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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS BILLS TO EXPAND PROTECTIONS FOR COMMERCIAL TENANTS, ESTABLISH WORKER RETENTION LAWS FOR HOTEL WORKERS, AND ALIGN CITY POLICY WITH EXPANDED STATE PAID SICK LAW

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good afternoon, everybody. Today, we are holding a hearing, and the signing of three bills that expand protections for workers, consumers, and commercial tenants. These bills are Intro. 2032-A, 2083-A, and 2049-A. Now a little bit of quick history. In 2014, I signed into law historic reforms that ensured that hardworking New Yorkers would get paid sick leave. And this was something that had been worked on for years and years and we were finally able to achieve for hundreds of thousands more New Yorkers in 2014. And it was a matter of justice and making sure that hardworking people could actually live a decent life. Now, in this pandemic, we know there's so many people who cannot afford to lose what little pay they have, and if you're sick and you are threatened with losing a day's pay because you're sick, it's an absolutely unacceptable situation. We want to make sure people are well and we want to make sure people get the pay they deserve. So, today we extend our Paid Sick Leave laws by aligning them with recently passed New York State laws. And we provide our Paid Sick Leave to workers in smaller businesses and ensure paid sick time – that there's more paid sick time for employees in larger companies.

Now, another group of folks who have really been hurt deeply during this pandemic have been our commercial tenants. Many are struggling to pay the rent because they were forced to close for a period of time, or they cannot be opened at the same capacity. So, they're in a really tough situation. So many businesses that we all depend on in our communities, that employ so many New Yorkers, including restaurants, barber shops, nail salons, and they're critical to us all and to our future. We have to provide them with some extra support and protection as well. We have legislation on that today.

Finally, another piece of legislation focuses on our hotel workers, and they've been at the frontline of this crisis. They've borne the brunt. Our hotel workers helped the city respond to this pandemic in so many ways, including helping New Yorkers who have to isolate from their families in hotels, helping folks who need to get out of congregate settings for their health and safety. And we know this industry has been through so much. So, today we're got to provide stronger protections to hotel workers and also additional consumer protections for hotel guests in our city. So, all of this revolves around respecting the needs of hard work in New Yorkers and acting on these needs in this unprecedented time.

Let's first talk about Intro. 2 – excuse me – 2032-A. Again, this aligns the City's Paid Sick Leave law with the recently enacted New York State Paid Sick Leave expansion. Now, here are the changes. It will expand Paid Sick Leave to small businesses with four or fewer employees and

with income of less than \$1 million per year. And these employers must now provide up to 40 hours of unpaid sick leave. Now, small businesses with four or fewer employees with an income of over a million dollars must provide 40 hours of paid sick leave under this law. And then largest businesses, those with over a hundred employees, must now provide up to 56 hours of paid sick leave.

Intro. 2083-A, this amends Local Law 55 of 2020, which temporarily prohibits the enforcement of personal liability provisions in commercial leases or rental agreements involving COVID-19 impacted tenants. And this extends the sunset date of this protection from September 30th, 2020 to March 31st, 2021.

And Intro. 2049-A, this establishes protections for displaced hotel service workers in the event of a sale or transfer of hotel. New owners will be required to provide existing employment and maintain wages for a period of 90 days. At the end of the 90-day period, the new employer would perform an evaluation of each worker. Intro. 2049-A also establishes consumer protections and notice requirements for service disruptions for guests of hotels.

I want to thank many people who have been involved in moving these key pieces of legislation, our Corporation Counsel Jim Johnson, our Department of Consumer Worker Protection Commissioner Lorelei Salas, Small Business Services Commissioner Jonnel Doris, Speaker Corey Johnson, the Council member who sponsored Intro 2032-A, Council Member Andy Cohen, who is chair of the Consumer Affairs Committee in the Council; and the sponsor of Intro. 2049-A, Council Member Mark Levine. And now I'd like to turn to the sponsor of Intro 2083-A for her to provide her comments on this very important legislation. We thank you for sponsoring it. My pleasure to introduce Council Member Carlina Rivera.

[...]

Thank you so much, Council Member. Congratulations to you and your team for this really important legislation. And I really appreciated the story you told knowing that this could help any business to survive this extraordinarily difficult time, but hopefully it's going to help a lot of businesses, we can get through to a vaccine and the rebirth of our city, and everyone will be able to benefit from the opportunity that this legislation provides. So, thank you so much Council Member. I know we've got some individuals signed up for public testimony. Want to call out all the names in order, and if you would please each speak in this order, I'd appreciate it. First, Rich Maroko, the President of the Hotel Trades Council. And then Molly Williamson, Director of Paid Leave at A Better Balance. Marrisa Senteno, the New York Co-Director for the National Domestic Workers Alliance. Sean Feeney, Co-Founder of ROAR which is Relief for All Restaurants; and Carl Williams, who is a restaurant owner. So, in that order, starting with Rich.

[...]

Thank you so much, Rich. And Rich, I know you put a lot of time, personally, into this legislation and making sure that it would reach all the people we need to protect. I want to thank you for that effort, and I want to congratulate you and all your members for this important step forward. Let's turn now to Molly.

[...]

Thank you very much, Molly. Thank you for all you and your colleagues did back in 2014 and you have never let up in continue seeing it through right to now. So, thank you and congratulations to you. And now, let's hear from Marissa.

[...]

Thank you so much, Marissa, and thank you for the great work that you do, and everyone at the Domestic Workers Alliance, and, you know, you continue to make progress and we thank you for that. Now, we have Sean.

[...]

Thank you, Sean. And I appreciate your absolutely accurate optimism about the future of the city. And I think every time a New Yorker says it out loud, it helps to tell the naysayers that we, in fact, are going to come back and this industry is going to come back strong. So, thank you very much. And finally, we have Carl, Carl you're there?

[..]

Thank you, Carl. And thank you for laying out so clearly the challenges that you're facing and so many other people of color are facing, trying to keep industries going in this moment. And it is so important that we support you because of what you do for this city and this economy. But also as a matter fairness to ensure that actually everyone gets to participate in the economy of the city. So, thank you very much for your comments. Everyone, I'm going to do a few words in Spanish, summarizing what we're doing today before I sign the legislation.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's sign this legislation –

[Mayor de Blasio signs Intro. 2032-A, Intro. 2083-A, and Intro 2049-A]

All right, all three of these bills are now law. Thank you to everyone who's participated today and everyone who worked hard on these pieces of legislation. Congratulations to all, and this hearing is now adjourned. Thank you.

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