

Illinois Gender Advocates



Advocacy for the Transgendered and Gender Variant Community

Volume 1 Issue 2

December 2002

DOUBLE HEADER!



Chicago Passes Ordinance

Chicago, IL --- November 6, 2002 --- Today the Chicago City Council passed an amendment to the city's anti-bias laws that would protect the city's transgender and gender variant population by making it illegal to discriminate against a person on the basis of gender identity.

Aldermen Billy Ocasio and Bernie Hansen introduced the ordinance a little over two years ago. The ordinance passed City Council's Human Relations Committee last week with a unanimous vote. And today it passed the City Council by a vote of 40 to 9.

See *Chicago* on page 5

**The Next Meeting of
It's Time, Illinois
Will Take Place at 7:30 p.m. on
Tuesday, November 7, 2002
at TransGenessis
4554 N. Broadway, Suite 311
in Chicago**

Please watch for the date and time of our January meeting due to the New Year Holiday

Cook County Passes Ordinance

Chicago, IL --- November 19, 2002 --- Today Cook County amended the County's Human Rights Ordinance to include the classification of Gender Identity. The vote came less than two weeks after the Chicago City Council passed a similar amendment by a 40 to 9 vote majority.

With a population of 5.4 million people, Cook County is the largest county in Illinois and one of the largest counties in the United States. The new law affects the nearly 2.5 million people who live within Cook County outside of the City of Chicago. The law provides protection to the transgender and gender variant population by making it illegal to discriminate against a person on the basis of gender identity.

Sponsored by Board President John Stroger, and Commissioners Mike Quigley and John Daley, the ordinance was introduced at the Cook County Board meeting on November 7. The amendment was

See *County* on page 5

Time to Renew and Update Your Membership

Miranda Writes...

Miranda Writes... *We Got Rights!*

When we started working and organizing for transgender rights, there were just a handful of us stumbling around in the dark. But rather than curse the darkness, we lit that first candle. By the time Chicago and Cook County passed the Gender Identity Amendments a few weeks ago, that small flickering flame had become a beacon of light, the voice of the people, the will of the people, and the obvious right thing to do.

There are so many people who have been involved along the way that it is risky to start thanking individuals for fear of leaving someone out. So I am not going to try to name everyone individually. But I did want to give some special thanks.

Thank you, Stephanie Young and Janice Galeckas for your leadership in the early days of the movement in Chicago. You envisioned this day many years ago when you founded It's Time, Illinois, we were glad to carry it to fruition for you.

Thank you, Larry McKeon, for your courage to bring these issues first to City Hall, and then to Springfield. Before you were a State Representative, you were the Mayor's liaison to the Gay and Lesbian community. You were the first to invite us to City Hall to speak with AGLI about transgender rights.

Thank you, Robert Castillo and John Pennycuff, for advocating for transgender inclusion even before it became popular. When these issues were first brought to AGLI, and when everyone else was scratching their heads trying to figure out what to do, you were the ones who stood up and said this is the right thing to do. And you brought that to the attention of Mayor Daley year after year with stickers, signs, button and banners.

Thank you Mary Morten and Bill Greaves, the immediate past and current Directors of AGLI. You laid all the groundwork in City Hall, you made this issue your own issue, you worked your way through the morass of the city bureaucracy to make sure that this

See *Miranda* on page 4

As an early reminder memberships run on a calendar year basis, so it's almost time to renew.

We are asking all members to update their contact information. We are getting a fair amount of returned mail and email bounces. It is important that we have up to date information.

WHATEVER

By *Beth Plotner*

WHAT A YEAR

This has been a phenomenal year for our rights. There are now 53 jurisdictions across this country, which have gender identity protection in their anti-discrimination laws.

At the start of 2002 there were just 38 jurisdictions, which provided rights to the transgendered and gender variant. So you do the math. Hey there's still a month left in the year. Who knows?

We could pat ourselves on the back (special pat on the back to Miranda) for Chicago and Cook County. But that's not the point of this month's column. The point is that we have seen quite a grass roots swell of anti-discrimination laws around the country. Big cities New York, Chicago, Dallas small cities New Hope, Huntington Woods, Decatur (you can look up the states) have passed these laws. 2 states have passed protection for us and Illinois is poised to join the list.

And with all this happening the world has not come to an end. The sun still rises in the east. Dogs still chase cats. The earth has not opened up and swallowed up the cities, counties and states that have passed human rights laws for us.

Passing laws at the grass roots level is a very important step in eventually getting federal legislation passed. Of course nothing is going to happen for at least the next 2 years. I don't think we're going to be included in the "compassionate conservatism" which is about to run or overrun our country.

Be that as it may those in Washington can no longer use the excuse that we have to start on the local level and the state level before we can even think of the federal level. We've started, we're doing it and we're thinking.

NOTES FROM THE SCULLERY

THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: WORK COMPLETED AND WORK YET TO BE DONE

By DIANA WILLIAMSON

WELL, WE FINALLY DID IT. WITH OVERWHELMINGLY FAVORABLE VOTES, THE CHICAGO CITY COUNCIL AND THE COOK COUNTY COMMISSION BOTH ADOPTED THE GENDER IDENTITY AMENDMENTS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE HUMAN RIGHTS ORDINANCES WHICH WE HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO ACHIEVE. THERE WAS NO ORGANIZED OPPOSITION TO EITHER AMENDMENT, EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN EXTENSIVELY PUBLICIZED AND DISCUSSED IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY. IN FACT, THE ONLY PUBLIC CRITICISM WE EVER RECEIVED CAME FROM PEOPLE WHO HAD PURPORTED TO BE OUR FRIENDS. (WITH FRIENDS LIKE THAT... WELL, YOU KNOW THE REST.)

It is appropriate at this time for us to engage in some celebrating and congratulating of our community leaders whose skill and perseverance resulted in these major legislative achievements. It is also definitely appropriate for us to express our gratitude to those aldermen and county commissioners who supported us with their votes and sponsorship of the legislation. Transgender and gender variant people living or working in Chicago and suburban Cook County are now much safer and more secure in their rights as citizens than they were just a short time ago.

We would be making a serious mistake, however, if we were to rest on our laurels in the belief that our legislative work is now finished. As the recent Day of

Remembrance Vigil made painfully clear to all who attended, violence against transgender people is on the rise. Hate crimes legislation needs to be added as an additional weapon to combat such senseless violence. It would, of course, be naïve to suggest that inclusion of gender expression in the existing hate crimes laws would somehow eliminate violence against transgender people altogether. Nevertheless, such legislation would have much more than symbolic value, and should become one of the top priorities on our new legislative agenda.

Although childhood and youth are often said to be the most carefree times of a person's life, that is certainly not the case for most transgender and gender variant youth. Many of us survived only by adopting behaviors that were appropriate for our apparent sex – but which were completely inappropriate for our own needs. Of course, it just is not possible to legislate away all the problems faced by transgender youth. Adopting safe schools legislation, however, could go a long way toward alleviating the horror that confronts many gender variant children on a daily basis.

See *Scullery* on page 8

Become A Member of the Advocates Club

With our mission expanding and becoming a 501 (c)(3) organization we have started the Advocates Club. The purpose of the Advocates Club will help us to reach a fundraising goal of \$50,000 over the next year.

These funds will be used to maintain a weekly drop-in for trans youth and for educational outreach to governmental agencies, schools, foster care facilities, and other organizations that are responsible for care of trans youth.

Our trans youth program will be run by our new staff member who first came to us first as a legislative aide thanks to a grant from the Human Rights Campaign, and is now our Director of Youth Advocacy. She has experience with trans youth advocacy having previously started and ran a trans youth drop-in at a major Chicago community center.

Membership levels in the Advocates Club are \$250, \$500, \$1000 and \$2500. An application is on page 10.

For more information please contact us.

Illinois Gender Advocates
TV

Friday
December 20th
6:30 p.m.

Chicago Access Cable
Channel 21

Thanks to Our Contributors

A big thank you goes out to those who contributed articles to the newsletter this month.

- Miranda Stevens-Miller
- Marsha Jackson
- Jean-Michael Brevelle
- San Jose Mercury News
- Beth Plotner
- Diana Williamson
- 365Gay.com

Miranda continued from page 2

issue saw the light of day. And I know that many times I pushed too hard, but you never gave up, and never lost faith. I love you both!

Thank you, Alderman Billy Ocasio, and Aldermen Bernie Hansen, Gene Schulter, Helen Shiller, Toni Preckwinkle and Mary Ann Smith, for going out on a limb and sponsoring the Chicago Gender Identity Amendment. But Alderman Ocasio, you deserve a special thanks, because you agreed to sponsor this amendment almost five years ago... before anyone else in the City Council even thought about these issues. You made this happen.

And thank you, Commissioner Mike Quigley, and Commissioner John Daley, and Board President John Stroger, for sponsoring the Cook County Amendment. But Commissioner Quigley, you deserve not only a special thanks, but also a great big hug and kiss, for advocating for this issue and trying to get it passed in

Cook County even before Chicago. And for lining up all the support to make sure that it would pass quickly and smoothly, even with someone like Commissioner Carl Hansen on the County Board.

There are so many more to thank... the national organizations that helped out including NGLTF, HRC, NCLR. The other transgender activists from around the country who we were in constant contact with, and who acted as a support network, as they passed legislation in jurisdictions all over the United States. The local organizations including Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, ACLU, CABN, Equality Illinois, and Amnesty International.

And thank you, members of Illinois Gender Advocates, who supported our efforts over the years with your time and effort and dollars. There is absolutely no way this could have been done without the strong support of the community behind us. And you stayed with us through all the one-step-forward and one-step-back routines.

Yesterday, at a community event, I happened to run into Dawn Clark Netsch, who I am sure all of you know for her years in state government and her support of the LGBT community. I was telling her that the Chicago and Cook County Gender Identity Amendments had passed. At first she thought I was asking about them, but then when she realized that all I was doing was passing on some good news, she smiled broadly and congratulated me.

And when I complained that it had taken seven years of my life to get to this point, she looked strangely at me and said, "Seven years may seem like a long time to you, but it is really very little time in terms of legislative progress. Creating legislative change is like turning an ocean liner around at sea..."

And as I looked at the wisdom and serenity in her beautiful face, I knew that she was right. Real progress always moves too slowly. And I wondered where I would get the patience and stamina for then next legislative battle... and there always will be one more battle... but at least this time, we got rights!

Miranda Stevens-Miller is Legislative Director of Illinois Gender Advocates. She welcomes your comments at MirandaSt1@aol.com, and invites you to visit the IGA website at www.itstimeil.org.

County continued from page 1

passed unanimously by the Cook County Human Relations Committee on November 18, and today was passed by the Cook County Board with a vote of 14 to 1 (and 1 voting present).

Miranda Stevens-Miller, Legislative Director of Illinois Gender Advocates, had been working for about two years with the office of Commissioner Quigley on the language and strategy of the ordinance. She said, "What a pleasure it has been to have worked with Mike Quigley on this issue. I cannot imagine a more decent and compassionate public servant."

Commissioner Quigley, Legislative Aide Laura Nelson, and Chief of Staff Jennifer Koehler worked tirelessly in the days following the passage of the Chicago amendment to line up the support behind the Cook County amendment. Commissioner Quigley had been hoping to pass the Cook County amendment simultaneously with the Chicago amendment, but certainly before the newly elected Board took over in December. The vote came at the end of a grueling four-hour County Board meeting, as the next to last item of business of the outgoing Board.

The new law amends Cook County's Human Rights Ordinance with the addition of Gender Identity, which is defined as "the actual or perceived appearance, expression, identity, or behavior, of a person as being male or female, whether or not that appearance, expression, identity or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's designated sex at birth." The law provides protection from discrimination in employment, in public accommodations, in housing and in credit transactions.

Beth Plotner, Chair of Illinois Gender Advocates, said, "I am thrilled that Cook County so quickly joined with Chicago to provide the same rights and protections to our community. And as a suburban Cook County resident, I am overjoyed that I can finally stand up and say 'I have rights'."

City continued from page 1

The new law amends Chicago's Human Rights Ordinance, Fair Housing Ordinance, and Personnel Code. These laws provide protection from discrimination in private and municipal employment, in

public accommodations, housing and credit transactions.

Gender identity is defined in the ordinance as "the actual or perceived appearance, expression, identity, or behavior, of a person as being male or female, whether or not that appearance, expression, identity or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's designated at birth."

Beth Plotner, Chair of Illinois Gender Advocates, was thrilled at the vote. She said, "I'm so proud that Chicago has joined the growing list of jurisdictions that recognize our community is entitled to the same rights and protections as everyone else. Thank you, Mayor Daley, for your support."

Illinois Gender Advocates, formerly known as It's Time Illinois, had been working on this ordinance for over seven years. Through public forums, documentation and advocacy, the organization helped unite members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community, as well as many other allies, behind the ordinance.

Over the years, many organizations and individuals helped with the effort. Nearly 100 organizations, both Chicago-based and national organizations with large Chicago memberships, endorsed the ordinance. Among the dozens of people who helped advocate for the ordinance, there are three who deserve special recognition. They are Robert Castillo, Mary Morten, and William Greaves.

Robert Castillo, a member of the Advisory Council on Gay and Lesbian Issues (ACGLI), is a leading advocate for the rights of transgendered individuals. He introduced several resolutions in ACGLI in support of the Gender Identity Amendment. Mary Morten, Mayor Daley's liaison to the gay and lesbian community from 1997 to 2000, laid much of the groundwork in City Hall for the ordinance, and continued to advocate for its passage after she left that position. And Bill Greaves, the current liaison to the gay and lesbian community, continued to act as the point person for the ordinance with City Hall.

Miranda Stevens-Miller, Political Director of Illinois Gender Advocates, who has been advocating for transgender rights since 1995, said, "I am grateful to all the wonderful people who have helped make the passage of this ordinance a reality."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Monday, November 25,
2002

CONTACT Jean-Michel Brevelle,

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL PASSES TRANSGENDER ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROTECTIONS

Baltimore, MD -- In a historic vote this evening, Baltimore City became the first jurisdiction in Maryland to prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and credit practices based on gender identity or expression. The vote was unanimous among the 19-member Council without abstentions. Mayor Martin O'Malley had requested that the Council consider the bill, to investigate the prevalence of discrimination against transgender people and to ensure equal rights for all Baltimoreans.

Council Bill 02-0857 was introduced on August 12 at the request of the Baltimore Community Relations Commission, the City agency that enforces the anti-discrimination ordinance and investigates claims of discriminatory practices in Baltimore City. At an October 17th hearing convened by the Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee, Chaired by Councilman Robert Curran, the committee heard testimony from 10 individuals in support of the bill. More than half of the testifiers were transgender people, who related their personal experiences of being the victims of discrimination due solely to their gender identity or expression. No one offered testimony in opposition to the bill.

The final vote was received with great anticipation by approximately 30 community members seated in the gallery. Councilman Curran gave a brief speech congratulating the local transgender community, and Council President Sheila Dixon generously invited the community to rise and be recognized by the Council. The Council Chambers replied with a long round of applause and congratulatory wishes.

"Tonight's vote is a great victory for the Baltimore transgender community," said Jean-Michel Brevelle, Interim Director for Free State Justice. "It is the culmination of years of effort by many transgender people and our supporters, and clearly demonstrates the goodwill and understanding that Baltimore City government has developed for the transgender community. It is also the result of forging strong partnerships and healthy alliances between community

and local, state, and national organizations committed to transgender equality."

Free State Justice formed MATTER (Marylanders Advocating Towards Transgender Equal Rights) as a Board committee just over a year ago. The MATTER Committee has led the campaign to introduce and pass legislation this year to extend anti-discrimination protections to transgender people in Baltimore City. Financial support for the effort came through two Equality Grants received from the Human Rights Campaign, and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, through their Transgender Civil Rights Project, contributed technical assistance and the draft language for the bill. Local organizations including the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center of Baltimore; Tran*Quility; the Baltimore-Washington-Annapolis Guys; Chase Brexton Health Services, Inc.; and TransAm - a program of the Baltimore Prevention Coalition - have provided support through outreach to membership, testimony, and letters of support.

The bill now goes to Mayor Martin O'Malley for signature into law. Since the bill was submitted at the request of his Administration, the Mayor is expected to sign it. Baltimore will then join 52 other US jurisdictions that prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or expression, including the States of Minnesota and Rhode Island. A similar ordinance was most recently passed in Cook County, Illinois. Thirteen other jurisdictions have passed similar ordinances in 2002 alone.

-- 30 --

Jean-Michel Brevelle
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NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Steve Black, PA-GALA 610-863-4961
Mara Keisling, PA-Gender Rights Coalition, 717-439-7111
Stacey Sobel, Center for Lesbian & Gay Civil Rights, 215-731-1447 ext 11

**PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE PASSES LANDMARK
HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION**

Bill Adds Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender and Disability to Ethnic Intimidation Act

November 26, 2002

(Harrisburg, PA) - Today, at 8:45 p.m., the Pennsylvania House passed legislation to amend the state's Ethnic Intimidation Act by adding actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender, mental and physical disability, and ancestry to the existing law. This legislation is believed to be the most inclusive language of any hate crimes bill in the country. The bill's passage was the result of a broad-based community effort from numerous organizations and individuals across the state strong bipartisan support from the leadership in the house

The community effort was lead by: the Statewide Pennsylvania Rights Coalition (SPARC), the state's largest network of individuals and organizations dedicated to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) legislative advocacy; the Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance (PA-GALA), the largest gay and lesbian political organization in the state; the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights, the state's only LGBT legal aid and public policy organization; the Pennsylvania Gender Rights Coalition, a statewide organization working for transgender rights; OUTFRONT a public education, legislative advocacy and political action organization, the Log Cabin Republicans of Pennsylvania, Human Rights Campaign, PFLAG, parents, friends, families, of lesbians and gays, many LGBT youth organizations along with a wide variety of student groups across the Commonwealth, among others.

A number of house members were instrumental in the bill's passage including several of the amendment's sponsors, including Steve Nickol, Pat Browne and Lita Cohen. The bill won passage by a 118 to 79 vote after two hours of discussion. "We are all gratified to see that, for the first time in Pennsylvania's history Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people will be equally protected under the law," said Steve Glassman, SPARC's co-chair.

Pennsylvania has joined 27 other states and the District of Columbia in extending hate crimes protections to gay, lesbian and bisexual people and the fifth state to add gender identity. Steve Black, political director of PA-GALA said, "Pennsylvania now has the most inclusive hate crimes law in the country - we applaud the legislature for taking this step to protect all Pennsylvanians from hate crimes."

Stacey L. Sobel, Esq., the Center for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights' executive director, who drafted the bill's language added, "The legislators who voted for this bill stood up for their most vulnerable constituents and let it be known that we will not condone hate crimes in this state. When this legislation becomes the law, we will finally have the tools we need to aggressively prosecute these crimes and assist victims in Pennsylvania."

"Working together we have reminded the legislature that

Pennsylvanians are decent people who want every person protected from hate violence", said Mara Keisling, co-chair of Pennsylvania Gender Rights Coalition.

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**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS
TO
OUR
MEMBERS
AND
SUPPORTERS
From
ILLINOIS GENDER
ADVOCATES**

Scullery continued from page 3

Another area where legislation can be of enormous importance concerns the marital rights of transsexuals. The courts in at least two states have judicially determined that post operative transsexuals have not legally changed their sex for purposes of marriage under the provisions of the Defense of Marriage Act (which prohibits same sex marriages). In other words, a male-to-female transsexual cannot marry a genetic male, because that would result in a marriage between two men. (One county in Texas, however, has reportedly permitted a male-to-female transsexual to legally marry a genetic female, since that would *not* be a same sex marriage. Go figure.) In order to avoid absurdities such as these, it would be best to delineate the marital rights and responsibilities of transsexuals in a single piece of legislation. (Because this issue is one of great importance in the LGBT community, you can expect to see it revisited in this column in greater detail in the near future.)

We have made a good start on the road toward eliminating discrimination based on gender identity. But we still have a very long way to go before achieving our ultimate goal. Our legislative agenda has just begun.

Feedback...

Problems? Questions? Disagreements? Want to submit an article? Please write to us. We love to get mail.

It's Time, Illinois! Board Members:

Chair:

Beth Plotner
BethJD@earthlink.net

Vice Chair:

Diana Williamson
DianaAW@aol.com

Director of Youth Advocacy:

Josephine Christopher
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Legislative Director:

Miranda Stevens-Miller
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Board of Directors

Information

Minutes for the Monthly Meeting of October 2002

By Marsha Jackson

Called to order at 7:37 In attendance Carole, Jo, Allison, Miranda, Beth, Rebecca, Lisa, Diana, Amy R., and Marsha

With the election being uncontested, Lisa, seconded by several was passed on a voice vote.

Legislation reports from Miranda The City Council's Human Relations committee held hearings and unanimously passed the amendment to be voted on by the full council, probably on Wednesday, November 6th where it is expected to pass.

Introduction of the Cook County bill is planned for Thursday, November 7th. Commissioners M. Quigley, J. Daley, and County Board President Stroger cosponsor it. If the amendment doesn't pass with the current board it will be reintroduced in January to the new board.

State will need to wait for the results of the election (meeting was election night). If democrats gain more control in Illinois it is hoped that passage of the bill will be easier.

Lisa reported on the planning for the Day of Remembrance November 20th, State of Illinois Building at 6p.m.

Speakers scheduled (barring conflicts) include Jan Schakowsky, Billy Ocasio, Mike Quigley, Vernita Grey, and Michelle Moore. Also a presentation of a Brandon Teena monologue

Illinois Gender Advocates is officially nonprofit in Illinois, Federal status is pending

Lisa is looking into doing something to help support the About Face Theater

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15

Wed, Nov. 27, 2002 San Jose Mercury News

City council Members Unanimously Approve Anti-bias Protections for Transgender People

Prompted by the recent slaying of a transgender teen in Newark, the San Jose City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to add transgender people to the list of groups protected under the city's anti-discrimination policy.

Councilman Ken Yeager proposed changing San Jose's harassment policy after learning about the beating death of Eddie Araujo--also known as Gwen--last month. Araujo was killed after his dual identity was discovered at a party, authorities say.

Members of the Bay Area Municipal Elections Committee, a gay and lesbian political advocacy group that Yeager co-founded in 1984, approached Yeager and Mayor Ron Gonzales about the amendment, which will add protections for gender identity. Current protections include race, color, ethnicity, national origin, disability, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation and religion.

According to Yeager, cities including San Francisco, New York City, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Dallas, and Seattle have adopted similar policies. Yeager said he knows of only one transgender city employee in San Jose, but companies that receive city contracts also would have to comply, he said.

NY Gay Rights Bill In Trouble Over Excluding Transgenders

by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff

Posted: November 27, 2002
5:55 p.m. ET/+5GMT/-3PT
(Albany, New York) Legislation to give New York gays and lesbians civil rights protections may not be passed this session after all.

The Senate is to be recalled December 17 to consider the bill, a concession made by Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno in order to get a coveted endorsement for Gov. Pataki in the November election.

The bill would protect gays and lesbians in the areas of employment, education, housing and public accommodations.

But, opposition from transgendered groups may force the bill to be rewritten. As it now stands, the Sexual Orientation Nondiscrimination Act, (SONDA) does not mention the transgendered. TG activists say the legislation needs to be amended to protect some of the state's most marginalized residents: Transsexuals, cross-dressers and effeminate men.

"Right now, SONDA protects one class of folks and leaves out another class that arguably needs more protection," said Michael Kink, legislative counsel of Housing Works Inc., an AIDS advocacy group that is running radio ads in the Capitol Region calling for a transgender amendment.

Senate Minority Leader David Paterson, D-Manhattan says he might not support SONDA without an amendment.

"I don't want to see anyone get left out," Paterson said. "I support (SONDA), and I'm for passing it. But how long would it take to get something to protect these citizens?" Bruno has repeatedly said he has no intention of allowing an amended bill sponsored by Sen. Thomas Duane, D-Manhattan, to come up for a vote, arguing that transgender people are either protected under the existing state Human Rights Law or will be covered by SONDA.

The transgender community and lawmakers agree if enough of the 25 Senate Democrats follow Paterson's lead, SONDA cannot pass, because there isn't adequate support among the 37 Republicans alone to pass the bill.

The Democratic-controlled Assembly passed SONDA last February.

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<http://365gay.com/NewsContent/112702NYRights.htm>

Application for New or Renewal Membership

YES, I would like to join (____) or renew (____) my membership in Illinois Gender Advocates

Name(s) _____

Name to Be Used on Mailing Label (if different from above) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP+4 _____

Home Telephone _____ Work Telephone _____

E-mail Address _____

Membership Level (check one):

(____) Annual - \$15 (____) Supporting - \$35 (____) Household - \$50 (____) Sustaining - \$75
(____) Benefactor - \$150 (____) Lifetime - \$250 (____) Other - \$ _____

How would you like to be involved with Illinois Gender Advocates (Please check all that apply.)

(____) Keep informed by newsletters (____) Participate in monthly meetings
(____) Participate in actions (____) Join a working group or committee
(____) Liaison with other human rights groups. Please specify _____
(____) Do you have any special skills that could help us out? (legal / legislative, artistic / design, technical / computer) Please specify: _____

Have you ever been a victim of a hate crime or discriminated against because of your gender identity, expression, or image? Yes / No (circle one)

If yes, may we document your case for our report? Yes / No (circle one)

Please mail, along with your check or money order, to:

Illinois Gender Advocates, 47 W. Division, #391, Chicago, IL 60610

Advocates Club

I wish to join the Advocates Club.

\$250 \$500 \$1000 \$2500 Other _____

Name _____ Phone _____ e-mail _____

Address _____

Illinois Gender Advocates is a 501 (c)(3) organization.
Your contribution may be fully deductible.