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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE ASSOCIATION
FOR A BETTER NEW YORK'S POWER BREAKFAST**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: That is a really big apple. Bill, you – you have been honored for good reason. I want to thank you for all you have done for New York City and I think everyone can agree that Bill Rudin's open personality, his embrace of this whole city, his ability to work with everyone in common cause to better our city has meant so much to all of us. And it's a lot of work to bring people together in this place, eight and a half million people, eight and a half different and strong opinions, but we all love our city deeply. And no one more than Bill Rudin. So Bill – a fantastic job over 17 years – thank you for all you've done.

And you have passed the torch to a fine choice. Steven, I just want to thank you for taking on this responsibility. You too have that ability to work with everyone and hear everyone, and you're going to help us make New York City a better place. Let's congratulate Steven everyone.

[Applause]

I also want to offer my thanks and congratulations to all the members of the Rudin family because everyone – when it comes to the Rudins they're all in this together helping the city so, thanks to all the members of the family.

I want to thank all of the members of my administration who are here, and I just want to take a moment as we get to the close of four very long and intense years to say I've been so privileged to serve with my colleagues of this administration. They have been really exemplars of public service. I couldn't be happier with the people I've been blessed to serve with. I want to thank all of them. I want to give special thanks to First Deputy Mayor Tony Shorris, Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen, and Deputy Mayor Richard Buery all of whom are with us. If you would join me please in saluting the leadership of this administration.

[Applause]

Thanks to all the elected officials who are present, thanks for all you do. A special thanks to Congressman Jerry Nadler who – Jerry Nadler fights battles every day in Washington that are let's just say things we did not anticipate. And Jerry, you're doing a great job standing up for this city and for this country. Thank you, Jerry.

And a huge congratulations to all the marathon winners, Shalane Flanagan in particular makes us proud. The marathon is when we celebrate the coming together of all nations and people joining in harmony. It's a beautiful event, 125 nations were represented by the runners. But, we are also patriotic Americans so it's really great to see an American woman win isn't it? That's – so we're really happy about that.

[Applause]

So the marathon puts a lot in perspective. We had a very tough week last week and one of those moments that really tells you so much about who we are as New Yorkers. It would not have been surprising after a tragedy such as occurred on Tuesday if people withdrew, if people felt a sense of unease and pulled back from their lives. No one would have blamed them but what was so outstanding about this city is everyone understood the attack on us for what it was, it was an attempt to undermine our values, it was an attempt to undermine our democratic society, to change who we are. And New Yorkers were so quick to reject the idea that anyone could change who we are. And I saw it at the Halloween Parade, who knew that that event would take on such powerful meaning. But, within hours of an attack a million New Yorkers were out in force, going about their lives, celebrating all that's great about this city. And then we saw it again at the marathon, two million people together enjoying all that's great about humanity. Doesn't that make you proud to be a New Yorker?

[Applause]

I remind you we are targeted for a reason, because this city exemplifies a pluralistic society. This is a place for people of all faiths, all nationalities, people speak all languages can actually work together and live and let live. That is an affront to the terrorists' ideology. We are proof positive that they are wrong and therefore they have to attack us. But New Yorkers, again, understood our obligation to our city and also to our nation to stand strong, to be unmoved by any effort to undermine us. So it's a proud time, a painful time for sure, but a proud time for New Yorkers as well.

Now that reality of this city, a place for everyone, I talk about a lot and I am a product of that reality. Grandparents who came here from far away seeking opportunity, having that chance, nothing was perfect by any stretch but New York was and remains an open city. And the fact that it is open to all, the fact that everyone has a chance to make it is what has made us great. It has created a city of strivers and great creative minds and entrepreneurs and its intrinsic to our success is that we are open and inclusive and that opportunity is available. And that has informed everything we do.

Bill mentioned some of the things I've had the honor to talk about from this stage. He mentioned the Pre-K initiative, for example, which I first put forward to the world from this stage in 2012. He mentioned the Equity and Excellence plan for our schools. The notion underlining all of it is to keep New York New York to keep that flame alive, to keep that ability of New Yorkers to reach opportunity, to keep that real, to not ever let anyone be excluded. And let's face it, we are living in a time where things have changed. We're living in a time where we're confronting

challenges we couldn't have imagined just 20 years ago. I think everyone here would agree that the affordability crisis that we have today and the way it reaches into every part of the city was unimaginable just a couple of decades ago. Our job is to address it. Our job is to address the new reality of what our economy requires of workers and of our young people going to school. Our obligation is to come up with new solutions. And so, we did that with Pre-K and we look forward with everyone's help here to doing that with 3-K because three-years-olds deserve an early childhood education for free don't you think?

[Applause]

We did that by bringing police and community closer together. What a striking fact that stop-and-frisk is down 93 percent, crime is down four years in a row, and complaints against officers are down to a 15 year low proving that together we can be safer. We are doing that in our schools by increasing graduation rates and improving test scores, and that's happening in all 32 districts of this city. And we're doing that by building an economy. Everyone in this room contributed to the amazing economic success we've had over these last four years, and I want to thank you, anyone who thinks any one of us does it alone misses the reality. I want to offer my profound thanks to everyone here because when you add 350,000 plus jobs in four years well that takes a village for sure. So I'd like to say that's something we all should be very proud of, 350,000 more jobs plus in the last four years. I'd ask everyone applaud your neighbor because everyone helped build that reality in our city.

[Applause]

But despite the fact that we have proven that we can address the challenges of our times and we can do things that truly keep New York City an open city, an inclusive city, a city of opportunity. There still looms real danger. And the danger of us losing our essential character is real. We should be concerned that we never fall into the trap of becoming an exclusive place, that we don't become a gilded city, that we don't become a large gated community. We will not be New York City anymore if every day people can't afford to live here and if they can't find real opportunity here. We need to understand just like those giants of the 1970s understood the treat that faced our city then, we need to understand the threat that faces us now. And we need to be devoted to constantly coming up with better and better solutions.

Now I want to give you an example of our affordable housing plan. I love to quote a well-known expert in the housing field who when we originally unveiled the notion of an affordable housing plan that would create and preserve 200,000 apartments in 10 years, the quote I received from this expert – very sympathetic, kind, someone who wanted to be as helpful as possible, and he said 'Bill, that is this close to insane' and I took that as a badge of honor that we had found the ultimate stretch goal. Well I want to tell you, the team I want to commend Deputy Mayor Glen and everyone at HPD and HDC and City Planning and all of the elements, EDC, everyone in the City government who took on that goal, believed in it no matter how stunning it was, no matter how challenging it was, believed in it, believed they could innovate, believed they could reach a level that wasn't reached before. You know the standard used to be we could build and preserve about 15,000 apartments in a year that would be affordable. This team promptly went and showed they could do 20,000 a year and then they started to surpass that number. Well when you

see goals being met and then surpassed, when you see a plan not only on budget but ahead of schedule, it begs the question can we go farther? So I turn to the Deputy Mayor team and I said give me a new stretch goal, tell me how much farther we can go because there is a vast need, a vast yearning in this city for affordable housing. I have had 43 town hall meetings during this administration, I talk to everyday New Yorkers all day long and I'll tell you something, the number one issue by far, the number one concern, the number one fear is the possibility that they won't be able to live in their own city. Even for so many who did so much to make it great, families who have been here for in some cases generations, wondering if this is – these are the last years they'll get to be here.

So the mandate I gave was let's go farther. And we recognize that we could achieve our 200,000 apartment goal not in 10 years but in just eight years. And we recognized that we could bring production up to 25,000 apartments a year and therefore we set a new goal, 300,000 affordable apartments. 300,000 – enough for 750,000 New Yorkers to remain in the city they love. That is essentially the size of the City of Boston. Imagine that, enough affordable housing for everyone in Boston but right here in our city where the need is so great. Please join me in thanking Deputy Mayor Glen and her whole team for what they have achieved.

[Applause]

And when I talk to those audiences around the city I say you know it also dawned on us there are two ways to keep things affordable. And the first, of course, is to take the number one expense in peoples' lives, the housing expense and make it affordable, but the second is to just constantly increase income. And we've tried to do that in a number of ways including initiatives that were crucial to this administration in the beginning, raising minimum wage, creating deeper paid sick leave policy, things that would reach millions of New Yorkers and improve their lives. We have to go a lot farther. So we determined that we would create a job creation plan based on targeted government investments, creating jobs that would not have been built otherwise because we invested where it was needed.

The goal is 100,000 jobs, but not just any jobs – jobs that will pay at least \$50,000 per year, which for so many New Yorkers would be a huge improvement in their circumstance. And it comes from targeting investment in the tech sector, in the life sciences sector – which is one that excites me greatly, with the right investment is one that could take off here – in film and TV, and advanced manufacturing, and so many areas that with the right government intervention and support can grow far beyond their current boundaries.

So the sky is the limit for this city's economy, and we will make sure as we build this economy that it's a five borough economy. This is something we talked about a lot four years ago, and it's really been visible in recent years. Economic growth is happening in all five boroughs, and it needs to stay that way, and it needs to deepen, and we need to make sure the people from this city get those jobs, and it's part of how we keep New York New York.

So when I put together those pieces, I can report to you some very good news. We are by every measure a prosperous city right now. Our economy has tremendous potential. There are a number of sectors poised for growth. We see the basics improving – our streets safer, our schools

getting better. There's a lot we could feel good about, and if only that were the whole story we could leave here today very content that we were on the right path and we just have to keep working hard to build on it. But the danger to New York City isn't here – it's 200 miles down I-95.

The danger to New York City and to our growth and to our potential is a series of policies emanating from Washington, and sadly the one that could do the most damage is the one that's being debated right now. President Trump's tax plan takes dead-aim at New York City. It would undermine the success that we have achieved, and despite the hype it would undermine the middle class in this city – and I would say all over the country. We understand that what is being portrayed is not a middle class tax cut. I want to be very, very clear. This is not a middle class tax cut. It's a shell game.

It is an illusion, and middle class people who have struggled so hard in this city and beyond are in for a rude awakening if this plan passes. We have to understand that all the changes that are projected, all of the personal deductions that would be taken away – the notion of state and local tax deductibility alone being taken away. This fundamentally undermines the lives of so many families. It creates a reality of double taxation. And I think this is a room of worldly, wise people, and you would agree with me something like state and local tax deductibility – it's been a part of American life since 1913 – over a century.

But if it is taken away, you will never see it again. If that right which was meant to give people opportunity and help them live a better life – if that right is taken away, it will be gone forever, and it will undermine working families and middle class families.

Meanwhile, we are promised all sorts of tax cuts, but they are inherently – even if they occur – they are inherently temporary. The thing that's protected us – the deductibility – will be gone forever. The tax cuts, maybe we'll see them, maybe we won't. Maybe they'll be for a few years. Maybe they won't. It's not a safe bet to say the federal government will never raise taxes again, but taking away our right to deductibility undermines us all fundamentally.

One hundred million Americans – some people have portrayed this as a niche issue, only affecting a few states, and they said 'oh look, they're blue states, oh it's payback.'

No, no – it's very, very different. One hundred million people in a nation of 330 million. It's a huge swath, and it's not just a few blue states. It's states in the heartland. It's states all over the country that would be negatively affected, and that realization is coming to bear. Whether you live on the Atlantic or the Pacific or the Rio Grande or Lake Michigan, there are people who are going to be hurt by this tax plan, and they're starting to understand it. And they're starting to engage. So it's a universal challenge, but I also want to be clear President Trump's tax plan will hurt nowhere more than his own home town, and this is a sad commentary.

And I think it's fair to say he understands life in this city, and I find it strange that he would come up with a plan that would undermine us so deeply. There are more than 700,000 New York City families that would see a tax hike if this plan were passed as is right now – 700,000 New

York City families. The vast majority of them earn less than \$200,000, so that means working class and middle class families would bear the brunt.

How much more would they pay cumulatively in taxes? \$3.7 billion.

Just those families in New York City - \$3.7 billion more out of their pocket. That's what double taxation looks like.

And there's also a painful delayed release reality to this plan. Some people may not do so bad in the first year but will see taxes go up more and more in subsequent years. It's like a boomerang effect for middle class families. Here's the other reality – what it will do to our city budget and our ability to serve.

Look, we have undertaken an approach that has proven it produces result. We have an investment oriented model in this administration. We believe in investing in the people of New York City. We believe in ensuring the City provides the services that will help us all grow. We put 2,000 more police officers on patrol in this city. That helped us to make the city safer. It helped us to build neighborhood policing, to improve the social fabric, to bring police and community together. It helped us to create the 500-member-plus Critical Response Command, so we would have the strongest anti-terror capacity of any police force in the country. That took investment.

It took investment to create pre-K. It took investment to improve the ability of our Sanitation Department to keep our streets clean and clear the storm after snow storms. These things don't happen by accident, and they don't happen without resources. But these are investments that paid off. Here's the problem with the tax plan – at minimum it takes away \$1.5 trillion in federal revenue.

\$1.5 trillion.

And look, we can all debate the meaning of that loss of revenue. I would say very bluntly, and I've always come before this audience with great respect but also trying to be a truth teller. I don't think the \$1.5 trillion tax cut for wealthy Americans and corporations is the best way to move this country forward.

But whether you like it or don't like it – here's the problem, \$1.5 trillion less in revenue will eventually create an impact on this city. Will it all just be deficit spending? Maybe. But I find it hard to believe. That loss of revenue will express itself as cuts to the support for this city and other cities around the country. So it will take away money ultimately, I believe, from support for mass transit and infrastructure, which we desperately need to keep growing and to be strong. It will take away support for education. It will take away support for public safety and for anti-terror activities. You can't take that much out of the federal budget and expect it not to hurt this city and cities all over the country.

And here's the challenge, and everyone in this room knows it. We are more and more the engines of the economy. The cities of our nation are helping to build up our economic strength.

We're creating the jobs. We're where so much is happening that's good for everyone in this country. This plan will undermine the ability of cities to maintain their growth and to address their most fundamental problems.

So, we need to see this for what it is, and we need to understand that later the impact of this plan will start to be felt when it comes to Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid, the very things that have helped guarantee a decent society and the ability of people to survive even in tough economic times.

I will tell you that amidst this challenge there have been some really extraordinary acts of leadership. I want to particularly commend Senator Schumer for leading the charge against this tax plan, and I think his leadership in the Senate has been outstanding and so important for this city.

[Applause]

But I want to inject some honest bipartisanship into this discussion.

I have been so struck in working with my fellow mayors around the country how we have been shoulder to shoulder democrats and republicans alike to challenge this tax plan or to fight the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. What's amazing – and it's a good news story – is there are republican mayors all over the country who recognize that these decisions will hurt their constituents and the growth of their cities, and they have stepped up, too. And in the Congress, outstanding – and it is the only word appropriate because it's really, visibly extraordinary – the leadership of Congressman Donovan, Congressman King, and Congressman Zeldin fighting against what's wrong with this tax plan.

[Applause]

Joining me in opposition to the tax plan are my traditional allies and closest political confidantes – the National Association of Home Builders, the National Association of Realtors, and the National Federation of Independent Business.

To say the least, something about this plan is bringing out a bipartisan spirit and something universal in recognizing the danger it would create. And I know that as more and more people understand in this city and beyond the impact more and more opposition will rise; more and more questioning of how something of this magnitude is force through with very, very limited debate; how much danger could be created to our real estate market, to our tax base, to our ability to grow economically, to our ability to be a fair society – all of that it up for grabs right now.

So I ask everyone in this room right now to join into this effort to stop this plan, to stop it from having such negative impact on all the progress we have achieved together.

I want to invoke history for one moment as I conclude. You know, this organization has done so much for the city, and as everyone knows this organization was founded at one of our most dire

moments. There were a lot of people as the fiscal crisis was progressing who really were literally about to give up on New York City, who could not see any potential rebound. Well thank God, the founders of ABNY and so many other good people believed that New York City could come back.

Some of them are no longer with us, but I wish they were because they would be stunned by the strength that we see today. It would be a wonderful gift we could give them if they could just see for a moment how their faith was rewarded. But a very specific historical fact – Lew Rudin who did so much for this city, one of the earliest battles he undertook of behalf of this organization was to fight against a proposal to end deduction of state and local taxes made by President Ronald Regan, and ABNY and so many others stepped up and protected that right for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. A reminder that we see lots of challenges, but we also have tremendous ability in this city to overcome them.

So I conclude with this – we have fought these fights before and won. We have seen challenges from Washington many a time and overcame them. This city right now – we have a lot to be proud of. Everyone has been a part of it, and I thank everyone in this room, everyone has been a part of this success. But we have eyes to see – crimes going down, schools are getting better, jobs are increasing, something is working.

We can't risk it. We can't risk going backwards. Can't risk losing our progress.

We can't have it taken away from us from, of all places, our nation's capital. We know what to do in this city. This city has the ability to do bold and important things faster and better than ever. That's something to be very proud of, and now we're going to need to fight shoulder to shoulder to protect that reality and to ensure this will always remain a city for everyone.

Thank you. God bless you all.

Bill Rudin: We have a few minutes for some Q and A, so, anybody have a question for the Mayor? Yes, Mr. Thompkins right there?

Hold on, microphones coming in hot.

Mayor: There is supposed to be a microphone

Bill Rudin: Yeah, where is the mic?

Mayor: Theoretically there's a microphone.

Bill Rudin: Go ahead.

Mayor: You can start.

Question: [Inaudible] there is also – done an amazing job with respect to counterterrorism, both in first responder, rapid response, but also staying ahead of the curve. How do incidents like the

things that happened last week, how are they affecting NYPD's and the City's plans, counter-terrorism plans going forward.

Mayor: Thank you. When I started working with the NYPD so closely in this role, what was striking to me was the incessant, strategic work that was done, certainly with the fight against terror, but also in crime fighting.

I think this was, in one part the brilliance of Bill Bratton and what he started with COMPSTAT that pervaded the whole department and certainly Jim O'Neill has taken that mantle and taken us even further. The notion that we cannot stand pat, we can never assume that the strategy we are using is sufficient in an ever changing world, that pervades everything being done at the NYPD, but particularly in terms of our counter-terrorism activities. So I would tell you the simple answer is we combine tremendous intelligence gathering capacity, including having some of our detectives assigned overseas to help get very current, very realistic assessments of what's going on with a heavily resourced apparatus here focused on prevention.

So, you know, I'm sorry to have to say it, but expect that very visible, physical presence of the NYPD including well-armed, well-trained anti-terrorism officers, expect that for years to come until this threat passes. But the adjustments are made incessantly. So, literally within hours of that attack, the question was, what changes and modifications make sense whether is adding additional barriers, physically in some areas, or other kinds of deployments of officers, and then looking ahead, what are the unfortunate trends that we may have to address going forward.

A simple example, you know, we saw what happened in Nice, we saw what happened in Berlin, that the attacks on big public gatherings were a particular challenge. So now, you will notice, big parades, Thanksgiving parade, St. Patrick's, all sorts of gatherings, no vehicles are allowed to cross them anymore. There is a huge number of blocker trucks up and there is a real discipline about imposing order on that situation, not allowing anybody thru who is not authorized. We will keep making those changes, and look, sometimes it will be an inconvenience to the everyday lives of New Yorkers, but it will keep people safe.

Bill Rudin: Yes, sir in the –

Question: Good Morning, Jonathan Bowles, Center for an Urban Future. First off, Mayor, thanks so much for your plan 100,000 good jobs, I agree it's such – the important gap in the economy and economic development today.

My question is about Amazon, I'm glad your administration has put in the bid for Amazon's second headquarter and the 50,000 very good jobs that are part of it. How important is to you that New York get Amazon, and what exactly are we as a city offering to help us beat out all the other cities in the race?

Mayor: First of all, Jonathan, thank you for the great work you and your colleagues do, which we pay a lot of attention to at City Hall, so thank you for that. We offer Amazon the greatest city in the world. I'm not making it up. That's the number one thing we offer.

[Applause]

We offer Amazon – look we are very enthusiastic about Amazon, we are going to work hard, our teams are already been working very hard to put forward the best possible proposals to provide any and all information to Amazon that will help with them in their decision, we will roll out the red carpet in every way. But, I honestly believe our best selling points, best workforce in the country and an abundance of that workforce, you know, I don't want to belittle any other city, a lot of great cities in this country, but if you – if the mission of Amazon in creating a second headquarters is to develop that strong workforce and to have another location that can be that focal point, where, anywhere in this country, or any other country is there a stronger workforce than what we have right here? And a place where people want to be, and let's face it, we all understand this, one of the interesting dynamics of talent acquisition today is talent is choosy about where they want be, and more and more really talented, really creative people want to be here.

And then, the other tremendous reality is that we can connect Amazon to all other economic sectors right here in a way that is much hard to do in other places. So, we will do everything in our power, I know the State feels the same way, I've been clear there are some things that other cities are choosing to do that we don't believe is the right way to approach it, but it when it comes to very energetic effort to reach Amazon to convince them to show them all sorts of great opportunities including great physical options. The sites we put forward are outstanding and I think fit their needs but also will be extraordinarily appealing to the talent they are seeking and we are going to work it very hard, and look, I like to believe it's hard to say no to everything that is great about New York City.

Rudin: One more question, we'll go over here.

Question: Morning, Mayor.

Mayor: Good morning.

Question: You have – as you know frustration with the inequities and disparities in the property tax has built up to the point that there is now a lawsuit pending challenging it supported by many people in this room. You've said that you don't think litigation is the right way to handle this problem and that you intend to work on it in your second term. Could you share with us what you think needs to be addressed? And how you plan to work on this?

Mayor: Thank you, absolutely. First of all the people have to decide whether they want to renew my employment contract. So were going to work hard for the next two days and then we'll see what they choose. If they choose me, we're going to get to work on this in a very big and focused manner. I'll tell you why I think the lawsuit is wrong to begin with – and I understand the frustration, I obviously do. I've talked to a lot of people who feel it. And there is no question that his current property tax system is broken in many ways. But I caution – you know, be careful what you wish for. When you put things in a hand of a judge, you never know where it's going. And there is a reason why we have a legislative process, and there is a reason why we have an executive branch of government to make decisions in this magnitude and not to turn them over to

a judiciary. Really this is not their function to make policy like that. I've said it very clearly; we'll gather all the stake holders. It will probably take a year or two to complete this work. It will certainly take both city and state legislation. But here are the ground rules that I see going forward. Wildly inconsistent system has to be made more consistent. I hear from people across different neighborhoods how blatantly unfair their property tax bills are and literally the way they change from neighborhood to neighborhood that makes no sense per say. Obviously people live in condos, co-ops versus single family homes, the disparities there. There are so many issues that we have to get under the skin of that are really thorny, and really difficult.

But were going to have to be blunt about it, we're going to have to really be open about some of the tough choices, and then further we have to protect our revenue levels.

I've been at a lot of these town hall meetings people raised almost always raised property taxes. Usually from a homeowner point of you, and then I say to them look; it's going to be a massive undertaking. We will come up with a more consistent, more transparent, more fair system. But I want to put a caveat on it. We can't reduce our revenue substantially. If we do that and I look at people in the eye and say if we're going to reduce our revenue substantially it might feel great at first. But then we can't have the same number of police officers, or we can't sustain early childhood education, or we can't provide the same sanitation services. Do you want that? And two a one I want to be fair to the people of this city, including to some of the most virulent critics of what I've been doing. They stopped dead at that point. They say no, I don't want to lose of those services. In fact they were very happy there is more officers on patrol. Almost everyone has been really happy about pre-K. So that's the rug. Creating fairness in an open manner, a transparent process that will ultimately show people how all of the pieces fit without substantially changing the revenue picture.

But I will say, I am ready to do it, it will take a lot of time and energy but I am ready to do it. And it's not the kind of mission a lot of people want to take on in public life. But I've said it, because I mean it. And I will just say this one personal plug. When I say something that definitively, I mean it. I said we'd do pre-K, I said we'd do 200,000 affordable apartments; you know, I said we would bring down stop and frisk. You name it we've done it. We will create a tax reform, a property tax reform that will end up with a better and fairer system for this city.

[Applause]

Thank you.

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