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Senators Sepúlveda and Hoylman-Sigal Lead Request for \$6.63 Million in Comprehensive LGBTQ+ Community Funding in NYS Budget

Albany, NY – Senator Luis Sepúlveda and Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal are spearheading an initiative to secure critical funding for LGBTQ+ support services in the FY24-25 New York State Budget. The senators are advocating for a series of allocations totaling \$6.63 million to support various organizations and programs dedicated to serving the LGBTQ+ community across New York State. This funding initiative reflects a strong commitment to the health, well-being, and equity of LGBTQ+ New Yorkers, addressing the unique challenges faced by this community.

The proposed funding includes:

- **\$500,000** for the establishment of a new Article 31 Licensed Mental Health Clinic at the LGBT Center, designed to provide LGBTQ+ affirming mental health care services.
- **\$800,000** for SAGE (Services and Advocacy for LGBTQ+ Elders), aimed at ensuring older LGBTQ+ New Yorkers receive culturally competent services and support.
- **\$4 million** for the Lorena Borjas Transgender Wellness & Equity Fund (TWEF), supporting transgender, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and intersex (TGNCNBI) individuals.
- **\$700,000** for The New York State Health and Human Services Network, enhancing the network's capacity to provide holistic health care, education, legal, and social services.
- **\$200,000** for The Center's LGBTWorks economic justice program, addressing the disproportionate impacts of poverty on LGBTQ+ families and individuals.
- **\$50,000** for the NEW Pride Agenda, supporting statewide civic engagement and community organizing efforts.
- **\$180,000** for Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) to assist with operating expenses related to serving those living with HIV and AIDS.

This funding request comes at a critical time when instances of prejudice, harassment, family rejection, and discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals are alarmingly prevalent, and anti-LGBTQ legislation is on the rise nationwide. By including these allocations in the state budget, New York can demonstrate its unwavering support for the LGBTQ+ community, promoting a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment for all its residents.

Senators Sepúlveda and Hoylman-Sigal emphasize the importance of these funds in continuing New York's tradition of leadership in LGBTQ+ rights and services. These investments are crucial for the sustainability and expansion of programs that offer specialized services to some of the most marginalized members of the LGBTQ+ community, ensuring access to necessary health care, support for elders, economic justice, and advocacy for TGNCNBI New Yorkers.

The senators urge their colleagues to recognize the significance of these initiatives and to support the inclusion of these vital funds in the FY24-25 NYS Budget, reinforcing New York State's commitment to the well-being and dignity of the LGBTQ+ community.

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