditions of a foreign prison with no oversight or guarantee of safety. However, that is exactly what happened to Andry Hernández Romero, and hundreds of others, who were shipped off to the notoriously dangerous CECOT prison in El Salvador. Mr. Hernández Romero came to this country, as people have since its founding, to seek a better life after he was targeted for his sexuality in his home country of Venezuela. Today, New Yorkers gathered to show our support for Mr. Hernández Romero, demand that he, and all of those who have been wrongfully deported by the Trump Administration, be brought home immediately and call on New York City, and the United States as a whole, to remain the welcoming refuge for those in need that it once was."

Margaret Cargioli, Directing Attorney of Policy and Advocacy at Immigrant Defenders Law Center & Counsel for Andry Hernández Romero, said: "One of the greatest forms of torture that CECOT imposes is to cut people off from their loved ones- no visits, no contact, and no communication. For over 50 days Andry has been cut off from the outside world without due process. But due process matters. Immigrants matter. LGBTQ rights matter. Andry and all the men disappeared to El Salvador matter and we won't stop until we bring them back."

Congressman Jerry Nadler said: "We stand here today at the Stonewall National Monument, a place that honors the bravery and resilience of a community that refused to be erased. As we gather, we face another struggle against an administration that undermines constitutional

rights and due process for vulnerable communities. One such individual who is being persecuted is Andry Hernández Romero, a 31-year-old gay Venezuelan makeup artist, who came to the United States and legally applied for asylum because of his legitimate fear of political persecution and anti-LGBTQ+ violence in Venezuela. He has never been arrested and has no criminal history whatsoever. Yet he was sent to an El Salvadorian prison based solely on an ICE officer's unsubstantiated claim that his small crown tattoos indicated a gang affiliation. No hearing. No due process. I call upon the Trump Administration to bring Andry Hernández Romero and others in his situation back to the United States, provide them with the constitutionally required due process and present the evidence against them in a court of law.”

Assemblymember Tony Simone said: “Andry Hernandez Romero’s deportation to a gulag in El Salvador is a disgrace to our country. Every passing day that Donald Trump allows an innocent man to remain imprisoned in a foreign labor camp should cause mass outrage among the American people. What could be more contradictory to the core tenets of our nation than stripping someone of due process and sending them to a place that El Salvadorian officials have referred to as ‘a coffin?’ This injustice must end. Humanity must win out over hatred and fear.”

Assemblymember Deborah Glick said: “Andry Hernández Romero must be immediately released from El Salvador’s Terrorism Confinement Center and safely transferred back to the United States for his asylum claim to be heard. The Trump Administration’s deportation and imprisonment of Andry Hernández Romero, who was legally seeking asylum in the U.S. from political persecution and anti-LGBTQ+ violence, encapsulates the dangerous and cruel practices of this administration. Romero and all Americans and asylum seekers residing in the U.S. must be granted their rights, and our LGBTQ+ community seeking asylum must be protected from these inhumane actions.”

Council Member Erik Bottcher said: “What has happened to Andry Hernandez Romero is nothing short of a human rights tragedy. As a gay asylum seeker, Andry came to the United States seeking safety—and instead was disappeared by our government and sent to a prison in El Salvador, a country he fled in fear. This is unacceptable. New York City must always stand as a beacon of hope and sanctuary for the LGBTQ+ community and for all those fleeing persecution. I join with advocates and community members in demanding Andry’s immediate return to the U.S. so that his asylum claim can be heard with the fairness and dignity every human being deserves.”

Council Member Carlina Rivera said: “The Trump administration’s aggressive and callous immigration enforcement policies are disrupting communities and inflicting life-altering harm. Without any due process, residents are being abducted, detained, and even sent to a mega-prison in a foreign country, about which El Salvador’s justice minister is reported to have said, “the only way out is in a coffin.” New York City will come together to defend our neighbors and challenge federal policies that restrict asylum or expand expedited removal. Andry Hernandez Romero must be returned home.”

Kei Williams, Executive Director of NEW Pride Agenda, said: “LGBTQ+ immigrants fleeing violence and discrimination deserve not just safe harbor—but the freedom to live with dignity and hope. Yet the Trump administration is slamming the door on people like Andry, stripping them of their right to seek asylum and disrupting democratic norms. Here in New York, we must stand firm. We must resist this cruelty with every tool we have and ensure our city remains a sanctuary—for Andry, and for every queer person who refuses to live in fear.”

Murad Awawdeh, President & CEO, New York Immigration Coalition, said: “Nobody should be deported to a foreign prison without due process. Andry Hernández Romero was disappeared by Donald Trump to CECOT in El Salvador, where he joined hundreds of others who have been stripped of their Constitutional rights and subjected to unimaginable

horrors. Hernández Romero came to the United States seeking safety from the persecution he experienced in Venezuela because of his identity, only to be subject to this atrocity right here in a country that is supposed to uphold human rights. We demand that Hernández Romero be returned to the U.S. immediately.”

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