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**STATEMENT FROM MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO ON DEATH OF STAFF SERGEANT  
AND NYPD DETECTIVE JOSEPH LEMM IN AFGHANISTAN**

“Today, one of New York City’s finest made the ultimate sacrifice for our city and for our country. Detective Joseph Lemm, a 15 year veteran of the NYPD and member of the U.S. Air National Guard, was serving in Afghanistan when he was killed in a suicide attack near Bagram Airfield.

Just one day after the city marked the anniversary of the assassinations of Detectives Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, today’s horrible news serves as a painful reminder of the debts we owe to the brave men and women in uniform who put themselves in harm’s way each and every single day in order to keep us all safe.

There can be no greater sacrifice than the one made by a member of our military or our police force, who put their lives on the line to protect Americans. Detective Joseph Lemm did both for 15 years. He gave his life, yet asked for little in return other than to serve his country and his fellow New Yorkers, who may not have known him in life, but mourn his death nonetheless.

Police and military families serve right alongside their loved ones in uniform, so tonight, on behalf of all New Yorkers, I extend our gratitude and deepest sympathies to the Lemm family. This week, as we wrap up the holiday season, I also want us to remember the families in New York City – and across the country – who have an empty chair at the dinner table because one of their loved ones went off to defend our country and never came back. May God bless them all.”

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