



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, CHANCELLOR CARRANZA, COMMISSIONER
TROTTEMBERG HOST RALLY URGING THE STATE SENATE TO PRESERVE
CITY'S SPEED CAMERA PROGRAM**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you so much that was beautiful. I think it is so painful to listen to those who have lost loved ones or those who themselves have been victims of these crashes. I have been at so many gatherings when I've heard these powerful stories. I can say what I know we all feel I wish we never had to hear a single one of these stories. I wish you didn't have to lose your daughter, I wish you didn't have to go through the agony of what you have gone through. But I have to say that Judy and Janie do that thing that I admire so much which is someone who has been through adversity turns it into an effort to help others. And I know it's not easy because it cause you to have to remember each time but I really want to thank you both for not just standing idly by but doing something powerful. And everyone at Families for Safe Streets that have been champions and they are saving countless lives through their activism. Let's thank Judy and Janie, everybody for what they do.

[Applause]

You know we are here at P.S. 78 and it's important to be in a school at this moment as something is about to happen that really does not make sense to anyone, particularly those of us who are parents and have thought about what it means to take our kids to school and drop them off and want to know that they will be safe throughout the school day and after the school day. When you think about here we are P.S. 78 in Staten Island, a place that has a summer school program, where kids are still going to summer school. And right now all over the city we have speed cameras, literally this minute protecting kids. But we also know that because of inaction in Albany that literally the hours and the minutes are ticking away to the point where we are not going to have these speed cameras. Literally there is a countdown clock right there – 26 hours, eight minutes, 11 seconds until 120 speed cameras will be turned off. And I just can't make sense of it how something that clearly protects people, protects children in particular could slip through the hands of our public servants in Albany. And I think what people are saying is that we are not going to stand for something that we know endangers our own families.

So I'm going to ask this group of good people here, I want to thank everyone who is here, all the activists, all the community residents, and particularly the kids who are here because you are fighting for your safety.

[Applause]

So I'm going to ask everyone, I want to hear your voices loud and clear – do we need safe streets and safe schools?

Audience: Yes.

Mayor: I'm going to ask you again. Do we need safe streets and safe schools?

Audience: Yes.

Mayor: Are we going to let the State Senate off the hook?

Audience: No.

Mayor: The bottom line is the evidence is in – you know, I wouldn't mind it if there wasn't evidence but there is where the speed cameras are placed by schools speeding has gone down 60 percent. And I want to tell you about some research that has come out recently that now looks back over the time we have had the speed cameras by the schools and in those zones, fatalities are down 55 percent. 55 percent decrease, these stories, these painful stories wouldn't happen just like you heard, if the cameras were in place. We just had the safest six months in the history of New York City in terms of reducing traffic fatalities, the safest six months in our history of New York City in terms of reducing traffic fatalities. The safest six months in our history and speed cameras were a big part of it. So there are so many pieces of evidence and yet as we're talking that clock continues to tick down and it all comes down to a simple idea, the Senate has to come back and finish the job. They have to come back and renew and expand the speed cameras so we can keep people safe.

Right now, honestly, there is no timeline, there is no plan, but we know that voices like this from all around the city are going to make a difference. And we know that more and more parents are speaking up, more and more community members are speaking up and saying they cannot believe that Albany is failing to act on this issue. You know, again, kids are going to be in summer school over these next weeks, we need the speed cameras then, but schools, the regular school year is starting in about six weeks from now and then 1.1 million kids, going to school, coming from school every day, I can't think of more urgency than that. We are all going to keep the pressure on the Senate until the job is done.

One other thing I want to say, you know, there's always this push back we get on this issue and I say to everyone I think it's a matter of common sense. The only people who should fear speed cameras are people who are speeding, right? If you're not speeding, you're not going to have a problem and this is the thing I never understand about this whole discussion, we know speeding goes down because of cameras, we know fatalities go down. The only people inconvenienced are

the people who are already breaking the law. So this is about common sense, we lose at 5:30 tomorrow, we lose 120 cameras. A 120 lifesaving cameras go dark at 5:30 tomorrow. We still have, by the law, 20 mobile cameras that we can continue to use in sites all around the city. So I would want to remind motorists of that fact. Any place near a school one of those mobile cameras could be for the next 30 days or so.

We're going to do everything in our power, with all the tools we have, to protect our children and protect all New Yorkers, but we can't do the same thing that these speed cameras do in every place we need to be. We cannot replace the impact of 120 speed cameras with the resources that we have. So we need to keep fighting. We need to keep fighting because literally, even if we save just one life because of these speed cameras, it's worth it and that's what moves us all. I want to say a few words in Spanish.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

I'm going to say that in English as well, call your State Senator today and tell them to do their job, get back to Albany, and pass the speed camera bill. Is that what we need?

Audience: Yes!

Mayor: When do we need that?

Audience: Now!

Mayor: Perfect. I want to now bring forward a man who has the awesome responsibility for thinking about 1.1 million kids, their health, their wellbeing, their safety, their education as Chancellor of the biggest school system in the entire nation, our Chancellor, Richard Carranza.

[Applause]

Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And I want to thank everyone that's here, especially our parents and our students that are here. I just want to echo what the Mayor has said. This is not necessarily a matter of policy. It's not necessarily a matter of finance. It's a matter of life and death. And when you think about those 120 cameras that in 26 hours will shut off, if only one life is saved for every one of those cameras, that's 120 lives – and you multiply that by whatever number that actually is – this is a matter of life and death for our children. And it's a simple fix. And, as the Mayor has said, there is data that shows that these cameras are effective. So, I am going to ask the Senate – I'm going to beg the Senate, on behalf of the 1.1 million children in New York City, please, return to Albany. Please, give us the tools to ensure our children are safe coming to school and going home after school.

[Chancellor Carranza speaks in Spanish]

It's a matter of life and death. Thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor: Thank you, Chancellor. I want to bring up one of the real heroes of Vision Zero. We talk about the safest six months we've had in our streets in our history, and she's one of the reasons why, with a great team at DOT – our Commissioner, Polly Trottenberg.

[Applause]

Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Department of Transportation: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And it's great to be here with the children and Families for Safe Streets, and Judy, and Janie, and so many others who have helped us. As you've said, Mr. Mayor, not only achieved the safest six months in the history of the City, but really now the safest four-and-a-half years. And as DOT Commissioner, as I travel around the country or I talk to my fellow commissioners in other cities, I'm constantly asked how New York is doing it, because, nationwide, traffic fatalities have gone up the past four years, pedestrian fatalities have gone up the past four years. And here, in New York, we have dramatically bucked the national trend, and it is clear that speed cameras have been part of the puzzle.

And when we talk about those numbers – right now, compared to last year, we are at 22 fewer fatalities, which is a pretty, pretty dramatic place to be. And again, as we all know, standing here with our colleagues, those aren't just numbers, that's our family, our friends, our coworkers, our fellow New Yorkers. I think the Chancellor put it well – I too want to beg the Senate. Please come back and pass the bill and enable us to continue to use these speed cameras, they really have saved lives in this city.

Thank you.

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