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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY FOLLOWING
MAYORAL CONTROL HEARING IN ALBANY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: I just want to say upfront, I really want to thank –

Unknown: The cameras are over here.

Mayor: – the cameras are over here, okay.

Tell me where you want me.

I really want to thank Chair Marcellino. I thought the hearing on mayoral control was very substantive, thought it was a very respectful hearing – a really good dialogue on a whole host of issues that revolve around how we make our schools better. And I want to thank him for the way he handled the hearing, and I thought it was a good airing of a whole host of issues, and certainly a great opportunity for me to explain to members of the Senate why mayoral control of education is so important for serving 1.1 million kids. I just wanted to share that, fire away.

Question: Mayor, as the only person who seemed to bring up anything [inaudible] Senator [inaudible]. Did you find him in anyway confrontational regarding fundraising scandal or anything else?

Mayor: I am never surprised by what people do at hearings. Again, the issue at hand was mayoral control of education. As I said to him, when we've got a graduation rate over 70 percent for the first time in New York City history; when test scores are going up; Pre-K for All; afterschool for all our kids; AP courses in our high schools; computer science for all. And these are real indicators of tangible progress for our kids and for their parents. That's what people are going to judge by.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: We met with the Assembly conference, so – you know – very large number of Democratic members of the Assembly. I guess someone could get you the exact count, but it seemed to me like 60 or more. And the Chancellor and I primarily talked about education issues – about a few other stray issues, but we took questions from maybe a dozen members on a host of issues primarily education [inaudible].

Question: Mr. Mayor, are you concerned at all [inaudible] fundraising scandal [inaudible] with the Senate Republicans [inaudible]?

Mayor: Again, the issue here is the substance. And I think the hearing was really telling. We are here to talk about mayoral control of education, the only system that has been proven to provide proper governance of our schools. There are a number of Republicans who participated, and you didn't hear them say that mayoral control is a bad idea. They wanted to talk about different policy matters related to education, they wanted to talk

about how to make sure they understood some of the things we were doing. That's fine – that's very healthy. I said I welcome that kind of dialogue, but the bottom line is was some counter vision of school governance presented, no. I thought it was a very respectful hearing about how mayoral control works. And I thought they gave us every opportunity to explain to them why it is the only system that actually works for the kids of New York City. So, if this is an example of a democratic process in action, I thought it was a very good substantive hearing. I feel fine about the relationship being focused on the issues.

Question: Senator Murphy raised the issue of trust, saying that with all the investigations [inaudible]. He wonders if he can trust you with mayoral control, your response to that?

Mayor: [Inaudible] So, I said to the Senator [inaudible] is part of public life. There's also due process, and I believe we've done everything appropriately, every decision we made was on the merits [inaudible]. And I am very confident. That's why we are happy to participate and be open to working with anyone doing investigations because we are confident we [inaudible]. That's what matters.

Question: So, are you saying to Senator Murphy, "Yes, you can trust me"?

Mayor: Of course. I made it very clear to him. The people of New York City can trust me because they've seen me provide results for them, and I'd like the Senator to recognize that that is very, very good evidence of the kind of trust that [inaudible].

Question: You said several times that it was [inaudible]. Were you surprised? Were you expecting a more antagonistic reception?

Mayor: I always think the best of people, and I believe that there were folks who wanted to have a serious conversation of the issues. I've talked to Chair Marcellino before about education. I know he cares deeply about it; he was a teacher for many years. I've talked to Leader Flanagan about education that he chaired the committee for many years. I think there are a lot of people in the Senate, on both sides of the aisle, who care a lot about education. And that's how [inaudible].

Question: Have you asked the Governor to support your [inaudible] of your extension? What's been his response?

Mayor: Again, I don't go into private conversations. I've made very clear to the Governor that I think mayoral control is the right way to go, and that this is what the children of New York City need.

Question: Will they give you seven years?

Mayor: I don't predict. I think we presented the case. We're going to keep presenting the case. And if it is about the merits the Senate, I think, should look at the history of what Michael Bloomberg got originally – seven years, got an extension of six years. I think if we're really talking about working in a bipartisan spirit for the good of our children, it's logical to follow that same pattern.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Again, I don't get into details about the electoral process. Everything we've done, as I have said, was based on the laws, the rules – we follow the rules, we followed the legal guidance. And I am very, very comfortable that everything we've done is appropriate.

Question: [Inaudible] is there even a viable alternative to mayoral control?

Mayor: Well, I appreciate that question, and that is my point. We had one system before that failed consistently. And the Chancellor talked about it. Remember she's been in education in New York City for 50 years if I may quote. I have to keep saying it.

[Laughter]

Remember, what did you say the day we named you – 70 is the new 40.

Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña: Yes, absolutely. I'm getting younger every day.

Mayor: There you go. But look, she's talked about the fact that in all of those previous efforts – the previous structure just plain failed. It failed our kids, and on top of that was writhe with corruption, plenty of patronage. It's all been documented. You know I don't agree with Michael Bloomberg on everything, but I believe he achieved something great for New York City by getting us mayoral control of education. And we have built on that accomplishment and done a lot more in terms of the graduation rate, test scores, pre-K, and afterschool. So, yes in all of this dialogue no one said, "Oh, wait I've got this other great idea." You don't have people saying let's go back to the bad old days. You don't have people saying let's go back to local school boards who are writhe with corruption and inefficient. And there's not some magical third way that anyone has put forward including in that three-and-a-half hour hearing. I mean you were all there, no one said, "Wait, I want to test this other good idea." No. So, I think there is a recognition – when Democrats and Republicans, business and labor all together are saying mayoral control of education is the only governing system that works, I think the jury has come back and proven that this is the thing that New York City kids need. And I think in the end that's what's going to win the day.

Thanks, everyone.

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