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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS WITH ROME MAYOR
MARINO**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, I want to welcome Mayor Marino very warmly. I think, as everyone knows, the mayor is a very good friend, and someone who it's my pleasure – sir, could you sit down? – thank you. It's my pleasure and my honor to have this friendship. We talk quite a bit by phone and by – and we keep in touch by email. And we share values about the kinds of changes that we have to make in our city. The difference is my city is a wonderful city. It's been here essentially 400 years. Your city is the Eternal City – thousands and thousands of years. But we share a common vision of reform, of fighting corruption, of making the kinds of changes that create more opportunity for our people – and that's where our friendship really grew, out of that shared vision and so many challenges that we face in common.

I'm thrilled the mayor's here, and we talked about the next great visitor from Rome that we'll be seeing here in this city – the bishop of Rome will be coming in just a few weeks – the Pope. And that's going to be an extraordinary moment for New York City. The mayor has the great honor of working closely with his Holiness, and we had the honor of going to the Vatican together for the recent meeting of mayors around the world addressing climate change. So there's something very powerful in the connection between mayors who are fighting the same fight, share the same values, taking on the same challenges.

We also have learned – I've learned from mayors around this country and around the world – that we're helping each other think about how to solve problems.

For example, when we were in Rome, Mayor Marino and I spoke about a challenge he's facing that's something that this city has faced for many years as well. The city of Rome controls a lot of property, and the intelligent thing to do, the necessary thing to do is to make sure that if that property can bring in resources for the people of Rome, for the taxpayers of Rome, if the property can be used in a better way so that Rome can serve its people better, there's a very professional and modern way to do it. But what was true in this city before, true in Rome today, is a lot of times those decisions were made the wrong way. Very valuable properties were handled in a way that had more to do with politics than it had to do with the needs of the people. So this city had to learn that the hard way over many decades. We now have a much more modern approach that focuses on ensuring that whatever property we have is managed well. If we decide to keep it, it's done in a very professional fashion. If we decide to dispose of it, it's done in a way that's in the interest of the people and the taxpayers. We're sharing our example and our approach with the mayor and his team, and I hope that is helpful to the people of Rome.

I also have to say that Mayor Marino deserves a lot of credit and I think he has been heroic in taking on the mafia, taking on corruption, taking on the status quo. It's never easy to do. I want to emphasize that. Challenging the powers that be, challenging the status quo is never easy. It will always generate opposition. And this mayor has been brave enough to challenge some very powerful people. He's been willing to take on the mafia and ends its dominance of so many aspects of the Roman reality and to disconnect it from government – thank God – something that has been needed for many, many years.

So I just want to express my appreciation – and I say this as an Italian American, as well – I think what you're doing, Mayor, is something necessary for Rome and necessary for Italy, and I appreciate it. And I think when

you hear that opposition, you should see it as a badge of honor, because you know you are doing the right for the people, and you're challenging powerful interests.

And with that, I want to welcome you to offer your comments.

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