



Dear Neighbor,

Under the direction of President Trump, the **iconic Gilbert Baker Pride Flag was removed from the Stonewall National Monument**. A powerful symbol of the LGBTQ+ rights movement, the flag was designed by Gilbert Baker, a celebrated creative activist and US Army veteran. In their rampage against LGBTQ+ people, Trump and his Administration attempted to further erase us by tearing down the flag from the site of the beginning of New York City's gay rights movement, a place where the LGBTQ+ community, led by trans people of color, fought for the rights that we cherish as queer people today– the rights that Trump wants to eliminate.

You can listen to my remarks by clicking [HERE](#), and read my statement about the removal of the flag at the Stonewall National Monument below:

A graphic containing a statement from Assemblymember Tony Simone. The text is enclosed in a blue-bordered box. The statement reads: "Statement from Assemblymember Tony Simone on Removal of Flag from Stonewall National Monument. A flag is not simply cloth and dye. It is identity. It is history. Just as the stars and stripes are meant to stand for liberty and freedom the eight stripes of the Gilbert Baker Rainbow Flag stand for our liberation, diversity, and hope. In tearing down our flag, the President aims to repress, suppress, and erase us. He believes that tearing down our flag will break us. We know full well the era the right wing wants to return to but this is not our moment of defeat. For every flag he tears down ten will rise in their place. We shall rise up with every member of our community. ASSEMBLYMEMBER TONY SIMONE".

A graphic representing a New York Times article cover. At the top, the "The New York Times" logo is visible. Below it is a photograph of a rainbow flag with the text "STONEWALL National Monument Established 2016" on it. The headline reads "Pride Flag Is Removed From Stonewall Monument After Trump Directive". Below the headline is a sub-headline: "The removal of the flag from the Manhattan monument, the symbolic heart of the gay rights movement, came after a Trump administration memo about flags at national park sites." At the bottom, it says "By: Liam Stack, Jonathan Wolfe, and Yan Zhuang".

We will never accept the Pride Flag's removal. Immediately, New Yorkers massed at The Stonewall Inn to raise the flag again, and we were successful. It was a powerful reminder of our presence and diversity, and that hope will never be silent. After our flag raising, Chuck Schumer and

other New York leaders moved to permanently protect the Stonewall Pride Flag, ensuring this symbol of liberation is never erased again. Board members from the Gilbert Baker Foundation, including Bruce Cohen, and Gilbert Foundation Ambassador Ken Kidd, were in attendance.





Even after Trump attempted to remove our flag at Stonewall, threats to the LGBTQ+ community in our city continue as **hospitals like [NYU Langone](#) and [Mount Sinai](#) are cutting crucial gender affirming care programs for trans youth**. In doing this, not only are these hospitals bowing to the Trump Administration to deny medically necessary care for trans youth, but they are also violating New York law by discriminating based on sexual orientation or gender identity, including transgender status.

If we want this care to be offered in New York, it is critical that we pass my bill ([A6927](#)) to shield the names of prescribers on prescription labels for hormones to prevent potential attacks and targeting from the Trump Administration against the healthcare providers who continue to provide medical care and support for transgender youth. My official statement on the issue is available below:



ASSEMBLY MEMBER

TONY SIMONE



ASSEMBLY MEMBER

TONY SIMONE



ASSEMBLY MEMBER

TONY SIMONE

**Statement from Assemblymember Tony Simone
On Suspension of Youth Gender Affirming Care**

It has been less than one week since Donald Trump removed the LGBTQ Pride Flag from the Stonewall National Monument, and he has already launched his next attack on our community. Once again, he is targeting our transgender youth.

He tore down the symbol of our heritage, and now he tries to exterminate our future.

Just as we took action into our own hands to restore the flag, it is up to us to protect our transgender youth who are simply trying to get medically necessary care.



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As the President launches his vile attacks, we must reciprocate with state protections. That is why I carry legislation (A6927) to protect providers of hormone therapy by shielding the name of the prescriber on prescription labels.

NYU Langone and other hospital systems have bowed to this fake king and complied with Donald Trump's continued invasion from the Oval Office into your doctor's office.

Instead of standing for the medically necessary care of their patients, NYU Langone and others have sided with Donald Trump over doctors and their patients as the hospital started canceling gender-affirming care appointments for anyone under 19. We will not stand for political intimidation or any gross attack on trans youth.

I will continue to fight to ensure New York is a safe place for transgender people by passing A6927 and taking every action within my power to stand up to these federal attacks. I urge that all New York hospitals reaffirm and resume gender affirming medical care for our trans youth.

I also joined dozens of colleagues from local and state government to send a letter to NYU Langone demanding they reconsider their decision to end gender affirming care for trans youth. If not reversed, this decision will cause irreparable harm to New Yorkers across the state. You can read the full letter by clicking [HERE](#). We will not stop fighting until our medical providers restore this essential care.

New York State Budget

Budget season has begun in Albany. Through our budget hearings, legislators have the opportunity to question State agency Commissioners and issue experts on budgetary issues as we prepare our Assembly budget proposal.

Working-class New Yorkers are being driven out of our state because of the cost of living. For working families, these costs are being driven by housing and the cost of childcare. I have long called on the Governor to fund universal childcare. This year, after further advocacy from Mayor Mamdani, I am beyond proud to share that Governor Hochul, continuing her steadfast support of working-class New Yorkers, has committed to funding universal childcare for every family over the next five years. This is a historic investment in working families and our next generation. Let's get this done!



Supporting universal childcare with colleagues in Albany

In the fight to build more affordable housing, I attended a recent state budget hearing where the Governor’s proposal for SEQR (State Environmental Quality Review) was discussed. I’ve been advocating for the reform of SEQR as it would eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic red tape that makes the construction of housing expensive and lengthy, leading to higher rent costs. SEQR, a policy designed to protect the environment, creates pieces of this red tape, adding cost, without actually making things more environmentally friendly. While we want to keep legitimate environmental protections in place, **we need to reform SEQR now to address the housing crisis right away!** [Watch my questions on this topic HERE.](#)



Watch my full line of questioning on Penn Station by clicking [HERE](#)

During our Transportation budget hearing, I questioned MTA Chair Janno Lieber on the federal takeover of Penn Station. While I have faith in Andy Byford's leadership of the project, I am deeply concerned about this White House having so much control and a worrying lack of transparency surrounding the applicant to lead this project.

MELT Act moves forward

I am pleased to share that progress continues on the MELT Act ([A8908](#)) to unmask ICE and all law enforcement. The bill now has over 40 cosponsors in the Assembly and is gaining support from national organizations, including the [Law Enforcement Action Partnership](#).

Across the country, other states are now following our lead and have introduced legislation to curb this federal overreach. You can read more about it in this [article](#) from the New York Times. Zooming in on California, their No Secret Police Act was [struck down](#) by a federal judge. While the MELT Act was modeled on this legislation, it has a critical difference that ensures it is constitutional.

The California law was struck down because it exempted state-level law enforcement. This provision created a targeted, discriminatory provision on federal law enforcement, which precedent has shown to be unconstitutional.

Instead, the MELT Act applies equally to all law enforcement, local, state, and federal. Based on the ruling of Judge Christina A. Snyder (appointed by President Bill Clinton), the MELT Act would stand up to constitutional muster. You can listen to my recent interview with Morgan McKay on Fox 5 as we talk about this and more by clicking [HERE](#).

I hope you've had a wonderful February thus far despite these frustrating setbacks, but the resistance from everyday Americans in Minnesota, New York, and across the nation shows that we will always stand against hate.



Photos from the Mayor's interfaith breakfast

This month was also filled with celebrations, such as Lunar New Year, Lent, and the beginning of Ramadan. I also attended the Mayor's interfaith breakfast. The fact that these holidays and events all occurred around the same time reminded me of the cultural and religious diversity and coexistence of our city - that's what makes us New Yorkers!

Thank you for reading our Community Update! I hope you enjoyed the month's celebrations and found some helpful information and resources. As always, my office and I are here to serve you, if you need any assistance with a state agency, unemployment benefits, tenant issues, or have an idea for new legislation, please email us at simonet@nyassembly.gov or call us at 212-807-7900. Below are some resources for braving the winter storm, and for the LGBTQ+ community if needed.

I hope you are looking forward to spring as much as I am!

In service,

Tony

Useful Resources

A Code Blue has been called for this storm. The City has resources to help you navigate the snow and cold. Call 311 if your landlord is not providing heat or warm water.

See the links below to access free resources and tips if needed. Stay inside, safe, and warm!

Warming Center Locations

[Storm Preparedness Resources](#)

[Snow Removal Map](#)

If you or someone you know is struggling amidst these attacks on LGBTQ+ rights, please do not hesitate to reach out for help and support, and know you're not alone. Some resources are available here:

Hotlines:

- **Suicide hotline:** 988
- **The Trevor Project** – LGBTQ+ mental health resources
 - Access their crisis hotline at any time for a confidential, judgment-free conversation with a crisis counselor:
 - Call: +1(877)974-3129
 - Text “START” to 678-678
 - Visit their website to learn more about support groups, personal safety, and other forms of help and support.

Religious resources:

- **[GayChurch.org](#)** – database of LGBTQ+ friendly Christian churches, resources for LGBTQ+ Christians
- **MASGD** and **Tarab NYC** – religious services, communities, and retreats for LGBTQ+ Muslims
- **Keshet Equality Directory** – database of LGBTQ+ affirming Synagogues and Jewish community organizations

Other resources:

- **PFLAG** – Resources and support groups for LGBTQ+ people and their loved ones.
- **Q Chat Space** – online community for LGBTQ+ youth and teens.
- **Local resources**

To support LGBTQ+ rights amidst a strengthening opposition:

- Find ways to get involved
 - Support organizations like the **Trevor Project** and the **ACLU** who are standing up for trans rights.
 - Learn about supporting LGBTQ+ loved ones with **PFLAG** and **Lambda Legal**
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Help Support Older New Yorkers During Passover

As a Package Delivery volunteer, you can make a meaningful connection with an older neighbor through a social visit or phone call and a care package. While holidays can increase feelings of loneliness or isolation, volunteering for Passover Package Delivery creates shared connections and community.

Location: Upper West Side at DOROT (171 W. 85th Street, off Amsterdam) & Upper East Side at Moise Safra Center (130 E. 82nd Street, between Lexington and Park Avenue)

Date & Time: Sunday, March 22, 2026, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Visit their Web site to learn more and sign up!