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Transgender Advocacy Group Hails U.S. House Passage of Hate Crimes Legislation

Focus Shifts to Senate for Action on Pathbreaking Legislation

NEW YORK - The Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund (TLDEF) hails the U.S. House's passage today of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act (H.R. 1913), which would expand existing federal hate crimes law to include crimes motivated by gender identity or sexual orientation.

"Today's vote in the House of Representatives sends a clear message that targeting members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community for violence will not be tolerated in this country," TLDEF executive director Michael Silverman said. "As the Senate begins to consider hate crimes legislation, we urge Senators to act upon and pass this legislation quickly."

Transgender people are frequent targets of hate crimes. A Colorado jury convicted Allen Andrade of first-degree murder and a hate crime on April 22 in connection with the savage beating death of 18-year-old transgender woman Angie Zapata. In New York, the Onondaga County District Attorney is pursuing the state's first-ever transgender-related hate crime conviction in connection with the shooting death of 22-year-old Lateisha "Teish" Green. Dwight DeLee allegedly shot and killed Green outside a Syracuse house party last November because he reportedly harbored anti-gay animus.

"Transgender people deserve the same protection from hate crimes under federal law that everyone else receives, and we thank all the House members who voted for this bill today," Silverman added.

Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund is committed to ending discrimination based upon gender identity and expression, and to achieving equality for transgender people through public education, test-case litigation, direct legal services, community organizing and public policy efforts.