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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND SPEAKER QUINN ANNOUNCE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CIVIL PROTECTION ACT TO BROADEN
PROTECTIONS FOR UNMARRIED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
VICTIMS**

***Bill Would Give Domestic Partners and Unmarried Couples
Who Live Together Legal Protections Currently Available To
People Who Are Married or Share a Child***

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn today announced the introduction of the Domestic Violence Civil Protection Act, legislation that would broaden protection for domestic violence victims who are abused by their past or current domestic partners or live-in boyfriends or girlfriends. Current State law only gives the right to obtain civil orders of protection in Family Court to domestic violence victims who are married, divorced, blood related, or parents of the same child. Everyone else has to seek an order of protection in Criminal Court, which requires criminal prosecution and may result in the creation of a criminal record for the defendant. The Domestic Violence Civil Protection Act would allow unmarried individuals who live or have lived with an abuser, pregnant women who live with the fathers of their unborn children, and LGBT individuals who are abused by their live-in intimate partner the right to get a civil order of protection in Supreme Court without having their current or former loved one arrested. The Mayor and Speaker were joined today by Deputy Mayor for Legal Affairs Carol Robles-Roman, [Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly](#), [Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence](#), Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez, Mayor's Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt and the City's Corporation Counsel Michael A. Cardozo, City Councilman Leroy Comrie, and City Councilman Peter F. Vallone Jr.

"Domestic violence doesn't only happen to legally married people, but for too long, the law has not provided the same kind of protections to domestic violence victims in other types of committed relationships," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Working with Speaker Quinn and the City Council, we are creating a new avenue for these victims of domestic violence who want protection but don't want to have their abuser arrested."

"Today, we empower victims of domestic violence with the ability to take action against their abusers," said Speaker Quinn. "The City of New York will not stand idly by when people are victimized by those they live with and trust. I thank Mayor Bloomberg for his support in combating domestic violence on every front possible, and now including domestic partners and others in the law's protection. I also look forward to continuing to work with Albany to broaden those protections even further."

Civil orders of protection are an important way to prevent domestic violence because they let victims seek protection without initially

requiring a criminal proceeding. Specific protections may include directing the perpetrator to stay away from the victim or requiring the perpetrator to enroll in an education program for batterers. These local orders of protection from Supreme Court may also suspend the perpetrator's firearms license and allow the authorities to take away the perpetrator's guns. Violation of an order of protection would constitute criminal contempt, which can be prosecuted in Criminal Court. Should there be any violence after an order is issued, violation of a civil order of protection is a criminal offense and the perpetrator of violence will be prosecuted.

"Domestic violence does not discriminate, and we continue to seek innovative solutions to help all domestic violence victims achieve safety," said Commissioner Yolanda B. Jimenez. "Victims do not have to suffer in silence. We provide assistance through the criminal justice, health, and social service systems to all victims and their children."

"Domestic violence is pervasive throughout our City and my home borough of Queens is no different," said Council Member Leroy Comrie, co-sponsor of the legislation. "There are over 2,000 requests for civil orders of protection in Queens annually. However, there are many victims who are not related to or married to their abuser and are left without the legal grounds to seek civil orders of protection. This legislation seeks to provide such protection to those individuals, and it is my hope that my colleagues will swiftly pass this legislation."

"Everyone, no matter what their relationship, has a right to safety," said Council Member Peter F. Vallone Jr. "As a former prosecutor, I can attest to the fact that there are many people in need of court protection who are not able to get it. This bill will help provide that protection."

In addition to today's action at the city level, Speaker Quinn and Mayor Bloomberg called on Albany to expand the definition of 'family' in the Family Court Act to include individuals who are currently unprotected by the Act.

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