

# Transcript from Saturday, April 16, 2022: Mayor Eric Adams Celebrates the Earned Income Tax Credit Enhancement in the State Budget

April 16, 2022

## **Commissioner Vilda Vera Mayuga, Department of Consumer and Worker Protection:**

Good morning, everyone in New York City, this glorious Saturday. So happy to have you all here with us today. I am Vilda Vera Mayuga, commissioner of our wonderful city's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. Mayor Eric Adams has long supported our agency's, DCWP's, efforts to help tax filers. And I just could not be prouder to stand with him today as our EITC champion. Now, before we get to celebrate that, I will be remiss if with just two days before tax day this Monday, I didn't take a minute to remind everyone to file. Please go ahead and file. Two days left.

**Commissioner Mayuga:** If you make less than \$72,000 as a family or \$50,000 as an individual, guess what, you can actually take advantage of our free tax prepare services and claim credits. Keep your full refund, no need to be spending money in tax preparation fees. We have more than 120 locations across the five boroughs where you can file for free, drop paperwork off and pick it up later, or you can file online with help. You can call 311 or you can also visit [NYC.gov/taxprep](http://NYC.gov/taxprep) for more details.

**Commissioner Mayuga:** We, of course, being in New York city, provide services in multiple languages and provide them also available regardless of immigration status. We can even help you get your IT number, and filing, especially this year, is more important than ever thanks to credits like the child tax credit, the child and dependent care tax credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit, because they are worth even more when you file. But beyond the tax credit increases this year, our measure is just getting stuff done for New Yorkers beyond this tax season, by leading the EITC reform in the country. Thank you so much, Mr. Mayor, for your efforts to expand EITC and congratulations!

**Mayor Eric Adams:** Muchas gracias. Thank you, commissioner. I just love that energy early on a Saturday morning. And if anyone is not aware that you just love what you do, helping everyday New Yorkers, particularly those low-income New Yorkers, and you are the epitome of GSD, Get Stuff Done. And I'm really happy to see my colleagues in government, the law firm of Adams and Adams. It's only the beginning of some of the good stuff that Speaker Adrienne Adams and I are going to continue to do together as we go after those hard-working, low-income New Yorkers who slip through the cracks.

**Mayor Adams:** Assemblyman Gibbs, your story just personifies how the bend in the road is not the end of the road. All you have to do is make the turn and you are inspiring so many people, who are seeing the recovery, that is so important. And the amazing, amazing leader up in Washington Heights and Bronx, who has fought for us throughout this entire COVID pandemic.

**Mayor Adams:** My good friend and brother, Adriano Espaillat, who is the congressman in the area. What you guys have done for New York City and bringing home the resources, congressman, throughout the pandemic, we cannot thank you enough. And Councilwoman Velazquez, it's good to see, they tell me you are joining us, as well. Understanding the importance of this moment that we are in.

**Mayor Adams:** This is a great day for working families in New York City, we are celebrating the expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit. Something we fought for. We stood in the Bronx together with Assemblyman Gibbs and talked about how do we get this done and how important it was for us to get it done. And now we are actually watching it happen. I remember hearing the compassionate story from Ms. Diaz, as she talked about the power of those extra funds for her family. This is something that people often ignore, but we heard you.

**Mayor Adams:** Not only did we hear you, but our Assembly and Senate delegation, they heard you and our Councilmanic delegation. They also heard you. You are dealing with the electeds that will listen, understand the power of our actions, and to move forward in the right direction. And it was only a few weeks ago that we talked about this. We made a promise and we delivered on that promise. We got it done, the state acted, and we have secured an increase in this program for the first time in 20 years. For the first time in 20 years, we are securing this increase. This means an additional city investment of 250 million annually into the EITC program. Speaker, you have to be proud of this. This is our legacy project that you were able to accomplish and partner

with us in doing. In New York State, one year supplemental payment equates to an estimate, one-time, \$100 million investment for New York City's recipients.

**Mayor Adams:** The trip to Albany mattered, our elected officials heard us, the advocacy of our Senators and our Assembly persons clearly was heard throughout the entire budgetary process. Now, what does this mean on the ground? 800,000 New Yorkers would benefit for this actions. This is extra money in their pockets during a very difficult time. That's money to help pay for food, bills, rent, all of the things that New Yorkers know and deserve to receive. The EITC is a lifeline for far too many. And by allowing this increase, we are extending that lifetime. We heard what a difference it makes every day through the powerful story of those like Rose's story. We hear it all the time. This was something I heard over and over on the campaign trail. There are thousands of New Yorkers out there, who are looking for this report and we are going to continue to provide it.

**Mayor Adams:** And this is only the beginning of what we are going to do for families who are struggling in the city. Under the city's expansion of the EITC, a single parent with one child with an income of \$14,750 will see their benefit increase from \$181 to \$905, a 400% increase. And under the state supplemental payment for the EITC benefit, it will increase from \$1,085 to \$1,357. Just think about that for a moment. Every new dollar that comes in assists you in making ends meet every day. For a married couple with two kids and an income of \$25,000, their New York City benefit will increase from \$299 to \$897. Real money. That's a 200% increase. And the state supplemental portion from \$1,794 to \$2,243. I am just really proud of how this is going to help everyday New Yorkers.

**Mayor Adams:** We are helping working families and giving them the needed support that they deserve. We are leaving no New Yorkers behind as we continue to move forward and protect those who are in need. So many New Yorkers have suffered during COVID-19. But if we're honest, that suffering took place long before a pandemic hit our city. The suffering is generational. We have continuously left too many families behind. Families like my family, Rose's family, and others. It's time to keep them in mind as we make these budgetary priorities. Something that the speaker and I, and the leaders in both the Senate and Assembly, they fully understand. And so I want to thank Governor Hochul. I want to thank the senators and assemblymen and women, and the leaders of both those chambers for helping us get this done for New Yorkers.

**Mayor Adams:** This will make a real difference. New Yorkers across the EITC specter will know that not only are we going to make the money available, but we are going to give you the support you need to access the money. Far too long, it has been too complicated, too difficult, but we're helping you through that. We're going to ensure that we are there to help you file your taxes, with free tax prep. It's available for most family and low and moderate incomes across the five boroughs. And it's just the first part of some of the things that we are going to do. And it's crucial that tax season is here on us. New Yorkers can get the assistance that they deserve. Since the inception of our free tax prep program, we have helped over 41,000 joint tax returns, saving people over \$5 million in fees.

**Mayor Adams:** This is how you do it in a real way. And New Yorkers can find more information about these services at [newyorkcity.gov/tax prep](http://newyorkcity.gov/tax prep). And we're going to be on the ground, sharing this information with New Yorkers, meeting them where they are, mobilizing our faith-based institutions, our volunteers, our local CBOs, because it's about giving people the information they deserve.

**Mayor Adams:** And we are providing additional support for New Yorkers through our New York City Financial Empowerment Centers. This is one-on-one professional confidential financial counseling that helps navigate in banking, credit, and debt services. So important to give people information on the ground. It's now since launching in 2008, our New York City Financial Empowerment Centers, we have assisted over 66,000 New Yorkers helping dealing with debt more than \$85 million in debt release. And so you can make an appointment through 311 or by in-person to schedule the proper appointment to sit down with the counselor. These are all of the small things we are doing that will help in a big way. And we can't do it alone. We have to do it with the partnerships that are imperative to develop, and the partnerships have been amazing. And I thank my colleagues in government again for understanding that together, we can. Together, we can get stuff done. Thank you so much, Commissioner, and I appreciate the work you're doing and the energy you are bringing to this good work.

**Commissioner Mayuga:** Thank you so much, Mr. Mayor. It's our pleasure just working with all New Yorkers and helping everybody thrive. And as you mentioned, the other partner of the Adams and Adams firm, our wonderful City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, please. Thank you so much for being here with us today.

[...]

**Commissioner Mayuga:** Thank you, Speaker Adams, and what an honor to also have with us U.S. Representative of New York, Congressman Adriano Espaillat, a fellow Latino. So good to see you!

[...]

**Commissioner Mayuga:** Thank you, congressman. And I know last time when we were in-person talking about this, Assembly member Gibbs, you were there with us. We were all advocating for this to make it happen. And now we get to celebrate! So, thank you so much for being back with us to this victory!

[...]

**Commissioner Mayuga:** Thank you so much, assembly member. And also back with us today, I think someone who really is... [inaudible] but the most chill today, right? Because it's a New Yorker that can truly tell us the impact of this advocacy, that leaders like our mayor are really pushing through. And that is Rosa Diaz. So, Rosa, it's so wonderful to see you again. Thank you for being with us. The floor is yours.

[...]

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you. Thank you.

**Commissioner Mayuga:** Thank you, Rosa. It's really wonderful and we can't wait, right? As the mayor mentioned, there's about 800,000 families who can really take advantage of this. So, we want to hear all of those 800,000 stories of how this initiative, these efforts can make a difference. And now I would love to have Councilmember Marjorie Velazquez, chair of my committee, consumer worker protection. Thank you so much! It's wonderful to see you.

[...]

**Commissioner Mayuga:** Thank you so much. Really appreciate it. It's been wonderful. And I think with that, we are ready for some Q&A.

[Crosstalk]

**Mayor Adams:** We should do the on-topic, and if there are no on-topic, we can free up our electeds and Rosa, and I'll take the off-topics. But we don't want to tie-up their day because they have a lot of work to do.

[Crosstalk]

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you. Thank you all so much. Commissioner, thank you, excellent job. Look forward to seeing everyone out there. Let's get stuff done. Thank you!