

December 9, 2015

Caroline J. Downey
General Counsel
NYS Division of Human Rights
One Fordham Plaza, 4th Floor
Bronx, NY 10458
Via email cdowney@dhr.ny.gov

Re: Gender Identity Discrimination ID No. HRT-44-15-00033-P
New Section 466.13

I wish to voice my enthusiastic and unconditional support for an interpretation of sex discrimination in New York State Human Rights Law that will include discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. This more inclusive interpretation has been successfully adopted by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and will guarantee all New Yorkers equal access to employment, housing, credit, education, public accommodations, and all areas covered by the Human Rights Law.

This change is a necessary and fair step to correct the severe and ongoing discrimination experienced by a deeply marginalized group of New Yorkers. For the first time, transgender and gender non-conforming New Yorkers will have equal access to legal redress against discrimination. All New Yorkers will benefit from a fairer and more inclusive interpretation of the law that will now protect all of us.

While noting that this change in interpretation of the New York State Human Rights Law will not endow transgender and gender non-conforming New Yorkers with full equal rights under the law, I recognize it as a necessary and laudable first step. I hope the New York State Division of Human Rights will give the proposed changes its approval, and look forward to the day when all New Yorkers share full legal protection from discrimination.

Sincerely,