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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS DELIVERS REMARKS AT NATIONAL ACTION NETWORK'S SATURDAY ACTION RALLY

Reverend Al Sharpton: I was reminded of a song that James Brown sang — and you know James Brown is like a father to me. We've heard the governor this morning, we heard Senator Schumer and others. And I remember James Brown made a song, "People, people, we got to get over before we go under." Remember that song? He said, I need to be the mayor, so I can change some things around here. "Well, reverend, I am the mayor now." The mayor of the City of New York, Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you so much. It's been a long journey. When you think of 1954 — Reverend Sharpton's birth, and I think that was the same time when the important Supreme Court ruling was handed down that separate but equal was not constitutionally affirmed in the area of the Board of Education fights and battles that we've had. I think that was symbolic of that birth during that year — that ruling during that year. And having a person that has been just consistent on the issues of fighting for equality throughout these years, being a childhood preacher, growing up under the leadership of those like Reverend Jesse Jackson and other prominent leaders. Some of the great pastors during that time saw something special in Reverend Sharpton and allowed him to hone his craft of knowing how to deliver a message that would be complete, thorough, and clear. And we need that message now more than ever.

When we look at, from the days of painting crack houses, to point out the devastation of crack, the days of being there when President Barack Obama made the decision to run for president and other people ran in other directions, Sharpton decided to run with him. When we look at fighting police brutality... I remember the days when, over a police radio, someone made threatening comments against his life and we decided — with 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care and others — to be there for him and his family as they went through the journey, because we saw so many of our civil rights leaders were taken from us prematurely. But never stopping, just consistent — keep moving forward as we fought for the rights that we deserved. So this celebration of his birthday is more than just a celebration of another day on Earth. Because a lot of people just go through the motions. A lot of people are modern day ATM machines. All they do is withdraw, don't put anything back. He has put something back year after year after year after year after year.

I like to always remind folks that I'm just not a new friend. Just not a new friend. If people would just spend a moment and do something scientific, just Google us. Just Google us. If you would just go and see the parallel of the relationship and see over and over and over again. From the days of navigating the Police Department, the days of becoming the state senator, from the days of becoming the first Black borough president, from the days of becoming the mayor of the City of New York, he had this special eyesight that could look at a person who others may think is not suitable to do, but he'll see the beauty in you. I mean, he saw this kid that was dyslexic, arrested, rejected. Now, I'm elected. I'm the mayor of the city.

Audience: Yeah. Yeah. Whoo. Yeah.

Mayor Adams: But it's through a person that, no matter what would stand with you — no matter what. He would call me sometimes when I'm in the midst of the fire because good friends walk in the room when others walk out.

Audience: That's right. That's right.

Mayor Adams: He would call me in the midst of it and say, “Let me just give you some of these pearls that I've known” because this is a person that has lived through crises.

Audience: That's right. That's right.

Mayor Adams: And there's nothing worse than instructions from crisis-less folks. Never gone through anything, never know what it is to be demonized, ostracized, and then they want to give you advice.

Audience: Yeah.

Mayor Adams: But this is a person that has been on the frontline of fire and others will say that, “I've done my time on the front line.” But if you try to take Reverend Sharpton off the frontline, you in for a fight. This is a frontline warrior. It's easy to sit in the bleachers of life and talk about how well the warrior is doing on the field. But as Roosevelt stated in his speech of the man in the arena, the credit doesn't go to the person who points out how the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit actually goes to the man or woman whose face is marred with sweat, dust and blood, who's willing to get in the arena. Reverend Sharpton has been willing to get in an arena. And no matter what one states, when they look at this amazing life, they can't help but to sit in awe of not saying what he could have done, but what he has done.

Audience: That's right.

Mayor Adams: What he has done. And part of his list of accolades will point out that one of his members, one of his founding members of the National Action Network, went on to break political records, being first Black borough president, being the second Black mayor, being a person that learned from this organization and the National Action Network. This is my home and the person that has been the leader of this movement, we celebrate and we lift up today. I am so proud that out of countless number of people who have supported and know him throughout the years, countless number of people he has endorsed, countless number of people he has helped

to reach the level of political prominence that they deserve and other professional capacities. I know that I sit among the few that can clearly state this is my friend. Happy birthday, my friend.

Reverend Sharpton: Mayor Eric Adams. (Applause.)

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