



THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

THOMAS DUANE
SENATOR, 29TH DISTRICT

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July 24, 2009

Dear Colleague:

In November of 2008, Lateisha Green, a 22-year-old transgender woman, was shot and killed in Syracuse, an apparent victim of a bias crime. This tragic event has caused needless pain and suffering for Lateisha's family, who were supportive of her decision to live her life as a woman.

In the last month alone, there have been two separate attacks on transgender females in Queens in which the victims were viciously harassed, allegedly based on their gender expression. The experiences of these two women, Carmella Etienne, 22, and Leslie Mora, 30, are further reminders that transgender people face an extreme risk of becoming victims of hate crimes. There are countless other acts of violence and discrimination against those of transgender experience that go undocumented every day.

These attacks are simply the most recent horrible reminders of why it is imperative that we pass, S.2406, the *Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA)*. Under current law, transgender people whose gender identity, appearance, behavior or expression differs from their genetic sex at birth face severe discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations and many other areas of life. Further, those of transgender experience are arguably not fully protected under New York's hate crimes statute.

On July, 17, 2009, a jury found Lateisha Green's killer guilty of manslaughter in the first degree as a hate crime. Ironically, the case was prosecuted as a hate crime because police believe that her assailant thought she was gay – if he had simply been motivated by anti-transgender bias, he may not have faced that charge. Passing GENDA will end this glaring loophole in our laws and will further protect New Yorkers from crimes based on hate, ignorance and bigotry.

GENDA passed the Assembly on April 21st. It is now time for us to do the right thing and pass GENDA this year in the Senate.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas K. Duane". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Thomas K. Duane