

## Memorandum in Support

### COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND THE LAW

Children # 3

April 30, 2019

S. 1481  
A. 3619

By: Senator Hoylman  
By: M. of A. Ortiz  
Senate Committee: Children and Families  
Assembly Committee: Children and Families  
Effective Date: 1<sup>st</sup> day of January next  
succeeding the date upon which  
it shall have become a law

**AN ACT** to amend the executive law, in relation to expanding the duties of the office of children and family services concerning lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender runaway and homeless youth.

**LAW AND SECTIONS REFERRED TO:** Section 532-e of the Executive Law.

The Committee on Children and Law supports S1481/A3619 as proposed to amend the executive law, in relation the housing facilitated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services concerning lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender runaway and homeless youth.

State and Federal Child welfare agencies undeniable recognize the extraordinary vulnerability of LGBT youth in who are already in crisis being placed in foster care and in being youth experiencing homelessness. (*See OCFS Pub 5090 and HHS 2014 Report Advancing LGBT Health and Well-Being*).

The Sexual Orientation Non-Discrimination Act, effective as of January 16, 2003, makes it unlawful for anyone in New York State to be discriminated against in employment, housing, credit, education and public accommodations because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. SONDA, in combination with laws prohibiting discrimination based on marital status, together prohibit discrimination against same-sex couples in employment, housing, credit, education, and public accommodations.

OCFS partners with many organizations that provide services to homeless and runaway youth of the LGBT community including: Ali Forney Center, Forty to None Project, New Alternatives for LGBT Homeless Youth, New York State Transgender Resource Guide Safe Place, Trinity Place, Volunteers of America in Greater New York State and Volunteers of America in Central New York.

This Bill, if passed, would expand OCFS mandates for service providers to adhere to heightened housing standards for homeless/run-a-way youth through confidentiality standards, specialized educational trainings, and anti-bullying protocols while in housing accommodations funded by partners and vendors of OCFS.

Accordingly, the Committee on Children and Law **SUPPORTS** this bill to provide additional safety and confidentiality to children who are already in a crisis point in their childhood and adolescence.