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June 1, 2020

David A. Correa
Interim Executive Director
Heritage of Pride
154 Christopher Street
Suite 1D
New York, NY 10014

Dear David:

Today, as Pride Month begins and protests for racial justice sweep the nation, I'm calling on Heritage of Pride to cancel conventional Pride celebrations and return to the radical roots of the modern LGBTQ movement: a protest against bigotry, racism, homophobia, transphobia and police brutality.

The first Pride was a riot and an outpouring of anger and frustration, led by transgender women of color who threw bricks at police and sparked the beginning of the queer liberation movement. As protests against police brutality continue in New York City and nationwide, we are reminded that millions of our black and brown siblings – many of whom identify as members of the LGBTQ community – are still denied justice.

This is no time for a milquetoast, corporate Pride celebration that simply celebrates the progress we've made since Stonewall. It would be unconscionable for the LGBTQ community to ignore our black neighbors crying out for justice.

Heritage of Pride must ensure that this year's celebrations reflect the ongoing struggle for dignity, safety, and freedom black and brown members of our community are fighting for. I urge you to refocus Heritage of Pride's efforts – including the televised virtual Pride "parade" Heritage of Pride will be hosting later this month – on issues of racial justice and police brutality. When doing so, I urge you to center the voices and experiences of black New Yorkers.

As New Yorkers, we are in a unique position to go back to the actual place where it all began, the Stonewall Inn. In the spirit of Sylvia Rivera, Marsha P. Johnson, and the pioneers at Stonewall, let us continue to fight so that all can live with dignity. It's our responsibility to ensure the memory and work of those who began the movement lives on.

Sincerely,

Brad Hoylman
New York State Senate
27th Senate District