



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Senators Hoylman-Sigal & Krueger and Assembly Member Simone Introduce Bill to Close “Sporting Event” Loophole MSG Uses to Bar Lawyers and Others From Premises

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL January 23, 2023

| ISSUE: **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, FACIAL RECOGNITION, DATA PRIVACY**

NEW YORK — Today, State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, State Senator Liz Krueger and Assembly Member Tony Simone introduced a bill that would prohibit Madison Square Garden Entertainment (MSG) from continuing the outrageous practice of refusing entry to patrons on a so-called “attorney exclusion list” and others deemed to be hostile to the corporate interests of MSG.

The legislation’s introduction, which adds “sporting events” to [a long-standing law](#) that prohibits “wrongful refusal of admission” of patrons with a valid ticket to “places of public entertainment or amusement,” comes on the heels of MSG ejecting a fourth person using facial-recognition technology simply because they worked at a law firm representing a client in litigation with the company. (The company also [rescinded Assembly Member Tony Simone’s invitation](#) to an MSG event after he attended a recent [press conference](#) condemning their inappropriate use of the technology.)

State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said: “MSG claims they deploy biometric technology for the benefit of public safety when they remove sports fans from the Garden. This is absurd given that in at least four reported cases, the patrons who were booted from their venues posed no security threat and instead were lawyers at firms representing clients in litigation with MSG. Our legislation will close the loophole in state law that allows MSG to remove fans from the Garden and encourage an end to surveillance for non-security purposes. I’m grateful to the Daily News editorial board for their suggestion to help address an issue that understandably has outraged New Yorkers.”

Section 40-b of the 1941 civil rights law was [originally passed](#) to prevent theaters from barring critics from attending their shows. The law does not prevent venues from refusing to sell tickets to certain individuals, but they cannot refuse entry to those that arrive with a ticket.

State Senator Liz Krueger said: “MSG’s use of facial recognition technology to retaliate against employees of law firms engaged in litigation against them is deeply concerning. It is an unacceptable invasion of the privacy of all their patrons, and a blatant attempt to intimidate and bully those who might want to pursue their day in court against the company. It is absolutely time for the city and the state to reconsider any and all permits, licenses, and benefits provided to MSG in the face of their continued malfeasance.”

Assembly Member Tony Simone said: “The use of facial recognition technology by MSG Entertainment to ban members of the public, not for safety reasons, but as perceived legal adversaries is incredibly disturbing. Madison Square Garden operates under a special permit from New York City, with licenses from the State Liquor Authority and receives a significant State tax abatement. Any policies that bar members of the public for non-safety reasons must cease immediately.”

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