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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, SPEAKER JOHNSON ANNOUNCE LANDMARK PROPOSAL
TO MAKE BIRTH CERTIFICATES MORE INCLUSIVE TO ALL GENDER
IDENTITIES**

New York City birth certificates will include a third category, "X," to reflect a non-binary gender identity; transgender New Yorkers will no longer need an affidavit change their gender markers

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and City Council Speaker Corey Johnson today announced a landmark proposal to make birth certificates more inclusive to all gender identities. New York City birth certificates will include male, female and a new, third category of "X" to reflect a non-binary gender identity. Furthermore, transgender New Yorkers will no longer need a letter from a physician or an affidavit by a licensed health care provider to change their gender marker. Instead, people born in New York City will be able to submit their own affidavit, which attests that the gender marker change is for the purpose of affirming their gender identity.

The Health Department will ask the Board of Health to consider these changes at a meeting of the Board on June 5. If the Board agrees, there will be a hearing in July and a vote in September. The City Council will introduce a bill with language matching the Board of Health proposal in June.

"Pride Month is a time to celebrate how far we've come in the fight for equality, and re-affirm our commitment to protecting all New Yorkers from discrimination," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "This proposal will allow transgender and gender non-conforming New Yorkers to live with the dignity and respect they deserve, and make our City fairer."

"You don't need a doctor to tell you who you are and you shouldn't need a doctor to change your birth certificate to reflect your true self. This groundbreaking legislation will make New York birth certificates more inclusive for all and will send a powerful signal to the world that New York City government works for everyone. Now more than ever, it's important for us as elected officials to show our constituents that we see them, we have their backs, and we respect them for who they are. I want to thank my Council colleagues for their support and to the de Blasio Administration for their continued commitment to making this a New York City for all," said **Speaker Corey Johnson**.

“The proposal to make birth certificates more inclusive of all gender identities is welcome, needed, and urgently important, ” said **First Lady Chirlane McCray**. “What could be a more basic human right than allowing transgender New Yorkers to state their gender identity on a birth certificate? It is both an official and a cultural affirmation of New York's leadership on LGBTQ rights.”

“Transgender New Yorkers, like everyone else, should have birth certificates that reflect their true gender identity,” says **Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett**. “By allowing self-attestation and ‘X’, the Health Department and City Council are reaffirming our commitment to the self-determination of the transgender and gender non-conforming community. We know that being able to live your authentic gender and gender expression is critical to physical and mental health. Now more than ever, we must ensure that all people can live their best and healthiest lives.”

This new policy builds on the City’s effort in 2014, when the Health Department and the City Council approved amendments that removed the requirements for a legal name change and surgery. The policy allowed the change to be processed upon receipt of an affirmation or affidavit written by a U.S. licensed medical or mental health provider. These include a licensed physician, doctoral-level psychologist, clinical social worker, physician assistant, nurse practitioner and mental health counselor, among others. Since then, over 1,000 birth certificates have been amended, compared to just 20 per year in the previous 4 years. In 2016, New York City also became the first jurisdiction in the country to issue an “intersex” designation on a birth certificate. If the proposal passes, intersex will be replaced with “X” as it’s a more inclusive category of all gender identities.

The City Council also created the New York City Gender Marker Change Advisory Board, which includes community members of transgender experience. The advisory board has met eight times since 2016 to identify barriers and evaluate processes in order to improve the implementation of the gender marker change law. The board advocated for the new, more streamlined process, in which the City will allow self-attestation and also the option of X on birth certificates.

“Today’s proposal regarding non-binary gender identity and self-affirmation continues to modernize New York City’s birth certificates to meet current scientific and medical standards,” said **Carrie Davis, health care consultant and Chair of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Report and Advisory Board on Gender Marker Change Requirements**. “This is particularly vital during this period of insecurity regarding national human rights protections for transgender Americans.”

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In addition to modernizing birth certificate services, the City has worked to improve, protect and promote the health of all transgender New Yorkers.

Last September, First Lady Chirlane McCray launched the NYC Unity Project – the City’s first-ever, multi-strategy to deliver services that address LGBTQ youth, including an expansion of the Jamaica, Queens drop-in center to provide supportive services 24/7; trainings and certifications for more than 500 Health + Hospitals physicians; and a public awareness campaign centered on LGBTQ youth and their families. Other programs and initiatives include:

- The first-ever LGBTQ Health Care Bill of Rights, which details health care protections on local, state and federal levels to empower LGBTQ New Yorkers to get the health care they deserve. It also reiterates that medical providers and their support staff are legally required to offer LGBTQ New Yorkers quality care regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
- The 2016 HIV Surveillance Annual Report features a dedicated section with data on HIV among transgender people. It also presents data by current gender instead of sex at birth and classifies transgender women as women and transgender men as men. New York City is the first jurisdiction to present HIV data in this way.
- More inclusive social marketing campaigns which feature transgender New Yorkers, for example the recent PrEP campaigns ¡Listos! and Living Sure. The Health Department has also released a series of publications to promote the health of transgender New Yorkers and to educate primary care providers: City Health Information Bulletin: Providing Primary Care to Transgender Adults; Health Tips for Trans Men and People of Trans-Masculine Experience; and Take Pride, Take Care: Tips for Transgender Women’s Health.
- In December 2015, the NYC Commission on Human Rights issued legal enforcement guidance defining specific gender identity protections under the City Human Rights Law, including equal bathroom access. In March 2016, Mayor de Blasio issued an executive order requiring City agencies to ensure that employees and members of the public are given equal access to City single-sex facilities without being required to show identification, medical documentation or any other form of proof or verification of gender. In June 2016, New York City became the first municipality to launch a citywide campaign specifically affirming the right of transgender individuals to use the bathroom consistent with their gender identity or expression.
- Enhanced services to address LGBTQ homelessness, including opening a 24-hour drop-in center in Harlem specializing in the LGBTQ community, and the first-ever City-funded transitional independent living homes with specialized services for transgender youth. Last year, the de Blasio Administration opened Marsha’s House—named after famed LGBTQ activist Marsha P. Johnson—in the Bronx, the first-ever shelter for LGBTQ young persons in the New York City adult shelter system, offering nearly 90 homeless individuals 30 years and under the opportunity to be sheltered in a welcoming and supportive space providing targeted resources. The Administration has also funded 500 additional beds for runaway and homeless youth, all of which are available to LGBTQ youth. During FY18, the total number of beds brought online will expand to 653, with a total of 753 by end of FY19
- City agencies and Administration officials will also participate in Pride events in all five boroughs this month.

"I fully support this measure which provides transgender, gender-nonconforming, intersex and other New Yorkers with an additional option for sex designation on their birth certificates," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm, Chair of the Council's LGBT Caucus**. "For many people, the gender binary - 'male' or 'female' - simply does not reflect their reality. The proposed change takes this into account, and I applaud Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson's leadership on this issue."

"New Yorkers should be able to change their birth certificate to reflect who they really are. This legislation makes that possible, by eliminating the doctor's note requirement and adding the X category for people who identify as neither male or female. I am proud of the Council for championing this legislation and thankful to Mayor de Blasio for his support. Together we are making this a more inclusive city," said **Council Member Mark Levine, Chair of the Health Committee**.

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