



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

February 15, 2013

JOINT STATEMENT BY NYC COUNCIL SPEAKER CHRISTINE C. QUINN, NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER DEBORAH GLICK, NYS SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, AND NYC COUNCIL MEMBER JIMMY VAN BRAMER

Re: New LGBT Community Center Space Use Guidelines

“We support the new Space Use guidelines, terms and conditions being implemented by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center. Their decision to allow groups to have open discussion and to create a resolution process to address complaints of potential hate-related speech is the correct approach. Under the Center’s new guidelines, all parties will have access to rent space to organize around LGBT issues, and the Center will remain a safe space, where hate-related speech will not be tolerated. This will allow the Center staff and board to promote its core mission of providing health and wellbeing services to our community, in addition to providing a safe and secure forum for issues relevant to NYC’s LGBT community.

That said, we want to make abundantly clear that we categorically reject attempts by any organization to use the Center to delegitimize Israel and promote an anti-Israel agenda. We adamantly oppose any and all efforts to inappropriately inject the Center into politics that are not the core of their important mission.

We vehemently oppose the absurd accusations by some groups that Israel is engaged in so-called “pinkwashing”. We find this charge offensive and fundamentally detrimental to the global cause of LGBT equality. These accusations should be understood as just one part of the arsenal of those who seek to completely discredit the state of Israel altogether. In fact, Israel’s highly laudable record in advancing LGBT rights deserves praise, not scorn. Given the very poor record of much of the world on LGBT issues, we should be celebrating Israel’s – or any country’s – LGBT equality advances. We must always encourage countries with strong records of achievement for our community to be rightly and publicly proud so they may set an example for others. We continue to believe that the boycott, sanctions and divestment (BDS) movement against Israel is wrongheaded, destructive, and an obstacle to our collective hope for a peaceful two-state solution.

We applaud the Center Board and staff for taking this important step. We now hope everyone will respect the Center as a safe space for open and safe discussions. We hope the Center can move forward and serve the LGBT community as it has always done.”