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RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOSTS PRESS CALL ON UPCOMING TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP (TPP) VOTE

Mayor Bill de Blasio: I thank everyone for joining with us today.

Obviously, people are – all over the country – very focused today on what action could happen in the House of Representatives on the trade bill. And I think we can safely say the situation is gray in terms of what the outcome will be. But I want to talk about – I know my colleagues on the call want to talk about the underlying issues here. And I think for many of us, there's deep concern that this country is about to make a mistake we've made before. And it was certainly – looking back at the history of NAFTA, we have an exceedingly cautionary history we have to learn from and not repeat.

I've been working with progressives all over the country who feel this same deep concern. A number of us unveiled a document back on May 12th – the Progressive Agenda. And you can see at progressiveagenda.us. And one of the planks in that 15-point agenda was the need to make sure we don't have the kind of trade deals we've had in the past that undermine the jobs of American workers and didn't rein in the power of multinational corporations. And I think the history of NAFTA is profoundly troubling. We saw how it hurt our economy. There are estimates that as many as a million jobs that were lost as a result of NAFTA. Obviously, it had a hugely negative impact on manufacturing in this country. And there's too many realities around the current trade deal that are reminiscent of NAFTA and there's still too much we don't know. A lot of us are deeply concerned about the regulatory structures created in the trade proposal that – certainly from my perspective and I think a lot of other progressives – will undermine the power of government regulators in relationship to corporate power. There's real concerns on a consumer-level. The patent strengthening for the pharmaceutical industry – very well could have the effect of making it harder for everyday people to get cheaper generic drugs that they need. There's a lot in this deal that appears to reinforce the status quo that is not working for the American people. And even the more generous estimates of the positive impact it could have for our economy don't seem overly impressive. So I think, for a lot of us, we see profound danger in this deal and a lot of bad history and very little about it that is encouraging that any lessons had been learned from the past.

So, trade is obviously a crucial part of our lives and our economy but it has to be done the right way. And what we've seen with fast track – what we've seen with the trade deal, as outlined so far, is clearly not the right way. So that's my opening. I want to see now – Bob Reich has joined us. Okay, it seems like a no, so we'll call again to find out – I think we have him on the line. But let's go to Adam Hersch – the senior economist at the Roosevelt Institute – for him to offer his cause.

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