



**Testimonial Letter to the New York City Council Committee on Women and Gender Equity  
Hon. Farah N. Louis, Chair  
February 28, 2025**

Thank you to Chair Farah N. Louis and the City Council for the opportunity to contribute to the city-wide discord around gender equity in New York City. My name is Caitlin Krenn, and I am addressing the Council on behalf of [The Door – A Center of Alternatives](#) and our prideful service of our Transgender, Gender Non-conforming, NonBinary, and Intersex (TGNCNBI) community members – to showcase our unwavering support of the continued fortification of healthcare access for our TGNCNBI community members.

**The Door’s mission is to empower young people to reach their potential by providing comprehensive youth development services in a diverse and caring environment.** We serve up to 11,000 youth annually across our four New York City locations, including our lower Manhattan and South Bronx youth centers and two supportive housing sites on the Lower East Side. Broome Street Academy (BSA), a charter high school embedded at The Door, enrolls up to 330 students and prioritizes applicants who are experiencing housing instability or have been involved in the child welfare system.

The Door’s teams work to create a safe, stable, inclusive, and affirming space for all young people. In accordance with our organizational values and their legal rights in our city, among the ways we serve our TGNCNBI community members is provision of any medically necessary treatment in both our Adolescent Health Center and Counseling Center. We serve roughly 300 self-identified TGNCNBI young people annually across The Door, some of whom access our services via their Medicaid coverage – which is also under attack.

Some recent executive orders have posed funding threats to programs, like ours, providing gender affirming care to the community. Despite the temporary abatement of these funding cuts, this federal administration has made their intentions clear; to say nothing of the constant barrage of flagrant rhetoric and hateful messaging emanating from the highest office in the land. Concurrently, despite Mayor Adams’ [historical support of gender-affirming healthcare in NYC](#), recent occurrences leave us questioning his commitment and/or ability to execute on said support. We fear this backsliding on his commitment to healthcare access for gender-diverse youth may already be underway, [as members of his leadership team have indicated support](#) for other attacks on the population.

Amidst the political chaos, young people are frightened – as the federal administration seems to balk norms, legal precedent, and even constitutional fundamentals, it is reasonable to wonder when [institutional protections for TGNCNB youth](#) will be disregarded or attacked. Not only are we supporting young people in navigating confusion around access and the preservation of such, but the toll this is taking on these community members’ mental health is remarkable.



Elevated rates of [mental health concerns among gender-diverse youth](#) are well documented. However, many of our gender-diverse youth, and our entire community that values them, are being profoundly impacted by these threats to their access and frankly, personhood. [Studies show](#) that initiating a gender identity milestone, such as engagement with gender-affirming care, is associated with higher risk of suicide attempts and running away from home; even *thinking* of oneself as transgender is associated with a meaningful increase in the overall probability of attempting suicide. Concurrently, [research shows](#) that pediatric gender clinics are a uniquely safe and affirming space for gender-diverse youth to be forthcoming about safety and risk concerns. The evidence is indisputable – gender-diverse youth are at greater risk for suicidality and self-harm, *and* access to affirming care spaces is a distinct protective factor. Access alone to spaces and services like those provided at The Door is lifesaving and must be protected.

The Door – A Center of Alternatives is meant to be just that, a space where young people are always welcome, and where they are offered alternatives to what the world has afforded them outside of our facility. We remain committed to providing that space and plan to exercise every option to maintain our ability to provide these services to our community regardless of coverage, as we have historically and presently for other targeted groups – however, we have concrete limitations on our resources, calling feasibility into question. Our contribution today serves to demand the fortification of healthcare access to vital treatment that we know is lifesaving for many young people. Access to their necessary medical treatment allows these community members to move through the world as their true selves, safely meeting developmental milestones of these formative years and positions them to become the healthiest versions of themselves in adulthood – what we want for all our young people.

The Door was pleased to see the introduction of [Bill 1204](#), which if passed would require the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to develop a citywide health agenda focused on TGNCNBI New Yorkers. The Door strongly encourages the City Council to pass this legislation and would like to offer the following suggestions to the Commissioner for the development of said health agenda. We request contingency planning around healthcare access for gender-diverse youth, which can include:

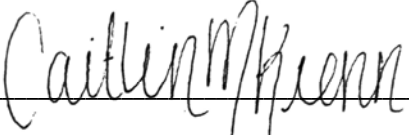
- City funding opportunities to supplement the operational needs covered by revenue generated from Medicaid (in the event of its elimination on this matter);
- Advance planning in production, storage, maintenance of hormone therapeutic medications, puberty blockers, necessary materials for gender-affirming surgeries, and all other necessary treatment materials;
- Reinforcement mechanisms to safeguard HIPAA and confidentiality around diagnostics and treatment for this population;
- Law enforcement contingency around any federal attempts to disrupt gender-affirming healthcare operations;
- Protections for gender-affirming health and mental healthcare providers from criminalization or loss of licensure;



- And finally – consistent, affirming public messaging around NYC’s commitment to protecting gender-diverse individuals and their access to healthcare.

We welcome the Commissioner to approach The Door for further consultation on the imperative nature of spaces and services like ours and hope to have an active role in the development of an affirming health agenda that meets the needs of gender-diverse youth in NYC and perhaps serves as a model for other cities and spaces looking to value the humanity of all citizens.

Thank you for your attention and consideration,



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