



## **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund applauds New York Assembly for historic vote on transgender rights**

June 3, 2008

The **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund** applauds the New York Assembly's passage today of the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA). The bill, which passed by a 102-33 vote, now moves to the state Senate. The measure seeks to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression in housing, employment, credit and public accommodations and would add gender identity or expression to the state's hate crimes law.

New York extended protections on the basis of sexual orientation in 2002 and the Task Force has worked with the Empire State Pride Agenda, legislators and community activists since then to amend the law to add gender identity or expression protections, including by helping draft GENDA. Among the other contributions the Task Force made to this effort was a convening of transgender and allied activists in 2005 at a training in Albany to provide leaders with skills for how to build coalitions in support of this bill, and a Power Summit training on Long Island in December 2007 that attracted more than 100 activists who were taught how to lobby their legislators and build grassroots support for the bill. If the bill passes the Senate, Gov. David Paterson is expected to sign it and New York would become the 13th state to explicitly ban discrimination based on gender identity or expression. Currently, 39 percent of the country's population is covered by such a local or state law.

### **Statement by Rea Carey, Acting Executive Director National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund**

"This is a very exciting victory for the people of New York, particularly transgender people. Legislation of this sort is not only responsible public policy, it also shows the nation that New York is unafraid to join the ranks of states that value all of their citizens, including those who are transgender or who express their gender in ways that reflect the broad and beautiful spectrum of humanity.

"We congratulate the leadership of Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, the many transgender leaders and allies in New York, and our partner, Empire State Pride Agenda, for this important victory. We now call on the leaders of the New York Senate to bring this bill to the floor so that protections for transgender people and others in New York are not delayed another day."