

ZERO TRANSPHOBIA CAMPAIGN UNVEILING

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New York, NY - As the launching of the Zero Transphobia Campaign occurs we have reasons to celebrate this historic day with the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA) taking effect in New York State. For far too long, transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals in New York had waited for their rights to be recognized, with discrimination and bigotry standing in the way of opportunities they should never have been denied.

This ended earlier this year with the passage and signing in NYS of the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA), a bill which Assemblyman Richard N. Gottfried introduced in the Assembly eighteen times before it finally passed both houses of the Legislature in January, 2019 and took effect today, Monday November 4, 2019. In past years, the NYS Assembly had passed the bill 11 times, but the Senate's Republican Majority refused to let the bill have a floor vote. In 2019, the new Democratic Majority joined the Assembly in protecting the rights of New Yorkers regardless of gender identity or expression.

For the launching of the campaign community-based organizations, health and elected officials, members of the LGBTQIA+ communities and allies made themselves present at the Week Against Transphobia, a campaign designed to create awareness to address Transphobia in both Spanish and English in the Hispanic/Latinx communities. The campaign will focus on addressing stigma in our communities. The campaign calls for a week of activities to raise awareness and calling for action in our country in response to increasing attacks, killings and abuses of members of the Transgender or gender non-conforming communities (TGNC)

The Zero Transphobia campaign aims to engage all sectors of our nation. The purpose of this event is to unveil the #ZeroTransphobia campaign, designed to create awareness to erase Transphobia in the Hispanic/Latinx community.

Transphobia is a challenge all over the world and, tragically, it is affecting too many people. Transphobia is real in our society and very much a part of the current political rhetoric. The purpose of the first ever Week Against Transphobia is to launch an effort to achieve Zero Transphobia in our communities. This year alone there have been 23 reported murders in the U.S. of trans individuals as a result of transphobia-alarmingly 20 being black transgender women. Among the many victims, Johana Medina Leon died in June of this year from an HIV-related medical complication, right after being release from an ICE detention center. Less than a month later-at Rikers Island in NYC- Layleen Cubillette-Polanco another transgender woman was arrested and unable to pay a \$500 bail. She was placed in unsupervised solitary confinement and was found dead hours later from complications of epilepsy.

These negative beliefs and actions affect the physical, mental health, and overall wellness of our TGNC communities. The stigma, violence and discrimination must be addressed at different levels, such as health care settings, houses of worships, workplaces, public places, and schools. Furthermore, many instances of Transphobia translate into physical violence against members of the TGNC communities.

"Our society has made great strides in embracing the TGNC communities, sadly in 2019 the issue of transphobia is still very prevalent here and around the world," said Speaker Corey Johnson. "Transphobia must never be tolerated and the Zero Transphobia campaign will highlight this issue plaguing our communities. I want to thank Oasis, the Latino LGBTQIA+ Wellness Center for bringing this issue to the forefront and working to erase intolerance and discrimination."-stated Corey Johnson, New York City Council Speaker.

New York State Assemblywoman, Assembly District 39 stated at the press conference- "For me it is an honor to represent a community with the highest number of translatinas in New York and possibly the entire country. But many of our translatinas also face daily discrimination not just when trying to find work but simply walking down the street. So at the state assembly I had the honor of voting in favor of GENDA because I believe it's a gigantic first step but it's only a first step to making sure we are fighting for your humanity."

"The Zero Homophobia campaign is a powerful reminder that TGNC people deserve to be fully protected and celebrated for who they are." said Daniel Dromm, City Council member and Chair of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus. "We are committed to working alongside advocates to end transphobia so that we can build a more inclusive and affirming city for all."

"I am proud to support the Zero Transphobia campaign in its mission to eliminate the hate and discrimination that so many of our transgender friends and family members face simply for existing. -said Carlina Rivera, City Council member and Chair of the Committee on Hospitals. It is crucial that we support campaigns that grapple with the cultural stigmas that inform transphobia, so we can work towards creating communities that empower all New Yorkers to live their lives authentically."

"It is not only important to address Transphobia when it comes from bigoted close minded cisgender individuals, including some Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people. It is also important to call out the toxic internalized transphobia that manifests itself within the transgender community as a result of the constant societal systemic oppression that we experience regularly especially from the current POTUS. Oppressing each other does nothing but hinder us from being able to support one another and heal from the stigmatized trauma that we experience ultimately creating unnecessary divisiveness. We need to re-focus our energy by bringing an end to transphobia locally, nationally and globally; inside and outside of our community."-stated Elizabeth Marie Rivera, Project Inspire and Co-Organizer of the Zero Transphobia Campaign, Latino Commission on AIDS.

"The Zero Transphobia campaign is an important opportunity for each of us to be part of confronting stigma and discrimination against Trans and gender non-conforming communities. We must do better as a nation to offer safety and allyship and not allow violence, attacks and murders to be met with silence. We need to value and respect gender identity and expression as a fundamental right." Stated, Joaquin Carcaño, Director of community organizing, Latinos in the South Program. North Carolina

"Stigma and all its ramifications need to urgently be eradicated with genuine care. If our more vulnerable and in need brothers and sisters are taken care of, we all collectively become stronger. Let's end the Trans GNC NB and Intersex violence epidemic and bigotry together, because we are all human and because we all care."-stated, Daniela Simba, TransPower, Trans Capacity Building Program Coordinator and Co-Organizer of the Zero Transphobia Campaign, Latino Commission on AIDS.

For more information visit www.hispanicnet.org/zero or contact Leandro Rodriguez at LRodriguez@latinoaid.org.

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