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At-Large Councilman Daniel Rivera Announces Creation of LGBTQ Advisory Board

The Nine-Member Resident Board Will Advise the City on Policies and Best Practices that Better Incorporate the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Community

JERSEY CITY – At-Large Councilman Daniel Rivera announced today the creation of a nine-member **LGBTQ Advisory Board** that will advise the City about issues and best practices for Jersey City's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning community, the largest in the state, as the City continues to advance equality for all residents.

"The goal is to give the LGBT community a seat at the government table and to make sure the City is proactive, not reactive to issues or incidents that involve the LGBT community," said **Councilman Rivera, the sponsor of the legislation**. "We are excited to get the advisory board off the ground and begin working on this important issue."

The Advisory Board, which will consist of nine Jersey City residents appointed by the Mayor to serve in a volunteer advisory capacity, will recommend policies and best practices, as well as develop and coordinate events and programs that bring together the sexual and gender minority communities with the greater Jersey City community. The Advisory Board will also ensure that City departments and agencies fairly and equitably address concerns of LGBTQ people.

The Board will also serve to drive understanding and awareness of the diversity of the LGBTQ community as a platform to connect Jersey City's municipal government with the contributions of the vibrant, diverse and active members of the LGBTQ community.

"Jersey City has the largest and most active LGBT community in the state, which we have always worked to support and advance," said **Mayor Fulop**. "Councilman Rivera's legislation is another way we as a city can become even more inclusive and create a dialogue to further equality for our LGBT residents."

(more)

Jersey City was one of the first cities in the State of New Jersey to perform gay marriages at 12:01 a.m. on October 21, 2013, marrying eight couples at City Hall.

For two years in a row, 2013 and 2014, Jersey City was also ranked first in the state with 100 points on the Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index, which awards points if a municipality has non-discrimination laws and gay-inclusive services, and if local police engage with the gay and transgender community.

"As the largest LGBT population in the state, the LGBT board will strengthen an already vibrant and active community," said **Michael Billy, Owner and Executive Producer of film and television at Humanity Pride Productions and a leading voice in the Jersey City LGBTQ community**. "It will ensure our ability to address the varied concerns facing our community. The board will be instrumental in building tourism as well as driving and attracting business to our fast growing city."

Other cites that have LGBT Advisory Boards include San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

"This board will help maintain the open line of communication between Jersey City's municipal government and the LGBT community," said **Detective Phil Raleigh, Jersey City Police Department LGBT Liaison**. "This is a positive and proactive step to ensure equality and inclusion."

The City Council in collaboration with the Mayor's Office is accepting resumes for the board and anyone who wishes to be considered should send their resume to the City Clerk's Office.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////