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# Mayor de Blasio Signs Legislation Expanding the New York City Human Rights Law to Protect Caregivers from Employment Discrimination

January 5, 2016

**NEW YORK**—Mayor de Blasio today signed eight pieces of legislation – Intro. 108-A, related to expanding the New York City Human Rights Law; Intros 603-A and 604-A, related to leaving the scene of an accident without reporting; Intros 908-A and 916-A, related to Open Data; Intro. 609-A, related to geothermal energy; Intro. 65-A, related to security services in nonpublic schools; and Intro. 128, related to sharing EDC’s annual job creation report with Community Boards.

The first bill, Intro. 108-A, expands the New York City Human Rights Law to include “caregiver status” as an additional protected category in employment. The City Human Rights Law protects a number of classes of persons from employment discrimination. Protected classes covered under the Law include race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, citizenship status, gender, age, and others. The addition of caregiver status to these categories means an employee who is caring for a minor child or an individual with a disability cannot be terminated, demoted or denied a promotion because of their status or perceived status as a caregiver.

“Caregivers are our unsung heroes. They literally keep families together. It’s critical we give them the employment protection they need and deserve,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “I want to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito for her leadership, Chair of Civil Rights Committee Council Member Mealy, and Council Member Rose for sponsoring this bill.”

“Whether it’s protecting to human rights of caretakers or the safety of students from all communities across New York, the City Council is proud to support legislation that makes New York City a safer, fairer and better place for all to live,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “I’d like to thank my colleagues in the City Council and the de Blasio Administration for their continued commitment to policies that improve the everyday lives of New Yorkers.”

“No one should be discriminated against because of their status as a caregiver,” said **Carmelyn P. Malalis, New York City Human Rights Commissioner**. “Intro. 108 guarantees that every parent and family member caring for a loved one receives the same rights and opportunities in the workplace as everyone else. The Commission will vigorously enforce this much-needed protection and looks forward to working with the Mayor’s Office and the New York City Council to further advance the rights of caregivers under the law so that every New Yorker can live and work free from discrimination.”

“The roots of any community's strength are family, friendship, and our ability to support and care for others,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “When someone in our city takes on the responsibility to care for another, they must not suffer job loss or discrimination in the workplace. I'm proud to see the mayor sign this new law today, and I thank Councilmember Rose for partnering with me to introduce this important legislation.”

“I introduced this bill with Borough President Gale Brewer because I know that many workers across our city also care for dependent children, parents and other family members. Many of these workers are afraid of losing their jobs because of their important family obligations. When enacted, this bill will protect caregivers from being treated differently than colleagues who are not caregivers. When Mayor de Blasio signs this landmark legislation into law, he will highlight once again why New York City remains the best place to both work and live in the United States, if not in the world,” said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

“Throughout my life I have vigorously opposed discrimination of any kind. Intro number 108-A is a very important piece of legislation that will make sure that people are not being treated differently just because they are caregivers. As time goes on, more and more people are having to provide caregiving responsibilities for children, the elderly and family members with disabilities. This bill is even more important because studies have shown that caregiving responsibilities have a greater impact on women in general, single mothers, and families living in poverty,” said **Council Member Darlene Mealy, Chair of the Committee on Civil Rights**.

The second two bills, Intros 603-A and 604-A, are related to leaving the scene of an accident without reporting. Intro. 603-A increases civil penalties – both for repeat offenders and first time offenders – for leaving the scene of an incident without reporting. Intro. 604-A requires that the Police Department report quarterly the number of notices of violation issued in response to an incident resulting in a critical injury. NYPD will also report annually the number of complaints for leaving the scene involving property damage, personal injury, or death, as well as the number of arrests for such an incident involving personal injury or death. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the Chair of the Committee on Transportation, Council Member Rodriguez, and the bills’ sponsor, Council Member Van Bramer.

“These laws will be a strong deterrent against repeat reckless drivers who continue to wreak havoc on our City’s streets,” said **New York City Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. “Hit-and-run crashes are an epidemic throughout New York City. While the penalties set forth in these laws will not bring back the lives that have been taken by reckless drivers they will send a message to criminals who think they can get away with leaving a fellow New Yorker on the side of the road to die – If you break the law, we will find you and punish you.”

“Hit and run crashes are an epidemic in New York City and today we take action to eradicate them,” said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair of the Transportation Committee**. “The shocking volume of these crashes that persist on our streets each year are a danger to all New Yorkers. With this law signed today we send a clear message that if you flee the scene of a crash, you will not get away freely. We also will require greater accountability of those who investigate these crashes, with more

reporting requirements including the results of investigations into these heinous crimes. I am proud to partner with Council Member Van Bramer in this effort and we will continue to take a keen focus to ending hit and run crashes for good.”

“Thanks to Mayor Bill de Blasio and Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer for bills that will protect New Yorkers from dangerous driving and will at the same time expand DOT’s data reporting,” said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “With fewer fatalities and injuries, the Mayor’s Vision Zero plan is showing real results two years in -- and these new laws will help inform our work in making our roadways even safer.”

“Today’s legislation represents a thoughtful means of holding the most irresponsible drivers accountable for the basic decency one would expect from those operating motor vehicles on our crowded streets – to stop and provide their identifying information if they have cause to believe that they hit someone or something, causing property damage, injury, or death,” said **NYPD Transportation Chief Thomas Chan**.

The fourth and fifth bills, Intros 908-A and 916-A, help ensure that all appropriate data is posted on the City’s open data portal. Intro. 908-A requires that when agencies release data in response to a FOIL request, they must review the response to determine whether the data should be included on the open data portal. The results of those reviews will be included in the annual open data plan. Intro. 916-A requires an office or agency designated by the Mayor to conduct examinations and verifications of certain agencies’ compliance with the open data law, to ensure that the examined agencies are in full compliance with the open data law and have not left out any data sets that should be included on the open data portal. The plan for carrying out these examinations and verifications will be reviewed by the Commissioner of Investigation. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked Council Member Vacca, Chair of the Committee on Technology and Sponsor of Intro 916-A and Council Member Palma, sponsor of Intro 908-A.

“Building on the great work we have been able to accomplish over the past few months, I am proud to see two additional bills signed into law that will remarkably strengthen the Open Data Law,” said **Council Member James Vacca, Chair of the Committee on Technology**. “Ensuring compliance with the Open Data Law is a critical component of the Council’s oversight role. This bill will empower the administration to develop an examination of agencies’ compliance with the Open Data Law, using a standard approved by the Department of Investigation. With this legislation, we are holding agencies accountable for complete, accurate, and timely data. I thank Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, and Council Member Palma for their collaboration efforts. Open Data is a priority for the Committee on Technology, for the Council as a whole, and for the administration, and I am incredibly proud of this legislation.”

“The objective of the Open Data FOIL bill, is to ensure that the public gains access to accurate government data in a timely manner. This bill will require that anytime data, as part of a FOIL response, is released, agency open data coordinators will be notified, and shall review all FOIL requests, determining whether information can be added to the Open Data portal. I am thrilled that the passage of this bill came to fruition, along with the rest of the legislative package. I thank Council Member Vacca, Speaker Mark-Viverito, and Mayor de Blasio for their leadership. These bills will be crucial to bridging the gaps in information provided to New Yorkers,” said **Council Member Anabel Palma**.

The sixth bill, Intro. 609-A, makes it easier for homeowners and businesses to determine whether geothermal energy is cost-effective. Intro. 609-A requires the City to develop, and make publicly available, a tool that helps building owners understand how cost-effective a geothermal system would

be for a particular building. The bill also encourages the installation of geothermal in newly constructed or retrofitted City-owned buildings, and requires developing standards for installing and maintaining geothermal systems. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill's sponsor, Council Member Constantinides, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection.

**Nilda Mesa, Director of the Mayor's Office of Sustainability**, said “We are eager to make the promise of geothermal systems a reality. With this bill, building owners will be able to use a City tool to determine whether their buildings are good candidates for this technology – and the City will ensure geothermal is a key piece of our own energy planning toolkit. The steady temperature of the Earth will be our ally to bring down greenhouse gas emissions – keeping down our cooling load in the summer and heating load in the winter, and helping us meet our 80x50 goals.”

“The Department of Design and Construction is committed to developing high performance buildings that emphasize energy-saving technologies. Our completed DDC Projects demonstrate the success of using geothermal within the city. By requiring the development of an online screening tool, this legislation will provide more accessibility to the public, allowing anyone to look up the geological feasibility of installing a geothermal system at any building in New York City. This bill will also continue to encourage the development of geothermal energy at city-owned buildings. I would like to thank Mayor de Blasio and the City Council for their vision and leadership in addressing climate change through this bill,” said **Department of Design and Construction Commissioner Feniosky Peña-Mora**.

**Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the City Council Environmental Protection Committee**, said, “INT. 609-A is a strong step forward for a more sustainable and greener city. For the first time in city history, the social cost of carbon will be considered as part of implementing an environmental policy. Using geothermal technology in city-owned buildings saves money and reduces emissions. The online screening tool will also provide an opportunity for informed private geothermal installations, making the installations more simple and safe for people to install in their homes and commercial buildings. I thank Mayor de Blasio and Office of Sustainability Director Nilda Mesa for their partnership and commitment to reach our shared goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050.”

The seventh bill, Intro. 65-A, allows the Mayor to authorize a program to reimburse nonpublic schools, including private and religious schools, for the cost of security guard services. Nonpublic schools with 300 or more students will qualify for the reimbursement program. The bill requires schools that take part in this program to report criminal and other significant public safety-related incidents to the NYPD. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked Council Member Gibson, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety, and the bill's sponsor, Council Member Greenfield.

“All New York City schoolchildren – no matter where they attend school – deserve a safe learning environment. Keeping all of our precious children safe from harm is the bedrock responsibility of government. That's why I have made it my top priority for the past five years to bring qualified, trained, equipped and well-paid security officers to non-public schools. All public school students are already protected and now nearly 200,000 non-public school students will be, as well. I heartily thank Mayor de Blasio for joining together with me, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, the overwhelming majority of my Council colleagues, and the historic coalition of Catholic, Muslim, Jewish and labor advocates who made Intro 65 a reality, giving peace of mind to hundreds of thousands of New York families and creating hundreds of new prevailing wage jobs. By addressing such a monumental issue, so decisively, we show today that New York City government is truly working for all New Yorkers,” said **Council Member David Greenfield**.

“Every student needs a safe environment in which to learn,” said **Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety**. “As biased and nonbiased related violence rises on campuses and in classrooms around the country, it is essential we find creative solutions to maintain security in all our schools. The safety provisions Int. 65 will provide to non-public schools meeting certain criteria will make our non-public schools, and by extension our City, safer for students, parents, and educational professionals everywhere. I thank Council Member David Greenfield for his tireless leadership on this effort and thank Mayor Bill de Blasio and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for recognizing the need to protect the public safety of all children.”

The eighth bill, Intro. 128, requires the City’s Economic Development Corporation to share annual job creation reports with all of the City’s community boards. The reports include information on projected and actual jobs created by EDC’s many projects and initiatives. Currently, these reports are distributed to the Mayor’s Office, the Council, the Comptroller, the Public Advocate, the Borough Presidents, and made available online. The reports will now be electronically distributed to the 59 Community Boards. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked Council Member Garodnick, Chair of the Committee on Economic Development, and the bill’s sponsor, Council Member Cabrera.

“I am thrilled that my bill, Intro. 128, is being signed into law today. I thank my colleagues in the Council, the Speaker, and the Mayor for their support. Our community boards will now receive an important annual report on job creation and retention, which will increase transparency and efficiency as they seek to decrease the unemployment rate in our communities,” said **Council Member Fernando Cabrera**.

## Media Contact

pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov  
(212) 788-2958