



ERIK BOTTCHER
COUNCIL MEMBER

THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
224 WEST 30TH STREET, #1206
NEW YORK, NY 10001

TELEPHONE
(212) 564-7757

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Dear VNS Health,

It is a pleasure to congratulate you on the occasion of the 2025 VNS Health Benefit, *"Here When You Need Us."* This theme speaks volumes about the essential role VNS Health plays in the lives of New Yorkers by offering care, compassion, and support exactly when and where it's needed most: in patients' and members' homes and communities.

This year's honorees, the Honorable Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick of Greenberg Traurig, LLP, and Dr. Ramon Tallaj, Founder and Chairman of SOMOS Community Care, are shining examples of leadership in service to others. Their lifelong dedication to justice, equity, and community health exemplify the very best of public service and medical leadership. I join you in celebrating their achievements.

As Chair of the New York City Council LGBTQIA+ Caucus, I want to especially commend VNS Health for your Gender Affirmation Program (GAP). The only program of its kind in the country, GAP provides culturally affirming, in-home clinical care and social support to transgender and nonbinary patients recovering from gender-affirming surgery. In a time when access to this kind of care is under attack across the country, this program stands as a model of dignity and equity.

Finally, I also want to recognize the vital services VNS Health provide here in District 3. Whether home care, behavioral health support, end-of-life services, or other programs, your team is a lifeline for so many of my constituents. Your presence in our neighborhoods is deeply valued, and your impact is felt every day.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to health, equity, and community. I look forward to celebrating with you and honoring the individuals who help make your mission possible and improve the health and wellbeing of New Yorkers.

Yours in service,

Erik Bottcher
New York City Council Member
District 3