

SDWNY 2015 Platform

The following includes, but is not limited to, the major goals of SDWNY in 2010.

- Advocate for the LGBT community in local, state and federal government and within the Democratic Party.
- Support pro-LGBT equality legislation. [Read a list of the legislation which SDWNY supports here.](#)
- SDWNY will not support any candidate who supports a state or federal version of the [Defense of Marriage Act \(DOMA\)](#)
- SDWNY will not support any candidate who supports hate speech; including the act of advertising on websites which promote hate speech; including, but not limited to, politicsny.net/politicswny.com.

The following include, but are not limited to, major LGBT equality legislation that SDWNY is lobbying for action in 2010.

Federal Level:

Repealing the military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy: The military’s policy of discharging openly or found to be gay members. Repeal efforts have recently included adding repeal measures to the 2010 Defense Reauthorization bill, and introducing separate legislation to discontinue enforcement of the policy.

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act: A bill before the United States Congress. Would prohibit discrimination against employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity for civilian nonreligious employers with over 15 employees. Rep. Barney Frank has currently introduced a transgender-inclusive ENDA, which is pending before a House committee (as is the Senate version.)

Repealing the “Defense of Marriage Act” (DOMA): DOMA is a multi-layered law which invalidates, federally, a marriage between two persons of the same gender. It states that no state needs to treat a relationship between persons of the same sex as a marriage, even if the relationship is considered a marriage in another state. It also states that the federal government defines marriage as a legal union exclusively between one man and one woman.

Uniting American Families Act /LGBT-inclusive immigration reform: Is a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate discrimination in the immigration laws by permitting permanent partners of United States citizens and lawful permanent residents to obtain lawful permanent resident status in the same manner as spouses of citizens and lawful permanent residents and to penalize immigration fraud in

connection with permanent partnerships.

Permanent partners are defined by the bill as a committed, intimate relationship with another individual 18 years of age or older in which both parties intend a life-long commitment, who are financially interdependent, unmarried and otherwise unable to enter into a marriage with each other.

State Level:

Gender Non-Discrimination Act (A 5710/ S 2406): Would prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or expression.

Marriage Equality (A 7732 / S 4401): Would provide same-sex couples with the right to enter into civil marriages, as opposite-sex couples do. The bill provides that no member of any clergy may be compelled to perform any marriage ceremony.

Dignity for All Students Act (A 3661 / S 1987): Would authorize the commissioner of education to establish policies and procedures affording all students in public schools an environment free of harassment and discrimination; requires reporting harassment and discrimination to such commission.

SAFETY Act (A 3645): Would authorize the Office of Children and Family Services to establish policies and procedures affording all children in OFCS facilities an environment-free harassment and discrimination based on actual or perceived race, national origin, ethnic group, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, requires reporting harassment and discrimination

A5165: Introduced in Assembly; would provide accidental death benefits to domestic partners and the children of domestic partners.

A 2128 / S5196: Introduced; would include domestic partners in certain provisions concerning disability benefits and defines the term domestic partner. This bill would extend survivor benefits available under the state disability law, as administered by the workers' compensation board, to domestic partners.

A 2563 / S 6177: Would provide that employers who provide funeral leave for family members of deceased shall not deny such leave for same-sex committed partners of the deceased.

A 3372/ S 2278: Would require a patient hospital admissions form to allow a patient to designate a domestic partner with the same privileges as a next-of-kind in regards to authorizing surgery.

A 3956 / S 1385: Would require the state Office of the Aging to report on the delivery of services to traditionally undeserved populations, which includes LGBT seniors.

County Level:

Erie

County Domestic Partners Legislation: Efforts advanced by Legislators Marinelli and Whyte, to provide legal status for domestic partnerships and extend provisions of laws that currently apply to spouses or next-of-kin to domestic partners.

County Gender Non-Discrimination Act: Would prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or expression from the level of Erie County.

County bereavement for domestic partners: Would provide that bereavement be provided to individuals in same-sex relationships on the same basis as those provided to county employees who are married.