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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES NYC MUNICIPAL ID TO  
GIVE ACCESS TO 1-YEAR FREE MEMBERSHIPS AT 33 OF THE CITY'S MOST  
ACCLAIMED CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS**

**Mayor de Blasio:** I'm feeling deep nostalgia about my trip to Italy. I think we should – we should go immediately, John –

**John Calvelli:** We're leaving now.

**Mayor:** – and continue our devotion to our ancestral heritage. Thank you, John Calvelli. John is a dear friend of almost 20 years, and someone that a lot of us turn to to understand not just our cultural institutions and how government can work best with them. And John has a big picture view on this city and this beloved borough, and he's someone I've turned to many times for help and advice, and let's thank John for all he does for this city.

[Applause]

As New Yorkers, we are inherently so proud of the Bronx Zoo. It's one of our greatest attractions. It's one of the things that makes New York truly special. I want to thank Dr. Christian Samper for his tremendous leadership, and not just of this zoo, but what he does all around the world protecting wildlife. Let's thank him for all he does.

[Applause]

We have good news to report today. I want to thank the members of this administration who did such great work to get us to this day – Nisha Agarwal, our commissioner of the Office of Immigrant Affairs, and Tom Finkelparl, our cultural affairs commissioner. Let's thank them.

[Applause]

And I will be introducing each and every one of the elected officials in just a moment, so they can say a few words, and we appreciate all of their support with the municipal ID program, and all the ways we're going to use it, including this incredibly exciting collaboration with the

cultural institutions group. Now, the muni ID program has gotten a lot of attention for a good reason. It makes sense [inaudible] New Yorkers to include everyone, to respect everyone, to give everyone access to the opportunities of this city. It's very much a part of who we are as New Yorkers to feel that way. And we are looking forward to a historic January 1st, 2015, when the Muni ID becomes available.

Now, it's a great thing in and of itself, but we said from the beginning, we want this card to do a lot of different things at once. We want to get a lot out of it. And there would be some really fantastic benefits that would come together with this card, and one of them we're announcing today. And I can't thank the Cultural Institutions Group enough for their incredible energy and willingness to be a part of this – 33 institutions crucial to this city, beloved in this city, quintessential to this city. They have joined together in our plan to have, connected to the ID, a one-year – one year free membership in all these cultural institutions – every last one of them.

[Applause]

That is a really legit deal. And it speaks to the universal nature of this ID card as something that New Yorkers are going to want.

So many New Yorkers don't have ID. I keep emphasizing, we are not a city of drivers as much as most parts of this country are. And a lot of people don't have ID for any number of reasons and need it. And it's part of allowing you to live fully in this city. We want this to be an attractive idea on so many levels. Well, this announcement today really epitomizes a great new feature that people are going to want in this ID. You can visit the Bronx Zoo, you can go to the New York Botanical Garden, the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, the New York City Ballet – it goes on and on, the Brooklyn Museum, the Staten Island Museum, so many fantastic institutions. And, there will be additional benefits and deals associated with the card, including discounts to Carnegie Hall, and the Public Theater, and invitations to exhibition openings at P.S. 1 Contemporary Arts Center. So, it's going to have five borough benefits, a range of positive benefits, and people are going to want to take a part in it.

The Cultural Institutions Group, all these institutions, were really energetic allies in this, because they share a commitment to making sure their institutions are for everyone. We are not an elitist city. We are not a city that wants to see great art and music and dance available only to a few. We're a city that believes everyone benefits from deepening their connection to arts and culture. Cultural Institutions Group has consistently rung this note that we have to open the doors wider, we have to get more people in, more and more young people in the picture, giving them exposure that will lead them to a lifetime of love of the arts. And so there's been a great energy to be a part of this, and we appreciate that.

And I've got to tell you, parents – and I speak as a parent myself – are keenly aware that when you give your children the opportunity to experience these extraordinary institutions, it builds something in them. It builds a love of arts and culture, it builds a sense of belonging, it builds a sense of being special, to walk through the doors of these extraordinary places. And parents of all kinds get this. I think for some of the parents who are newer to our city, and newer to our

country, there's a special meaning, a special sense of acceptance, to become a part of our cultural life.

I want to use an example of one parent who's with us today, Jose de Leon. He's a very hardworking man, he's a father of two boys – Alexander, 11 years old, and Daniel, 9 years old. Jose works in construction. His wife is a teacher at P.S. 43 in Queens. Every year as a special treat, he takes his sons here to the Bronx Zoo. I know what you want to ask next – what are their favorite exhibits? We have prepared that answer in advance [Laughter]. It is the gorillas and the zebras. Well, with the Muni ID, he can see, and his sons can see, the gorillas and zebras any time they want, because their first year will be free.

And this card, again, is going to be something that people of many, many walks of life are going to want to take advantage of. It's crucially important to treat our fellow New Yorkers who happen to be undocumented, with great respect and inclusion. That's a great advantage of this card, but it's also crucially important for all the people who don't have ID and need it. It's such a central part of our society. And we want to make this something that legitimizes our efforts to make government more efficient, to be fair to our taxpayers. So, right now we issue any number of types of ID cards. There's a process around each and a cost around each. We want to start bringing together, under the rubric of the municipal ID, a lot of other kinds of IDs that we issue as a city. We'll have more to say on that in the coming months. But we think there's a great opportunity to create more efficiency in this process as well.

The Muni ID card really aids people if they don't have another photo ID. It means you can get a lease, you can get a library card, you can do so many of the things – a bank account – so many of the things that are necessary in life that aren't possible without an ID. It's also going to allow you to connect with New York City government much more deeply. It's going to allow access to a host of certain New York City buildings – not all– but certain New York City buildings. And it's going to help the relationship between our police force and all of our communities because it's one thing police officers will tell you is, when they have an interaction with a resident, it begins with asking for ID. If you have that ID, it's a very different reality than if you don't.

This is going to encourage communication and partnership between police and community and that is a major benefit as well. I'll like to have a number of people come up and speak and tell you more about what's happened here. But just want to say something from a great hero of mine, Mayor LaGuardia, who I think epitomizes that New York City – epitomized that New York City impulse to inclusion. And LaGuardia appreciated the arts deeply, like all right thinking Italians – particularly loved opera and felt something powerful about the need for all the people to experience arts and culture. In his words, he wanted a New York City where New Yorkers – “New Yorkers could live beautifully and creatively.” We aspire to that too. And this wonderful development today [inaudible] Muni ID card opening the door to so many fantastic cultural institutions really epitomizes the goals of Mayor LaGuardia and our goals today.

A quick moment in Español.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that – now going back to English – with that we return to a dear, dear friend, who has epitomized the renaissance of Brooklyn and the renaissance of the Brooklyn Museum, and the great inclusive energy of the Brooklyn Museum. He's announced his retirement just a few days ago. I'm not sure any of us is going to let him fully retire because he's been a visionary leader and of course a great president of the Cultural Institutions Group and a key partner in bringing us to this day. The president of the Brooklyn Museum, Arnold Lehman.

[Applause]

**Arnold Lehman:** Mr. Mayor, Speaker, members of the council, good afternoon. I guess I don't need to introduce myself after that, thank you very much. I'm delighted to be here this afternoon for this incredibly important announcement regarding the partnership between the City of New York municipal ID program and the 33 members standing behind me, of the Cultural Institutions Group. The CIG – as you've already heard and perhaps will continue to hear – is comprised of extraordinary cultural institutions and extraordinary cultural leadership. And they are charged with and provide exceptional stewardship for many of the most important New York City owned properties throughout the five boroughs. Among the CIG, are many of our city's cultural and neighborhood cornerstones and proudly, a large number of the most respected cultural institutions, science institutions, and performing arts institutions in the world. The city and the CIGs have a proud and long history of partnership and our founding principles encourage the CIGs to be accessible to all New Yorkers. And I am absolutely and personally thrilled that the city and the CIGs have partnered to offer this membership to residents of New York City who sign up for the municipal ID. This is another wonderful opportunity for the CIGs to fulfill their mandate to allow access to their institutions and serve our diverse public through educational programs, collections, exhibitions, and performances. And I want to deeply, and truly thank the mayor of our great city, Speaker Mark-Viverito, members of the Council, our commissioner, Tom Finkelppearl of DCLA, and Nisha Agarwal of Immigrant Affairs, as well as so many members of the administration staff for bringing us all together today – one of the most important days in my career. I think this is a true landmark for the City of New York and for all of our residents and I could not be prouder to be here and to be president of the CIG at a moment like this. Thank you very much.

**Mayor:** I want to just say to everyone on my team, and I want to give a great credit before we get deeper into this press conference, for the staging of this press conference here in this beautiful location. And I want to say to all the leaders of the Cultural Institutions [inaudible], we value your time. We appreciate your presence. If you happen to be standing on a stage somewhere, does it get better than this? Okay, we thank you very much for your commitment and for being a part of this today. But as I bring forward our speaker, I want to say, there are – so I'm going to do what you told me to do? There are no hard feelings between me and the speaker based on yesterday's softball game. We have put it behind us. We hardly remembered it happened

[Laughter]

We're attempting to regain a sort of partnership between the Mayor's Office and the City Council while limping vigorously. But we had a lot of fun yesterday as part of our really

wonderful relationship. And this issue is something Speaker Mark-Viverito cares passionately about. We talked about a lot of things that needed to happen in this city. This is one of the ones the City Council worked on with such great intensity and speed. And so the City Council is close to the grassroots and knew what this would mean for people's lives. And today, a lot of people are going to be even happier to know this ID is going to bring a lot of other great things into their life. With that, I welcome the Speaker of the New York City Council, Melissa Mark-Viverito.

[City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito speaks]

[Mayor de Blasio introduces various elected officials; various elected officials speak]

**Mayor:** Okay, on topic questions first. On topic. On topic. Bobby.

**Question:** We have a [inaudible] cultural institutions [inaudible]?

**Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl:** So, I think the short answer to that is that there's no clear exact way, but one of the things you have to understand, this is for new members. So, if you are currently a member of one of these institutions, you're not going to be able to get a new membership. So, this is access also to the cultural institutions for additional members that they don't currently have. It's a one year proposition, so after that year, the institutions will be able to go and find – you know, they'll have the email address of that – of you, if you've signed up to a member of natural history, and then they're going to ask you to become a member, to renew a membership. So, we think that in the long run, it's going to be a proposition that could actually improve the membership quantities of those institutions. This is all in the future, so it's somewhat speculative, but that has been thought about a lot.

**Mayor:** I'd like to just add, the – I think we have to remember what these institutions are here for, and how deeply felt the commitment is, by these cultural institutions, to be available to all New Yorkers. So, I don't think anyone's content if you say, you know, there's tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people who could be coming each year, and aren't coming in, and aren't experiencing all this. I've talked to so many of these leaders behind us. They're passionate about wanting more and more people to experience. They are fantastic cultural institutions. So, from my point of view, this is about the mission. The mission is, to expose this entire city to our extraordinary cultural assets, to break down barriers, to make it more inclusive. That's good for everyone. That's in the public interest. Then if you want to go to the narrow economics, I think Tom is 100 percent right. In the short run, people get in for free, and in the long run, they become lifetime members, and they keep contributing to that institution.  
Jennifer.

**Question:** Do you know many people you expect to sign up, and also, like [inaudible] explain why [inaudible] more than just undocumented New Yorkers sign up for this, like why is it important to you that everybody, all types of New Yorkers sign up for this?

**Mayor:** So, I'll have Nisha come up in a second on the early projections. I think, I do want to emphasize the word early. It's mid-September, and this is going to launch on January 1st, so, you know, we'll have more to say as we get closer about what we're projecting, and how the

application process will go. And then, really the measure will be, throughout the first year, getting a sense of who really does come forward. But the value here is – look, we again are an unusual city. People come in and out of here in so many different ways. Again, so many people don't have drivers licenses – alone, that makes this a card that brings real value. I think – I start the equation from a public policy point of view, that says the absence of an ID card is a problem in our society. It really inhibits the ability of people to do a lot of the things they have to do, and a lot of their interaction with government is inhibited, and I'm including the connection with the police force. So, I think there is a larger public policy value in everyone having an ID. Every parent will tell you how much they want children to carry ID when they go out. I mean, it's a real foundational concept here. I think beyond that, the notion of something that simplifies people's lives and simplifies their connection to government, to say we're going to try to combine multiple types of government IDs from the city into this one as much as possible over time. That's an efficiency matter. But I think on the question of how important it is to acknowledge and respect and embrace the almost half million of our fellow New Yorkers who are undocumented – that's an incredibly important step in and of itself, in terms of living out our values as New Yorkers, and also we hope that it will be a powerful symbol to leaders in Washington about the kind of changes we have to make. It's very important that it be recognized that this card is something that has something for everybody in it, who doesn't currently have a form of ID.

Let me call up Nisha for projections.

**Commissioner Nisha Argawal:** So, as the mayor said, it's early in our process of implementing this ID card, and so we're finalizing our enrollment system, and we'll have very soon some very clear targets. To give you a sense, in other cities that have a municipal IDs, about 1 percent of their population signed up for the municipal ID, but they didn't have deals, like 33 world-class cultural institutions offering free membership. So, we're expecting to do a lot better than other cities have done, and should have clear targets very soon.

**Mayor:** On topic. Rich.

**Question:** I'm wondering if there's anybody from one of the institutions could tell us what it is, the benefit will be [inaudible] going into their institutions?

**Mayor:** [inaudible] volunteer?

**Unknown:** There's 33.

**Mayor:** I want to see who steps forward. There, this is the platform. Who will step forward?  
Emily.

**Emily Rafferty:** I will step forward, and say, the value for all of us, is as the mayor says, in our accessibility, and maximizing our accessibility for those people who might not have crossed our threshold, such as our friend here who has never seen a ballet. So, for us, we look at it as an expansion of our audiences, which is something that is a core part of all of our missions, and if we can participate with this city in this initiative, as we are all dedicated to do, we think that it

will very much contribute to the success of this effort to engage all five boroughs and citizens of this entire community.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Emily Rafferty:** I can give you several examples, but probably the most poignant one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to go back to 9/11. And I think it was a quintessential answer to your question. Obviously, everybody was in shock. The next day, 9/12, Mayor Giuliani called the Met and he said, can you get yourself opened tomorrow – which was a shocking notion that we might be able to do that, before the internet, cell phones, or anything else. But we did it, and the next morning – I will never forget the image – there were thousands, thousands of people outside the Metropolitan Museum of Art from all of our boroughs and a lot of our international tourists who were in the city at the same time. And what they would say, time and again, is places like the Met provide renewal. They provide solace. They provide affirmation that through time and history, we are able to, once again, survive and prevail. And I think that is at the core of what we can do for our citizens and the people who visit all of our institutions, and I think my colleagues would agree and certainly – anybody who would like to add.

**Mayor:** Let me bring up John Calvelli. Thank you very much Emily. I also want to congratulate Emily on her extraordinary tenure as chair of the board of the Metropolitan Museum and thank you for sharing.

[Applause]

I think to Richard's question – I think that was the perfect example of what cultural means in this city to people – how it sustains us in so many ways. John Calvelli wanted to add.

**John Calvelli:** I just wanted to add another point to it, because the mayor spoke about mission. So the mission of this organization is to help educate people about the natural world, about biodiversity. We're going through one of the greatest extinction crises the planet has ever seen. So at the end of the day, what we are hoping to do as people come here, they learn what is happening in the world by coming to an institution like the Bronx Zoo. Fundamentally what we're doing is we're helping to educate the next generation of leaders that they have a responsibility to help save the natural world. That is an intangible, but is very important in terms of what we're trying to do for the people of New York, and really, we have to be global citizens.

**Mayor:** Amen. Thank you very much. Emily?

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Yes, the example we've given before and again, all the details will be sketched out as we get closer. But there are any number of places you go for an appointment and you're asked for an ID. And you're going for a job interview or to qualify for a benefit or whatever it may be. So it's to simplify that process to have a readily recognized ID available. When I say, not all, I'm stating the obvious. There are secure facilities that a general ID doesn't get you into.

**Question:** [inaudible] Can you get us any sense of where you are with financial institutions, and whether or not they will be accepting these IDs [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** I'll bring up Nisha to go over the details. I want to say, I think the process of getting to the definition of what will be required for the ID and how to make it secure was a very impressive one. A lot of research was done in terms of the other cities that have municipal ID. The City Council worked very closely with the administration. The NYPD was deeply involved every step of the way in terms of ensuring the kind of qualitative level necessary to make sure it was a secure and accurate ID. So we feel very good about the foundation that's been laid, but Nisha will talk about the next steps.

**Commissioner Agarwal:** In terms of some of the details of the program rules, draft rules were initially promulgated and are available now. And there will be a public hearing in early October to discuss things like, what documents do you need to bring to be able to show identity and residency, what are some of the other rules and details of this program. So I'd encourage folks who are interested in those details to look at those rules that are available. In terms of the financial institutions, we are in active conversations with the financial institutions as well as their regulators, to hopefully be able to announce [inaudible] the commitment of financial institutions participating with the municipal ID as well.

**Question:** I have a question about the [inaudible] part. So if you don't come to a museum [inaudible] you don't just flash it and you get in, you have to sign up or – what's the process exactly?

**Commissioner Finkelppearl:** So once you apply, once you have your municipal ID, you're going to then be able to go to the institutions and can apply for your membership. So you're going to get the membership – the membership package I think is – all the membership packages for all of the institutions are going to be in the press release. Is that correct? Yes. So the press release will show you all of the institutions. So it's a two-step process. You get your municipal ID first and then you go to the institution to get your membership.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Commissioner Finkelppearl:** Yeah, or you go to the desk at the Metropolitan Museum, et cetera. Exactly.

**Mayor:** On-topic, on-topic. Is that question on topic? Go ahead.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Absolutely, it's available to any New Yorker who wants to apply for it. Again, I think the people who are going to apply for it the most are people who don't have other forms of ID, but it's available to all.

**Question:** [inaudible]



**Mayor:** I think we do. Do we have one that is public yet?

**Unknown:** We can't show it to you now, but we are working on it.

**Mayor:** It's close. We are going to get there very soon and you'll be the first to know. On-topic, yes.

**Question:** Other than these cultural benefits, why else should somebody who has a driver's license or has a non-driver's ID or goes to the DMV and for ten dollars, get a non-driver ID, why [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Well I think the – we're going to make this a very straightforward and accessible program to get an ID. A lot of people don't run to the DMV. Even though the DMV has made a lot of progress, it's not necessarily the place people look forward to going. Even ten dollars for a lot of people, can be a lot of money. So, the goal is we want a simple universal, readily available ID. We think that is all to the good in this society. Last time, on-topic. Please.

**Question:** Have there been further efforts to [inaudible] maybe like the sports realm, or –

**Commissioner Agarwal:** Yes, so this is not the last you will hear of benefits for the municipal ID. Beyond the cultural institutions, we're talking to lots of private retailers, others through iconic New York City organizations. So, expect lots more bang for your free ID cards soon.

**Question:** So, does the ID have any form of, like characteristics that can't be copied, like a barcode, or – what makes it not be able to be duplicated?

**Commissioner Agarwal:** So, the ID card will have a barcode, a unique ID identifier, there will be lots of – and the hologram, and kind of other security features that make it – it will look more like a driver's license than other sorts of ID cards, so it will have a lot of other security features to make sure it can't be duplicated, and when individuals apply, they'll have to provide documents – we'll have to establish their age, so we don't have underage people trying to use this card for purposes that they shouldn't be using it for.

**Question:** [inaudible] driver's licenses [inaudible] alcohol?

**Commissioner Agrawal:** So, there's a barcode that will be on there, that could be used also for other purposes, to facilitate access.

**Mayor:** Let's try some off topic.

**Question:** Ok, not to rub it in –

**Mayor:** I have a feeling I know what the topic is.

**Question:** How are you feeling after last night, and –

**Mayor:** I'm pained. I'm pained in more ways than one.

**Question:** The New York Times [inaudible] on that it was your first base playing that caused the Mayor's Office to be...

**Mayor:** I will say that my – after the first at bat, and Speaker Mark-Viverito's wily pitching caused me to lunge at a pitch I never should have taken, and then on my way to first base, immediately pulled something in my thigh – it just was not the game plan. So, I think my first base play went steadily downhill, and I said to – where's Skipper? Skipper, where are you? He left, huh? He doesn't want to take tough questions – Skipper John Paul Lupo, I said, you've got to get me out of this game and get someone who can play better, because it was not working out. So, I'm certain I did not contribute in the way I wanted to. But, I do want to note, as soon as I left the game, the team scored seven runs and came back immediately. So, that's my version of leadership.

[Laughter]

**Question:** On the 15-year-old girl who went missing from the school – can you talk about the city's position? I know that [inaudible] mandatory audible alarms on school doors, you left that up to the discretion of the principal [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** No, first of all, we are working to determine how to best ensure that every school has the alarms it needs. It's just – we wanted to do it in a way that worked for each school. That's an ongoing effort, and we've obviously been communicating closely with the City Council on that. But this is more than a question of alarms. And this is a very troubling situation. I want to first, because as a parent, I was very unhappy to see that a child with these profound problems was not supported better by that school. Every parent feels a sense of vulnerability when they go into where their children are, and a child with such severe special needs – my heart goes out to those parents from that family, for what they went through, for all those hours, wondering. It's not acceptable that this happens. And I want to be clear that anybody who works for me, and that means everyone at the DOE, is going to be held to a very high standard, and if this happens, anyone who had responsibility is going to feel some consequences, because it's just unacceptable that we don't watch out for every child, particularly our children with special needs. So, this is a moment that we're going to use to get a message across to all our employees, that this is unacceptable behavior and it won't be tolerated.

**Question:** Following up on that, my understanding is that Avonte's Law [inaudible] sort of examine what schools need, whether it's alarms or others. Do you believe, given what happened yesterday, that the administration sort of needs to step up that process, and get to a conclusion before May?

**Mayor:** I feel, given the size of the school system, that the law was structured properly to acknowledge the time it would take to reach across the entire system, and that we're moving any time we see an opportunity to add equipment in more quickly – we'll certainly do it. But again, I don't think this – this example, from what I know of it, and I will hasten to add, there's an investigation going on, we have very preliminary information, we won't get the full report until

we have had a full investigation. But this strikes me as human error. This does not strike me as an equipment problem. This does not strike me as the problem is a lack of an alarm. This strikes me as people not doing their job. You know, we need to address that problem too. Alarms and equipment are part of the solution. We're acting on that. But there's something much more fundamental we have to get at here, that any public employee that doesn't watch out for a child is not doing their job, and we have to fix it.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Yeah, I mean, that's – as you know, that report referred to cases going back a few years, and we certainly raised concerns. I know Commissioner Carrion was looking at that situation very closely, and trying to figure out how we can create a properly secure environment. We are devoted to community-based solutions. We think there's a lot of reasons why that's the smart thing to do, but they have to be secure at the same time. So, you'll be hearing more from ACS on that.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Well, I think the use of handcuffs is an issue that really depends on the circumstance. I don't want to comment across the board, because it really depends on what their interaction with the police was, for example. But what I think is obvious is, we have to get to the bottom of making sure that kids do not leave secure facilities unless they're supposed to.

Jillian.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, I'm just wondering what your thoughts are in the poll showing in the 11th Congressional District race that Michael Grimm is currently in the lead over Domenic Recchia by four points, and I was wondering whether you'd be campaigning for –

**Mayor:** Oh, I'll certainly campaign for Domenic, I'll do anything that would be helpful to him, because I believe very much that he should be the next congressman. I worked with him closely in the City Council. He's a very effective public servant. He's a very down-to-earth guy who understands what people are going through in that congressional district. He's, you know, a public school parent, he was a school board member, and he really understands the lives of people who are struggling and need help from Washington. And, you know, Mr. Grimm is part of a Republican majority in the House that has not addressed the problems of this city, or this country. So, it's absolutely time for a change. The poll says to me something very simple, which is, when an incumbent is essentially neck-and-neck with a challenger, it means the challenger is surging, and the challenger has a very good chance of winning. I think Domenic's going to win. Sally.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, [inaudible] NYCLASS said they're not willing to accept any compromise on the horse carriage issue besides the electric cars. I was wondering if you [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** I don't – I think you know me by now, I don't do hypotheticals, and I don't bargain against myself. We're going to see legislation put forward very, very soon. That's going to represent our vision of how to solve this problem. I've said very simply, you know, we should

not have horse carriages on the streets of New York City. And we want to make sure, of course, there are employment opportunities for the folks who currently do the work. But we'll put forward the proposal that represents our values, then there'll be a legislative process.

**Question:** [inaudible] explain the ways in which your wife Chirlane [inaudible] City Hall [inaudible] during your first five weeks in office, and don't you think that the public has a right to know how she's been involved in any sort of way?

**Mayor:** I think I've described it dozens of times. She is the most important advisor in my life. I've said that over and over again. I consult with her all day long. The role she played in helping us put together our platform last year, put together our team this year, and a lot of the core things we're working on. She played a crucial role in our UPK effort. It's impossible to summarize all the things that my wife has done as part of this team. So, I think it's self-evident she's my most important advisor, and I think it's quite clear why we think that the position we're taking makes sense.

Yes.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, what was your reaction this morning to the report about the severity in Manhattan between the rich and the poor, is leading the nation?

**Mayor:** Look, it's not an acceptable state of affairs. It's just – it's something we have to grapple with. By the way, I don't feel lonely as a voice on this point. Lloyd Blankfein talked about this pretty powerfully a few months back. Warren Buffett's talking about it. I think last year there was some inference in some of the public discourse that talking about the tale of two cities, talking about inequality was somehow divisive or unusual. I think it's becoming the consensus position now. We have an inequality crisis in this city. We have an inequality crisis in this nation. If we don't address it, it is at our peril. And we're trying, with all the tools of local government, to move every agenda item we can as quickly as possible – pre-k, afterschool, paid sick leave, affordable housing, minimum wage – you know, you go down the list, we're going to work on every front we can. We need partnership from the federal government. The big missing link here is we need a federal government committed to addressing income inequality. We don't have it now. I'm hopeful that these congressional elections will change things, but I'll tell you something, if we don't have a congress willing to take on this issue, it will undermine this nation. It will make us less secure. And this has to be treated head-on.

Jennifer.

**Question:** Can you talk about employment opportunities for the drivers, the horse carriage drivers? What do you mean? Do you mean, you want them to drive these electric cars, or –

**Mayor:** Sure.

**Question:** – like, what are some of the opportunities –

**Mayor:** Well, I've talked about this for a long time, so I just refer you to many many previous statements, and the platform, and everything else. We've talked about the – I think electric cars are a great alternative. There's work to be done to see if we can get all of the logistics worked

out, but I think the notion of saying, we have a thriving tourist industry – almost 55 million tourists last year. Lots of people want to experience the city in lots of ways. I've always believed if we could make the model of the replica electric cars work in Central Park, there'd be a huge audience for it. But whatever specifics are worked out in the legislative process, I want to make sure that anyone doing the work now in the horse carriage industry has an alternative opportunity for work. I want to make sure people have continuity, economically.

**Question:** They don't want that, and also they say they haven't talked to your office about that option?

**Mayor:** Well, we're going to – look, first of all, I think public policy making is about deciding what's best for all the people, and all – for our large society, and there's always going to be different interests, different desires in that office. There's going to be a very comprehensive legislative process, where all voices are going to be heard. And we'll certainly talk with people from the industry and others. But the bottom line is, my job is – first of all, follow through on what I said, things have to happen. Second, to come up with a plan that ends something that does not make sense in this city, which is the horse carriage industry, and get people who are in that industry a new opportunity, and I think we can do that.

**Question:** [inaudible]

**Mayor:** Louder, please.

**Question:** That several members of the Taxi and Limousine Commission [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Why?

**Question:** One said it might be unconstitutional? And they may [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Well, individual members of the commission can have whatever view they want, I'll respect that. But I have no reason to believe it's unconstitutional – a lot of work on both the council's side and the mayor's side went into it. I think a lot of legal minds looked at it and thought it was quite sound. Look, I think it's a necessary law. I think it unfortunately sprang from a tragedy, and one that many families had experienced, and we have to address this challenge much more aggressively. So, if someone wants to legal challenge it, that's just another day in New York City. But we are confident it's a legally sound law, and a necessary law. Thank you, everyone.

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