



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

250 Broadway, Suite 1882
New York, NY 10007

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Contact: Paul Leonard [CM Chin] (212) 788-7259, pleonard@council.nyc.gov
John Blasco [CM Mendez] (212) 677-1077, jblasco@council.nyc.gov

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN JOINS COUNCIL'S LGBT CAUCUS TO ANNOUNCE CITYWIDE SURVEY TO ASSESS HOUSING NEEDS OF LGBTQ SENIORS

NEW YORK, NY – Council Member Margaret S. Chin, chair of the Council's Committee on Aging, joined the Council's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Caucus and community partners to encourage all New Yorkers 50 years or older who identify as LGBTQ to take an important survey on the housing needs of the LGBTQ senior community.

The online survey, which will be live until April 15, 2017, can be taken at www.lgbtsurvey.org. The survey, which is available in English and Spanish, should take about 10 minutes to complete. The anonymous responses will be used to understand the "housing market profile" of the community and will inform strategies to deal with this upcoming crisis.

"Our city has a solemn obligation to care for our seniors – and that includes members of the Stonewall generation of LGBTQ individuals who led us through the darkest days of the HIV/AIDS crisis and a victorious march towards equality for all," said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin**. "This citywide survey will help determine what affordable housing for these seniors will look like, and I encourage these brave warriors and all New Yorkers over 50 years old who identify as LGBTQ to participate. I would also like to thank Stonewall Community Development Corporation and its lead collaborator Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) for their work to get this important survey up-and-running."

"In 2014, the NYC Council funded an initiative proposed by Councilmember Ritchie Torres and supported by the LGBT Caucus to create a LGBT Senior Center in every borough because it is important that for seniors who wanted to be in an LGBT setting that they have the option of staying in their home borough and not have to commute to Manhattan if they couldn't or didn't want to. Our senior citizens and LGBT seniors, in particular, are living in vulnerable situations city-wide and it is important to know what additional obstacles the LGBT elderly population is facing. I applaud the work of the Stonewall Community Development Corporation and its lead collaborator Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) in creating a survey and distributing it to the LGBT community who are over 50 years old. The LGBT Caucus of the New York City Council will work with Councilwoman Margaret Chin, Chair of the Aging

Committee, and these two organizations to help promote this much needed questionnaire,” said **Council Member Rosie Mendez, Chair, LGBT Caucus.**

“While laws and society’s attitude toward the LGBT community have shifted, it’s apparent that we are still missing the vital voices of LGBT elders who face discrimination and have been silenced for far too long. This survey will help us understand their needs as they seek affordable housing, which remains a concern for all New Yorkers. We thank everyone involved with this survey, which we are happy to distribute,” said **NYC Department for the Aging Commissioner Donna Corrado.**

Paul Nagle, Executive Director of Stonewall CDC, said, “We hope that LGBTQ folks who are over 50 years old will take the survey. It will be service to our community - an important tool in helping us evaluate the extent of the challenge facing our LGBTQ seniors and developing the best strategies to deal with it.”

“SAGE’s national research demonstrates that housing discrimination against LGBT elders is rampant,” said **Michael Adams, Chief Executive Officer of Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE).** “Data gleaned from this survey will illuminate the unique challenges faced by our community in New York City as well as perspective that can inform LGBT-welcoming elder housing that SAGE is currently building with partners in the Bronx and Brooklyn.”

As Baby Boomers age into the senior citizen bracket in unprecedented numbers, the issue of access to safe, age-appropriate and affordable senior housing is becoming more and more acute. This crisis is especially challenging for LGBTQ seniors who are particularly vulnerable, as:

- Many do not have children, spouses or families they can turn to (According to the CDC, 83% of caregivers are unpaid persons such as family members, friends, and neighbors)
- LGBTQ older adults can face discrimination, both real and perceived, inside the senior housing system, from both staff and other clients. In one recent study by The Equal Rights Center and SAGE, “LGBT senior” investigators were given detrimental incorrect or incomplete information by rental agents 48% of the time.
- Many have spent their careers in service and entertainment industries without benefit of pensions or financial planning
- Lesbians are twice as likely to live in poverty as their heterosexual counterparts, transgendered woman four times more likely

The survey is being conducted by Stonewall Community Development Corporation, working with Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) as their lead collaborator. It is funded with grants from NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Council Members Danny Dromm, Rory Lancman and James Vacca, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, the Altman Foundation and David Bryan.

Strength in Numbers Consulting Group is responsible for designing, implementing and interpreting the survey.

Stonewall Community Development Corporation (SCDC) is a grassroots response to a growing crisis. The goal of SCDC is to see New York City’s LGBTQ senior citizens in homes they can

afford, where they feel safe being themselves, receiving the care they need, from people who treat them with respect and whom they can trust.

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