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## **Transgender Advocacy Group Applauds Hate Crimes Conviction in Murder of Angie Zapata**

### **Verdict is Country's First Hate Crime Conviction Involving Transgender Victim**

NEW YORK - The Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund (TLDEF) applauds yesterday's conviction by a Colorado jury of Allen Andrade in the savage beating death of 18-year-old transgender woman Angie Zapata. The jury quickly convicted Andrade of first-degree murder and a hate crime in connection with her death. District Judge Marcel Kopkow sentenced Andrade to life in prison without possibility of parole. Andrade beat Zapata to death on July 17, 2008 in her Greeley apartment after he learned she was transgender.

"The hate crime conviction for Angie's murder sends a clear message that targeting transgender people for violence will not be tolerated," TLDEF executive director Michael Silverman said. "Angie's senseless death demonstrates the increased risk of violence transgender people face. We are grateful that justice was done, but know that little can be done to ease the pain of Angie's death for her family and friends."

In New York, the Onondaga County District Attorney is pursuing the state's first-ever transgender-related hate crime conviction in connection with the shooting death of 22-year-old Lateisha "Teish" Green. Dwight DeLee allegedly shot and killed Green outside a Syracuse house party last November because he reportedly harbored anti-gay animus.

Zapata and Green's deaths highlight the need to implement comprehensive hate crimes protections for transgender people. Federal law currently does not protect transgender people from hate-motivated violence. The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which was recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives, would implement comprehensive hate crimes protections for Americans who are victims of attacks because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Similarly, New York State law includes sexual orientation as a hate crimes category, but does not include gender identity or gender expression. The Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act, which recently passed the state Assembly, would add gender identity and expression as protected hate crimes categories.

"Transgender people face discrimination and violence in communities across the country," Silverman said. "Angie and Lateisha's tragic deaths highlight the need for state and federal lawmakers to enact comprehensive hate crimes legislation to protect some of society's most vulnerable members."

Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund is committed to ending discrimination based upon gender identity and expression, and to achieving equality for transgender people through public education, test-case litigation, direct legal services, community organizing and public policy efforts.