

Testimony of Bryan Ellicott-Cook
Director of Government Relations, SAGE
Before the New York City Council Committee on Women and Gender Equity
Res 0678-2024 – Designating January 31st as Cecilia Gentili Day
January 23, 2025

Good Afternoon Chair Louis and Members of the Committee on Women & Gender Equity

On behalf of SAGE, it is with heartfelt sincerity that we present this testimony in unequivocal support of the Resolution 0678-2024 to establish January 31 as Cecilia Gentili Day annually in the City of New York. This designation stands as a profound recognition of a singular individual whose life and work have enriched the fabric of our society and inspired transformational change for many Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender Diverse People across New York City.

Cecilia Gentili embodied resilience, vision, and an unyielding commitment to justice. Through her work as an author, performer, policymaker, and activist, Cecilia illuminated the intersecting struggles of undocumented immigrants, sex workers, and LGBTQIA+ individuals, fostering dialogue and action where silence once prevailed. Her advocacy was not merely a call for inclusion but a clarion demand for equity and dignity, ensuring that every person's humanity is acknowledged and celebrated.

For those she championed, Cecilia was not only a voice but a beacon of hope. Her leadership shaped policies that safeguard the most vulnerable among us, ensuring access to vital healthcare, social services, and legal protections. Her efforts resonated deeply with the mission of SAGE, which seeks to uplift and empower LGBTQ+ older adults who, like Cecilia, know the profound importance of living authentically and advocating for systemic change.

Declaring January 31 as Cecilia Gentili Day is more than a symbolic act; it is a testament to the power of courage and compassion, and another beacon of hope during difficult times for so many in our community and across this country. It is an invitation for all New Yorkers to reflect on her legacy and to reaffirm our collective commitment to justice, equity, and human rights.

We urge this esteemed committee to embrace this resolution and honor Cecilia Gentili's enduring impact. Her life's work exemplifies the best of what it means to lead with humanity, purpose, and unwavering integrity.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony and for your dedication to amplifying voices that transform lives and communities.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 678

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rio Saha Mallick

Address: [Redacted] Grand Gorge NY 12434

I represent: myself

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆