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**MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS LEGISLATION BANNING SMOKELESS TOBACCO AT
TICKETED SPORTS ARENAS AND RECREATION CENTERS**

*Also signs legislation establishing training for agencies on how to identify runaway, homeless
or sexually exploited youth*

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio today signed four pieces of legislation – Intro. 1068-A, in relation to prohibiting the use of smokeless tobacco at sports and recreational areas that issue tickets; Intro. 554-A, in relation to establishing training for agencies on how to identify runaway, homeless or sexually exploited youth and connect them to appropriate services; Intro. 993-A, in relation to changing the date of an annual report related to sexually exploited children; Intro. 815-B, in relation to protecting the right to truthful information under the New York City Human Rights Law and expressly providing a cause of action for employers and principals whose rights are violated by conduct to which their employees or agents are subjected.

“We are home to some of the most iconic sports arenas in the country, and our youth nationwide look up to the athletes in that spotlight,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “With Intro. 1068-A, we are taking a huge step forward to ensure that our youth are not exposed to dangerous practices. I’d like to thank Council Speaker Mark-Viverito and the bill’s sponsor, Council Member Corey Johnson, for bringing this legislation forward.”

“Whether it’s protecting runaway and sexually exploited youth, strengthening our Human Rights Law or promoting public health, the City Council is proud to continue its work to make New York City a better, fairer place to live,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “I thank my colleagues in the City Council and the de Blasio administration for their continued partnership in improving our city on behalf of all residents.”

The first bill, Intro. 1068-A, amends the Smoke Free Air Act and prohibits the use of smokeless tobacco at sports arenas and recreational areas that issue tickets. This bill helps reduce the visibility of smokeless tobacco where young people are likely to see their role models using it. In addition, this bill expands the Smoke Free Air Act to ensure that all forms of tobacco use are prohibited at covered sporting events. Smokeless tobacco is associated with serious negative health outcomes such as cancers, diseases of the mouth, increased risk for early delivery and stillbirth when used during pregnancy, and increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Intro. 1068-

A is an important public health measure that will continue advancing New York City's goals of reducing tobacco use and cement our status as a national leader in tobacco control.

“This bill sends a clear message: tobacco use has no place in New York City professional sports,” said **Council Member Johnson, Chair of the Committee on Health**. “When athletes who are role models to children are regularly shown on TV using smokeless tobacco, it sends a harmful message. Statistics clearly show us that high school athletes use chewing tobacco at a steady rate, even though smoking rates among their classmates has dropped. I want to thank Commissioner Mary Bassett for her support, and I thank Mayor de Blasio for signing this legislation that will benefit the health of the players and the many kids who watch from home and in the stands.”

The New York Yankees said in a statement, “Major League Baseball has long supported a ban of smokeless tobacco at the Major League level, and the New York Yankees fully support the proposed Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York pertaining to prohibiting the use of smokeless tobacco at ticketed sports arenas and recreation areas.”

“We applaud Mayor de Blasio, Council Member Corey Johnson and other Council members for stepping up to the plate on behalf of our children and taking tobacco out of baseball in New York City,” said **Matthew L. Myers, President of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids**. “With the nation's largest city and home to two storied franchises moving to rid baseball of tobacco, this cause is destined to get even more serious and acquire deserved attention across the country. Tonight, at Yankee Stadium, history will be made again with the first regular season tobacco-free baseball game in Major League Baseball history.”

“Enjoying a baseball game as a family shouldn't bring with it the potential risks of a lifetime of addiction for New York's youngest fans,” said **Michael Davoli, Director New York Metro Government Relations at the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network**. “New York is sending a strong message to all kids by once and for all eliminating tobacco use on and off the field in our sports venues. We applaud the leadership of Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Viverito and Council Member Johnson in this important fight.”

“The American Lung Association applauds Mayor de Blasio for signing tobacco free baseball into law today. This is certainly a homerun for everyone: New York Mets and Yankee fans, employees and of course, the players as well. We also thank Speaker Mark-Viverito and Council Member Johnson for helping to lead the effort to end the use of smokeless tobacco within the sport. It is tragic to watch talented baseball players succumb to cancer from using these products and just as disturbing to see youth take up the deadly habit to imitate their heroes. We are heartened New York joins Boston, Chicago and the state of California in prohibiting the use of smokeless tobacco at baseball stadiums. We look forward to all of Major League Baseball becoming tobacco-free soon,” said **Michael Seilback, Vice President of Public Policy and Communications for the American Lung Association of the Northeast**

“Thanks to Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito and our sponsor, Health Committee Chair Corey Johnson, today we can all channel our inner Tom Hanks and proclaim 'There's no tobacco in baseball,’” said **Robin Vitale, Senior Director of Government Relations at the American**

Heart Association. “Or at least that's true in New York City and a handful of other locations around the country. Tobacco-free baseball is an important movement to counteract the disparity of smokeless tobacco use among young men, particularly those who are athletes. We encourage the MLB to institute this policy across the country.”

The second bill, Intro. 554-A, requires the establishment of a training coordinator who will work with agencies on how to best identify runaway, homeless or sexually exploited youth and how to connect them with appropriate services. The coordinator will work with a group of agencies to determine the training that is most appropriate for their respective staff. In addition, the coordinator will identify appropriate training programs available through government or non-profit agencies that will be utilized for City employees who have frequent contact with youth who may be runaway, homeless or sexually exploited. Lastly, the coordinator will help agencies identify best practices to ensure that their staff is able to identify possible warning signs. Runaway, homeless or sexually exploited youth are among the most at risk populations in New York, and it is essential that the City connect them with the services they need by receiving appropriate annual training with frontline agency staff that will be equipped with the tools they need to identify and help these young people. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill's sponsor, Council Member Mathieu Eugene.

“We must do more to help our city's at-risk youth. Agency employees that have regular contact with runaway and homeless youth and youth who have been sexually exploited will now be required to receive proper training so they can identify at-risk young people and help these youth receive the services they need,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene, Chair of the Committee on Youth Services.** “Intro. 554-A will make an impact in the lives of so many young people, and I thank Mayor Bill de Blasio and my colleagues for their outstanding support.”

The third bill, Intro. 993-A, alters the date on which the Administration for Children's Services and the Department of Youth and Community Development reports on the number of people who are referred as, self-report as, or who DYCD or ACS later determine to be sexually exploited children. This will allow ACS and the DYCD to better identify and meet the needs of youth who are or have been sexually exploited. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill's sponsor, Council Member Stephen Levin.

“We take the responsibility of combating youth sexual exploitation and abuse very seriously. The first step to address this problem is for all the decision-makers to have accurate data on the true extent of these traumatizing incidents. To that end, Intro. 993 will extend the reporting window for partner agencies in order to give them adequate time to collect all necessary information,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin.**

The fourth bill, Intro. 815-A, expands the right to truthful information under the New York City Human Rights Law. This bill makes it unlawful for a person or entity to mislead protected persons when an employment opportunity or housing or public accommodation is unavailable when, in fact, it is. In addition, this bill also legislates an express cause of action for employers and principals who experience discrimination based on the characteristics of the agents or employees who are acting on their behalf, such as being denied a service or access to a public

space. Intro. 815-A also helps strengthen and preserve the use of testers – people investigating instances of discrimination on an organization’s behalf – which is a very important but underused tool to fight against discrimination. Often times, individuals who are aggrieved in these situations may not know that an employer is discriminating against an entire class of people. This bill will make it abundantly clear that organizations that use testers to root out discrimination can bring claims forward. Intro. 815-A provides more tools in the arsenal of both organizations and the Commission to fight discrimination in its most invidious forms. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsor, Council Member Brad Lander.

“We are taking two more steps today to make sure New Yorkers are even better protected from discrimination: Establishing a stronger ‘right to truthful information’ and making clear that companies, non-profits and other entities have recourse when they are discriminated against based on the characteristics of their employees or those acting on their behalf,” said **Council Member Brad Lander**. “A stronger right to truthful information will be especially valuable to civil rights testing organizations that send out undercover testers, often in matched-pairs, to uncover discrimination. Tester organizations have proven effective in rooting out discrimination that is otherwise hard to prove. Thank you to Council Speaker Mark-Viverito and Mayor de Blasio for their support of this bill and for making clear, both by working to pass a number of laws updating and expanding our protections and by supporting real, robust enforcement, that whatever may be happening elsewhere in the country, we will zealously defend the rights of New Yorkers, in the knowledge that our City can only achieve its promise when all of us – regardless of our background – have full and equal ability to achieve our potential.”

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