



*THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF MARGARET S. CHIN*

250 Broadway, Suite 1882
New York, NY 10007

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Contact: Paul Leonard [CM Chin] (212) 788-7259, pleonard@council.nyc.gov
Michael Mallon [CM Dromm] (718) 803-6373 x 203 mmallon@council.nyc.gov

***CHIN, DROMM, COMMUNITY ADVOCATES
HAIL PASSAGE OF DATA EQUITY BILLS***

Intros 251-A, 551-A, 552-A and Resolution 472 represent joint effort to count and bring more robust city services to LGBTQ individuals and people of color in New York City

CITY HALL – Today NYC Council Members Margaret Chin (D-Lower Manhattan) and Daniel Dromm (D-Jackson Heights, Elmhurst), together with Asian Pacific Islander, Latino, Arab American and LGBT community leaders, hailed the Council’s passage of data equity legislation to allow New Yorkers to accurately identify their race, ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation. All four bills – Intros 251-A, 551-A, 552-A and Resolution 472 – were passed overwhelmingly at the Council’s Stated Meeting at City Hall.

Intro 251-A will require the Department of Social Services, the Administration for Children’s Services, the Department of Homeless Services, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department for the Aging, the Department of Youth and Community Development, the Department of Education to collect data on the top 30 ethnicities and languages in NYC. All data collected from these forms will be posted on the city’s website.

Intro 551-A will require the these agencies to include an option for multiracial ancestry or ethnic origin.

Intro 552-A will require these agencies to collect data on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Resolution 472 calls on the state and federal governments to amend their official forms and databases to accommodate multiracial identification in all instances where racial identification is required.

Council Members Chin and Dromm anticipate that Mayor Bill de Blasio will sign all three pieces of legislation into law in the coming weeks.

“This legislation is not just about boxes we check off when filling out government forms. It’s about recognizing every New Yorker as an integral part of the diversity that makes our city the greatest in the world,” said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin, prime sponsor of Intro 551 and Resolution 472.** “By allowing New Yorkers to identify as multi-racial or as members in a specific ethnic group, we are ensuring that everyone is counted and that City services reach

people who need them the most. I thank Speaker Mark-Viverito and my partner on this important legislation, Council Member Dromm, for their leadership on behalf of our increasingly diverse city.”

“Now we count,” said **Council Member Daniel Dromm, prime sponsor of Intros 251-A and 552-A.** “This legislation is historic. It will provide the LGBTQ community and people of many different ethnicities greater access to vital city services. These important bills will do much to protect NYC residents who have been subject to institutional discrimination and neglect for far too long. I thank Speaker Mark-Viverito and Council Member Chin for have helped lead this effort to bring so many of New York’s communities out from the margins of society. This legislation will mean great things for our city.”

“The Asian Pacific American is the fastest growing community in New York City. Yet little is known about the over 40 different ethnic groups that comprises the APA community and the needs of our diverse communities. We know from our members that services and resources are not adequately allocated to meet the growing demand of APA communities because little data is available. For too long, when city agencies issue reports, APAs are either not mentioned, categorized simply as ‘Asian,’ ‘Asian/Pacific Islander,’ or ‘Other,’ said **Henrietta Ho-Asjoe, Interim Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families.** “This aggregated approach renders the different APA ethnic communities invisible and masks the unique social, educational, and economic difficulties in our communities. The passage of Intros 251-A, 551-A, and 552-A is an important first step. We hope that this is just the beginning. We will continue to work for data that better reflects the diverse experiences and real challenges facing New York City's Asian Pacific American, LGBTQ, and multi-racial communities.”

“No matter who they are, when populations aren’t counted they remain invisible to government,” said **Dr. Christian Huygen, Executive Director of Rainbow Heights Club,** an agency that provides advocacy and support services to low/no income LGBT New Yorkers living with serious mental illness. “Invisible populations don’t always receive their fair share of government resources, and in turn invisible populations do not get their needs met. The passage of Int 552-A and its companion 251-A and 551-A will help to ensure that government resources are more fairly and accurately allocated and we call on Mayor DeBlasio to sign these bills into law without delay.”

“We commend Council Members Danny Dromm and Margaret Chin for pushing forward this legislation that will make data collection more accurate and reflective of the communities that make up our city,” said **Steven Choi, executive director of New York Immigration Coalition.** “With more detailed data, including demographic information regarding ethnic origin with separate categories for 22 Asian Pacific groups, as well as options to indicate multiracial ancestry and one’s sexual orientation and gender identity, our city can understand how better to support New York's diverse communities.”

“We strongly support this legislation because it's critical that our city have comprehensive and accurate data on race, ethnicity, multi-racial identity, sexual orientation and gender identity,” said **Javier Valdes, Co-Executive Director of Make the Road New York.** “For our leaders to govern our city effectively, and provide the services that New Yorkers need, we need to have the data that reflect our communities' wonderful diversity and complexity.”

“The Asian American Federation applauds Council Member Margaret Chin and Council Member Daniel Dromm’s sponsorship of these multiracial bills and resolution to collect disaggregated information about individuals’ ethnicity, primary language, gender identity, and sexual orientation on government forms,” said **Jo-Ann Yoo, executive director of the Asian American Federation**. “Their leadership in advocating for these requirements means that we will better be able to track key information about those who are utilizing the city’s services and what accommodations, such as language services, we need to make to better serve those individuals. The Asian American community, especially, will benefit from Intro 251-A, which requires that city agencies track information on 22 different APA groups, separating out a number of Asian groups that used to be lumped together in the “Other” category. The City Council’s decision to pass the bills and resolution points to their understanding of how important data disaggregation is in effectively serving our diverse communities.”

“Good data is the cornerstone of good policy and good programs,” said **Drew Tagliabue, Executive Director of PFLAG NYC**. “We are pleased that this legislation will provide invaluable data about the city’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, helping PFLAG NYC, as well as city agencies and other independent organizations, to deliver the appropriate services to our constituencies.”

“We applaud Council Member Dromm and the New York City Council for their recognition of the importance of collecting this data,” said **Glennnda Testone, Executive Director of The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center**. “With this information, we can continue to effectively address the health and human services needs of the LGBT community, improving their livelihoods across the City.”

“Disaggregation of data in Asian American communities is critical to addressing the uniquely different challenges in the South Asian, Southeast Asian, and East Asian communities,” said **Cathy Dang, CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities**. “We are an organization that organizes Chinese, Korean, and Bangladeshi low-income tenants and youth to improve housing and community conditions. With accurate recorded data, it would help improve CAAAV’s ability to organize and advocate for the different needs of our base.”

“Callen-Lorde is thrilled that our New York City Council has passed this slate of very important demographic data collection bills,” said **Wendy Stark, Executive Director of Callen-Lorde Community Health Center**. “In particular, we know that proactively collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity measures will go a long way toward improving the health and well-being of our LGBTQ communities. Collecting, and analyzing, high-quality population-level data on health, human service, economic and the other issues that shape our lives will enable us to better marshal resources and advance effective public policy. We count, and we want to be counted.”

“Arab-Americans have historically been erased from the U.S. Census, classified as ‘White,’ and at times, ‘Black’ or ‘Asian,’ said **Lena Alhousseini, Executive Director, Arab-American Family Support Center**. “For many years, AAFSC has advocated on behalf of Arab-Americans’ ability to self-identify, and we are thrilled with the advancement of Bill 251. It is truly a step forward in democracy, as the Arab and South Asian immigrant communities will no longer be socially and economically invisible to our city’s policy-makers. We celebrate this progress in acknowledging, understanding, and supporting the many immigrant communities that make New York City so vibrant and strong.”

“As a person with multiple identities, which include my sexual orientation and gender identity/expression, I truly believe that this collection of data by our city government will help improve lives,” said **Bryan J. Ellicott, LGBT Activist**. “I thank the Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and the NYC Council especially Council Member Dromm for his work on this bill.”

“Collecting demographic data on the Indo-Caribbean community and many other ethnic groups is critical to unlocking some of the most pressing issues facing our diverse City,” said **Richard S. David, Board Member, Indo-Caribbean Alliance, Inc.** “This is truly historical, and we're thankful for the leadership shown by Council Members Chin and Dromm and the City Council.”

“Intro 552 A is an important step for New York City to begin having an estimate of how many LGBTQ people are in our great city,” said **Beverly Tillery, Executive Director, New York City Anti-Violence Project**. “This legislation will allow us to begin uncovering the issues impacting LGBTQ New Yorkers, including rates of violence and access to services for our LGBTQ communities.”

“The City Council and Council Member Daniel Dromm in particular should be commended for passing these important bills,” said **Matthew McMorrow, LGBTQ Community Advocate**. “Demographic data collection may not be a very sexy topic, but these bills are important for the city and the public to get a more accurate picture of the unique needs of geographically diverse communities so that public policies can be designed and tailored with greater precision and focus. In the LGBTQI community, for instance, it is well known that LGBTQI kids are disproportionately represented in the homeless population, but it has been difficult to accurately determine how many homeless youth are LGBTQI. When city agencies that serve the homeless begin collecting data on sexual orientation and gender identity, a clearer picture will emerge, and services can be targeted more effectively and efficiently.”

“As a former high school teacher and administrator with the NYC Department of Education, I am proud to support Intro 552-A,” said **Nelson Acevedo, Retired Educator, NYC Department of Education**. “We need to collect data on the number of LGBT youth in our schools so that we can provide much needed support for these students many who are at-risk youth.”

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