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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING AND SIGNS
INTROS 736-A, 511-A, 440-A, 198-A, 315-A, AND 641-A**

Mayor de Blasio: Okay, good afternoon everyone. We're joined by some of our colleagues from the City Council. We have our new youngest councilmember here.

[Laughter]

Alright, first, we're starting with Intro 736-A, which requires the creation of an office of civil justice, which will be operated by HRA – sponsors are councilmembers Mark Levine, but also, of course, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito – two Marks. The Gideon vs. Wainwright case paved the way for the right to legal counsel in criminal cases. But sadly, the right to counsel is not available in civil cases when the stakes are also very, very high for those involved.

Civil cases affect some of the most important parts of a person's life – the ability to have and keep a home; to keep a family together; to escape from domestic violence; in fact, to be able to stay in this country. So, on these areas there's a deep need, and my administration is focused in an unprecedented manner on civil legal service including legal assistance to protect tenants, and to prevent homelessness. This introduction – this bill is a step towards fixing the imbalance between those who can afford adequate civil counsel, and those forced to face life altering legal issues without help of an attorney.

The newly created Office of Civil Justice will work to ensure civil legal needs of low income individuals and families are met. And we're, obviously, dedicated to ensuring that justice is served for New Yorkers regardless of their means. I want to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for her support.

[Applause]

[...]

Thank you very much. Alright, let's sign the bill.

[Applause]

Alright. Now, we're going to talk about Intro 511-A, which requires the Department of Education to report annually on student demographics in our schools, sponsored by Councilmember Brad Lander; requires DOE to report on efforts to encourage diversity in our schools. And this is a step further in our efforts to ensure that our schools are as diverse as our city, and people of all communities work, live, learn together – and will ultimately play an important role in addressing the inequality gap in education, as well is in our society as a whole. I want to thank Chancellor Carmen Fariña for her support; Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for her support; the Chair of the Education Committee of the Council, Daniel Dromm, for his support.

[...]

Okay, let's sign the bill.

[Applause]

We are moving the legislative process here.

[Laughter]

Intro 440-A requires DOHMH to report on health services in the city's correctional facilities – sponsor is Councilmember Corey Johnson, the chair of the health committee. I can't overstate enough the importance of quality healthcare, and quality mental health care, in particular, in our jails. On Rikers Island, about 40 percent of inmates suffer from mental illness – 40 percent. And the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is working closely with the Department of Corrections to map a new path for inmate care at Rikers. Meaning, next year the city's own Health and Hospitals Corporation will take over delivery of care, and will include an improved approach to treatment and services that inmates deserve. The bill – this bill will increase transparency in our efforts to protect the health and well-being of inmates. I want to thank our Health Commissioner Mary Bassett for her support; Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for her support as well. And now it is my honor to introduce the chair of the health committee, Councilmember Corey Johnson.

[...]

Let's sign it.

[Applause]

Okay, Intro 198-A requires side guards to be installed on city trucks, and commercial garbage trucks – sponsors are Councilmembers Corey Johnson, Ydanis Rodriguez, and Julissa Ferras. Side guards are installed on large vehicles to prevent accidents involving pedestrians – to protect pedestrians, and cyclists from being caught under the vehicle if there a collision. This is part of the larger effort that we believe in under our Vision Zero policy. The goal of Vision Zero is to end traffic fatalities. In the United Kingdom, widespread adoption of side guards helped to reduce fatalities, and to reduce severe injuries in side impacts. And the impact was extraordinary

– 61 percent reduction for bicyclists, 20 percent reduction for pedestrians. DCAS has already begun installing side guards on over 200 city trucks already on the job. This bill takes this effort to the next level to ensure the all city-owned trucks, and commercial garbage trucks are outfitted – over 12,000 total vehicles will be affected as an example of using every tool at our disposal to make our streets safer. I want to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito for her support; Councilmember Julissa Ferras for her support.

[...]

Thank you. Let's sign the bill.

[Applause]

Okay. Finally, we have Intros 641-A and 315-A, which require the Department of Transportation to complete studies regarding pedestrian and bicyclist safety on truck routes. Sponsors are councilmembers – I'm sorry, first sponsors, 641-A – Councilmember Margaret Chin; sponsor of 315-A, Councilmember Paul Vallone. New Yorkers are, of course, concerned about the substantial presence of trucks on city streets and their impact on safety. That's why we've lowered speed limits and improved street designs. And that's why we're proud to say that last year pedestrian fatalities were at their lowest levels since 1910. But that is just a beginning. We are now going to redouble our efforts. And these bills will help us to identify problematic corridors and implement appropriate measures to create safe commutes and safe communities. Keeping New Yorkers out of harm's way is, of course, our top priority. I want to thank our DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

[...]

I will now speak Spanish less well than Ydanis.

[Laughter]

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's sign the bill – bills.

[Applause]

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