



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

## Senator Serrano And Senate Majority Passes GENDA & Ban Conversion Therapy

JOSE M. SERRANO January 15, 2019



(New York, NY) The Senate Majority has passed the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) (S.1047) that prohibits discrimination based on gender identity or expression and adds transgender New Yorkers to those protected by the state's Hate Crimes Law. The Senate also passed legislation (S.1046) prohibiting mental health professionals from engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with a patient under the age of eighteen years. Both bills were introduced by New York State Senator Brad Hoylman and supported by Senator Serrano and the Senate Majority.

"Today's vote sends a strong message that New York will not stop until everyone in the LGBTQ community is treated with dignity and respect. By officially including gender identity and expression under our human rights laws, we have taken the long overdue step of protecting transgender and gender non-conforming individuals from harassment and discrimination when it comes to all essential services. In addition, I am heartened that we passed legislation prohibiting so called "conversion therapy," ensuring that no minor in New York will be exposed to this dangerous, cruel, and discredited practice. I commend Senator Hoylman and for his steadfast commitment to fighting for the rights of all New Yorkers."

While the State Assembly has passed GENDA 10 consecutive times and Governor Cuomo has stated his support, the former Senate Republican Majority refused to allow this legislation for a vote. New York has been the only state in the Northeast without statutory protections for its transgender citizens. A 2016 National Transgender Discrimination Survey showed that 26% of transgender individuals lost a job due to bias, 50% were harassed on the job, 20% were evicted or denied housing, and 78% of transgender students were harassed or assaulted.

The legislation to ban conversion therapy on minors also provides that any sexual orientation change efforts attempted on a patient under 18 years of age by a licensed mental health professional shall be considered unprofessional conduct and shall subject the provider to discipline by the provider's licensing entity.