

Speaker Adrienne Adams
Legislative Office – City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Adams:

We, the undersigned coalition of civil rights advocates, LGBTQ+ organizations, and concerned New Yorkers, urge the New York City Council to pass **Int. 0625-2024** without delay. This crucial legislation will ensure that transgender, gender nonconforming, nonbinary, and intersex (TGNCNBI) individuals in city jails have a meaningful choice to be housed in alignment with their gender identity - an essential protection against the rampant violence TGNCNBI people face in custody.

We are deeply alarmed by President Trump's Executive Order explicitly targeting transgender women in prisons. By attempting to roll back important protections for transgender people under the Prison Rape Elimination Act, Trump's directive strips TGNCNBI people of their dignity and places them at heightened risk of violence and sexual assault in correctional facilities.

This is not merely a policy shift – it is a calculated effort to erase trans lives and fuel a climate of hatred that places TGNCNBI individuals in direct danger. Here, in New York City, the Department of Correction (DOC) routinely forcibly transfers transgender women to men's jails without notice, often without justification and with no meaningful pathway for appeal. DOC also routinely denies requests for gender-aligned housing. In the first fiscal quarter of 2025, DOC denied half of the requests for gender aligned housing and, of those transferred, five were involuntarily forced to transfer from the women's jail back to a men's jail.

New York City must act now. Trump's order emboldens the abuses TGNCNBI people face by sending the chilling message that transgender people's lives are expendable. At this pivotal moment, the city has an opportunity to take a stand and send a different message - one that affirms New York City's commitment to human rights and the safety of all its residents. Your office has a longstanding record of championing marginalized communities at the intersections of identity and incarceration, which is precisely what this urgent legislation does. This legislation is not just necessary; it is urgent. In August 2023, the City Council Task Force on Issues Facing TGNCNBI People in the NYC Jails named this bill as their number one policy recommendation to make immediate changes in jail conditions. As recently as September 2024, the Task Force has reiterated its stance that this bill would make the most effective life-saving changes for TGNCNBI people in city custody. It is essential for our city to address the persistent violence and discrimination TGNCNBI individuals face in custody and to uphold the city's values of equality, dignity, and respect for all.

Passing Int. 625 would align New York City with other progressive jurisdictions with similar protections, including many New York State counties, ensuring that our city remains a leader in upholding LGBTQ+ rights. Moreover, it would send a clear message that, even in the face of regressive federal policies, New York City remains steadfast in its commitment to champion transgender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, and inclusivity for all. **We call on you to support Int. 625 and bring it to a vote.**

Signed by,

(in)Visible Legacy

ACT UP NY

Advocates for Trans Equality (A4TE)

Ali Forney Center

Alliance for Positive Change

Anti-Displacement NYC

Art Against Displacement

Black & Pink NYC

Black Trans Nation LLC

Brooklyn Defender Services

Caribbean Equality Project

CASES

Decriminalize Sex Work

Dutchess County Pride Center

Equality New York

Every Body Therapy

Exodus Transitional Community

Free to Be Youth Project

Freedom Agenda

Golden psychology

Incarcerated Nation Network

Inside Outside Collective

JAC/HALT

Lambda Legal

Legal Action Center

Legal Aid Society

Make the Road NY

Melinda Consulting, LLC

National Harm Reduction Coalition
Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem
New Alternatives for Homeless LGBT Youth
NEW Pride Agenda
New York County Defender Services
New York Transgender Advocacy Group
NYLAG
Osborne Association
Q'Lective Therapy
SAGE
Sands House Inc
Sara Gillooly, LMHC
Superbloom Psychotherapy
Sylvia Rivera Law Project
The Bronx Defenders
The Fortune Society
The Prisoners' Brain Trust
The Remedy Project
Transformative Schools
Transgender Equity Consulting Inc
Transgender Law Center
True Bearing Bodywork
Valued Directions Psychological Services
Women's Community Justice Association
Women's Prison Association
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
Wove Therapy
Youth Represent