

## Local Pols Come Out In Support of Immigration Equality

Posted on Mar 18, Posted by [Administrator](#) Category [Civil Rights](#)

Elected representatives from both the city and federal level took to a small stage in Manhattan's West Village to demand equality for undocumented lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender immigrants.

Democratic U.S. Reps. Jerrold Nadler and Nydia Velázquez, both primarily based in Brooklyn, stopped by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center to demand that the federal government give LGBT couples the same protections as heterosexuals.

They were joined by Public Advocate Bill de Blasio and Comptroller John Liu, as well as Council members Daniel Dromm, Jimmy Van Bramer, Letitia James and Melissa Mark-Viverito.

"While there remains a bumpy road ahead," Velázquez said, "it has become clear that the political stars are aligning in favor of finally addressing this critical social justice issue."

Velázquez also saluted Republican Ohio Sen. Rob Portman, which elicited a wave of applause from the audience. Portman announced his support on Friday for gay marriage after he revealed his son is gay. Velázquez said that while she and Portman don't agree on many issues, Republicans like Portman could prove instrumental to recognizing LGBT immigrants during Senate discussions on reform.

While the bipartisan "Gang of Eight" continues to mull over a bill that would make both parties happy, Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina told reporters in late February that [provisions for same-sex couples did not come up](#) during a meeting with President Barack Obama. A study from UCLA Law School's Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Law and Public Policy recently announced that an estimated 267,000 LGBT-identified individuals, [or about 2.7 percent](#), live among the country's adult illegal immigrant population.

Organizers from Make the Road New York and Immigration Equality introduced the politicians and crowd to residents affected by the current immigration policy.

One same-sex couple, Angelica and Veronica, told the audience that they would have to move out of the country barring any changes to the law. Veronica, a Mexican citizen, said that her status is running out and that her inability to stay in the country doesn't make sense when her partner is here legally. Both couples declined to provide their last names.

"If she were 'Angel,' I would have a green card now," Veronica said.

Tags: Tagged in: [immigration](#) [LGBT](#)