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**REACTIONS: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS, PUTTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT CENTER OF 2015 AGENDA TO FIGHT INEQUALITY**

**NEW YORK**—In his second State of the City address, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced affordable housing would be the next front in his administration’s fight to lift up families and confront economic inequality. With housing the most significant cost facing New York City families, the Mayor laid out a sweeping set of programs to build a new generation of affordable housing, protect New Yorkers facing displacement from rising rents and harassment, and put in place the groundwork for denser, economically diverse communities with affordable homes for New Yorkers of all means.

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Below are some of the immediate reactions to the Mayor’s State of the City address:

“New York City is indeed strong, but it can be even stronger. To get there, we must focus on expanding the middle class and addressing economic inequality to make New York City the best it can be for everyone. Today, Mayor de Blasio put forth a plan to strengthen our city by increasing access to affordable housing, ending veteran homelessness, and increasing public transportation options—through ferries and bus rapid transit—in all five boroughs,” said **Public Advocate Letitia James**.

“The greatest challenge facing our borough and our city is ensuring our popularity translates into prosperity for all. At its most fundamental level, that requires our focus on making Brooklyn and the rest of the five boroughs affordable places to live, work and raise a family. Affordable housing has been a significant focus of my administration, and I am greatly heartened that it has been a focus of Mayor de Blasio’s as well. The vision he laid out in today’s State of the City address to advance affordable housing are bold and necessary, from transforming neighborhoods on the rise like Brownsville and East New York to pledging an end to veteran homelessness. I am particularly interested in proposals like the redevelopment of our rail yards and the provision of free legal representation for tenants facing landlord harassment, both items I have highlighted as priorities within the last year. I look forward to working closely with the de Blasio administration on these and other initiatives that will make affordable housing possible for everyone that wants to be part of our city, be they a long-term resident or a newcomer that wants to be part of our communities,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

“Mayor de Blasio has outlined a plan that is good for our families and therefore good for Queens. The creation of affordable housing for families, and especially for seniors, thus far has not kept up with demand, contributing to the inherited housing crisis. Mayor de Blasio’s Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Policy will bring us closer to meeting that demand. Queens is pleased that the Mayor is placing this as a top policy priority for his administration and has included emerging neighborhoods like Long Island City and Flushing West. Queens is especially thrilled with the Mayor’s commitment of capital investments to create 10,000 units of senior affordable housing. We want to keep our elders living close to their families, help them live independently, and with dignity. We will work with the administration to bring as much of the units as possible to Queens. That sound you hear is the cheers in the Rockaways. Queens is elated that permanent ferry service will be coming to

the Rockaways by way of Mayor de Blasio's Five-Borough Ferry System, a plan that had long been proposed but never in effect. Mayor de Blasio has laid forth a real capital commitment and a 2017 launch, and the restored Rockaway Ferry will be a boon for residents as an economic generator and an affordable transit option," said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**.

"We welcome Mayor de Blasio's announcement of committing \$200 million to the Lower Grand Concourse for the creation of 4,000 affordable housing units, site remediation, social programs and the redevelopment of our transit structure and infrastructure. My office, the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, SoBRO and others have long advocated for the transformative redevelopment of the Lower Grand Concourse and our Harlem River waterfront, and we look forward to working with the de Blasio administration on this transformative proposal," said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz**.

"Mayor de Blasio's housing plan is ambitious, necessary and smart. The Mayor's focuses on preservation, permanent affordability, and mandatory inclusionary zoning lay a strong foundation for real progress. This blueprint will take us far, and I think we can go even further: in the coming days, I will be discussing a number of additional ideas that can make the Mayor's plan even stronger," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A Brewer**.

"Congratulations to Mayor de Blasio for the pragmatic yet visionary proposals he set out in his State of the City today for combatting economic inequality. These include stimulating job growth, advancing living wages and paid sick leave, providing universal pre-K and creating community schools. I share the Mayor's continued interest in developing a more comprehensive public transportation system, including investments in a Rockaway ferry service. I especially welcome the Mayor's expansive vision of affordable housing. The Mayor's pledge to help New Yorkers whose homes were damaged or destroyed by Super Storm Sandy is of fundamental importance to residents in my district. I look forward to working with the Mayor on these and other proposals to assure that New York City remains the greatest City in the world," said **Congressman Gregory Meeks**.

"I applaud the ambitious affordable housing initiatives Mayor de Blasio put forth in his State of the City address, especially those aimed at reaching out to and housing the city's population of at-risk veterans, who have sacrificed so much for our country," said **Congressman Eliot Engel**. "In addition to the focus on keeping NYC affordable for all New Yorkers, I am also pleased that upgrading our aging infrastructure—an essential aspect of maintaining New York City's global competitiveness—is an important priority for this administration."

"I commend Mayor de Blasio for confronting New York's housing crisis in his State of the City address today," said **Congressman Jerrold Nadler**. "Affordable housing options are essential to ensuring New York remains a place where Americans of all stripes are able to live, no matter their income level. In 2015, we must continue the fight for equality, fairness, and justice in New York by supporting the Mayor's Housing New York plan and bringing even more affordable housing units to our great city."

"The Mayor outlined a progressive vision for the city that supports universal pre-K, paid sick leave and an emphasis on affordable housing—goals we should all work to advance," said **Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez**.

"I applaud Mayor de Blasio for making affordable housing the centerpiece of his State of the City address," said **Congresswoman Grace Meng**. "His vision to ensure that working and middle class New Yorkers have access to reasonably priced housing will help make New York a more affordable city, and will greatly benefit families, seniors, veterans and many others who continue to be impacted by the soaring cost of housing. I am also pleased that the Mayor has made housing homeless veterans a priority, an issue for which I've strongly advocated. Nobody who put their lives on the line to defend our country should be living on the streets of our city."

“Access to affordable housing continues to be a growing problem for families in my district and the rest of New York City. The Mayor’s new housing programs will allow us to continue fighting the loss of affordable housing by expanding access to inexpensive, permanent and safe housing for the city’s most vulnerable populations. I wholly support Mayor de Blasio’s plans to put affordable housing at the center of his 2015 agenda, and I applaud his particular commitment to significantly expand the number of affordable housing units in the Lower Concourse and Jerome Avenue Corridor areas of my district. I look forward to continue working with him on this and many other issues in the coming year,” said **Congressman José E. Serrano**.

“I am pleased to see Mayor de Blasio reaffirm his commitment to economic equality. The state of our city is strong, but its strength is derived from the diversity of neighborhoods and our commitment to help our struggling working families remain in their homes and in their communities. By building and preserving more additional affordable housing units, particularly in my congressional district that has been over developed with market rate and luxury housing, we continue to make New York City a place where everyone—despite their incomes and economic status—can be proud to call home,” said **Congressman Charles Rangel**.

“Mayor de Blasio has established an ambitious agenda for the City of New York. His proposals for creating or preserving 200,000 units of affordable housing, ending homelessness, and supporting local families who want to remain in their homes will improve the quality of life in this community. As the cost of housing continues to increase, particularly in Brooklyn, many families have lost their homes or are paying rents that are unsustainable. I will continue to work with my colleagues in Congress and in state and local government to focus not only our attention, but also our resources, on this critical initiative,” said **Congresswoman Yvette Clarke**.

“The Mayor has rightly made housing a central focus of his administration,” said **Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney**. “I am working at the federal level to help achieve this goal, and worked hard to achieve the funding of the Federal Housing Trust Fund, which was announced last year. This fund will provide hundreds of millions of dollars at the federal level for affordable housing. I share the Mayor’s commitment to making New York a place where middle class families can thrive in quality affordable housing and in safe neighborhoods. I look forward to continuing to work with him in the years to come.”

“A strong and vibrant New York City helps create a strong and vibrant New York State. The Senate Democratic Conference has long called for the need to confront the growing problem of inequality in our state and we are very pleased that Mayor de Blasio is taking the lead on this important issue. All New Yorkers should have access to quality, affordable housing, and we look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio to ensure that New York City achieves this laudable and important goal,” said **Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins**.

“When it comes to investing in affordable housing and ensuring that New Yorkers are never pushed out of their homes due to the ever growing rent rates, Mayor de Blasio’s programs will help fight the challenges faced by many of our New Yorkers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and give the people of this city an opportunity to take care of their families without having to ever feel burdened by it,” said **State Senator Diane Savino**.

“Providing free legal representation to tenants in housing court is extremely important to stabilizing our neighborhoods,” said **State Senator Adriano Espaillat**. “As more tenants seek assistance to stay in their homes, in the mist of rising housing costs, we need to make sure they have the help they need. I am fighting in Albany to provide free legal assistance to tenants that need it, and I applaud the Mayor for his continued partnership in this effort.”

“I applaud Mayor de Blasio’s proposal to expand ferry service citywide, including stops at Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn and Grand Street on the Lower East Side, as I urged with colleagues in October,” said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**.

“By investing in affordable housing, we build the foundation for a diverse, educated and economically sound city. Conversely, by not making this critical investment, we are reinforcing elements of a Dickensian society. Through his progressive policies and housing goals, Mayor de Blasio is sending a forceful statement that social

injustices and inequality will no longer be the status quo in New York City,” said **State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson**.

“I’m extremely pleased the Mayor focused his State of the City on the single biggest challenge facing working families in New York: affordable housing. I particularly welcome his plans to protect and strengthen rent regulation in Albany, provide free legal defense to tenants in rezoning areas, help homeless veterans, create and preserve senior housing and provide housing for artists. These initiatives are key to my district in Manhattan, where skyrocketing rents, porous regulations and aggressive landlords are forcing longtime tenants out of their homes,” said **State Senator Brad Hoylman**.

“I commend Mayor Bill de Blasio for his plan and vision to make this city more affordable, while fighting inequality. With increased programs for veterans and seniors, we will be better able to protect our most vulnerable New Yorkers. I am especially pleased to hear about the increase in affordable housing across the city, which will be a tremendous help to so many struggling families, especially in the South Bronx and East Harlem. I am also happy to hear about the Mayor’s focus on arts education and affordable options for artists, both of which will help ensure our vibrant creative sector continues to thrive,” said **State Senator José Serrano**.

“I applaud Mayor de Blasio for laying out a bold, concrete agenda to address the most critical challenges faced by our City,” said **State Senator Jose Peralta**. “Closing the opportunity gap means making sure that our fundamentals are secure, that people from all walks of life can afford to live and work in the greatest City in the world. There are great challenges ahead, but we must do what it takes to broaden the path to the middle class and make sure every New Yorker has a chance to thrive.”

“Mayor de Blasio is right that western Queens needs more affordable middle class housing so we can maintain the character of our growing neighborhoods. It is critical that the discussion regarding Sunnyside Yards includes the community and focuses on providing the additional infrastructure we desperately need. Any future development must bring with it more and better schools, new parks and open spaces, and vastly improved mass transit, particularly on the 7 line. I look forward to working with the Mayor to ensure our existing community is consulted and protected as this process unfolds,” said **State Senator Michael Gianaris**.

“The Mayor’s announcements regarding the Rockaways give me hope the Peninsula can emerge from decades of isolation stronger than ever. It is high time our City make use of the area’s untapped economic, commercial potential. Infrastructure upgrades are necessary to keep our community safe from any future storms and to also assure new residents that residing in the Rockaways is a one-of-a-kind experience. A ferry service is the icing on that cake—if the Peninsula is accessible, it is desirable,” said **State Senator Joseph Addabbo**.

“Mayor de Blasio is right to turn his focus to affordable housing—a problem affecting every square foot of our city. I look forward to working with the Mayor to help improve the quality of life of all New Yorkers. I agree with the Mayor—New York City has to be a place for everyone, and together we can make it happen,” said **Assemblyman Dan Quart**.

“I applaud the Mayor for addressing the critical issue of affordable housing. My communities of Boro Park and Midwood have a critical need for this issue to be addressed. I am confident that our Mayor will continue to champion this issue and make a real difference in the lives of New Yorkers,” said **Assemblyman Dov Hikind**.

“I, and my constituents in the 53rd Assembly District of Bushwick and Williamsburg, welcome Mayor de Blasio’s renewed commitment to building and preserving affordable housing in Brooklyn. As my colleagues in Albany and I work to strengthen the laws that protect renters, the City must maintain vigilance in enforcing those laws and providing education and legal assistance throughout the City to tenants whose rights are threatened by bad actors,” said **Assemblywoman Maritza Davila**.

“I applaud Mayor de Blasio on his steadfast support for affordable housing. I will work with the administration to address housing issues affecting my constituents, particularly the protection of existing affordable housing,

increasing the availability of senior housing, and keeping affordable housing truly affordable,” said **Assemblywoman Jo Ann Simon**.

“Access to affordable housing is fundamental to protecting our vibrant and dynamic communities. I applaud Mayor de Blasio’s effort to restore this priority through mandatory inclusionary zoning and intelligent density, while also working with communities to preserve their essential character,” said **Assemblyman Robert Rodriguez**.

“I am proud to stand with Mayor de Blasio as he continues his strong push to combat the lack of affordable housing across the five boroughs. However we can address the problem, we must use all the tools at our disposal to realize that Mayor’s 200,000 unit vision that he laid out one year ago, and by doing so, we’ll help countless families once again afford to live in New York City. As a member of the New York State Assembly Committee on Housing, this is a priority on my legislative agenda and I want to partner with the Mayor as he steers city policy toward inclusive housing,” said **Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte**.

“I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for making an historic \$200 million commitment to enhancing the infrastructure and the availability of quality affordable housing in the Cromwell-Jerome Avenue area. This down payment on addressing the affordable housing crisis and the day-to-day infrastructure needs of the southwest Bronx is a critical step in the right direction and will make a real difference in the lives of countless families in my community. Coupled with a strategy that includes advocating for stronger rent regulations and tenant protections, the Mayor’s announced commitment to the southwest Bronx is welcome news and I look forward to working closely with the administration to ensure that the community is fully engaged in the planning process,” said **Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner**.

“News of an affordable Red Hook commuter ferry to Manhattan will be another major boost to our community. Along with new housing initiatives and economic development proposals, Mayor de Blasio presented a great plan for Brooklyn. He deserves our support,” said **Assemblyman Felix Ortiz**.

“I applaud Mayor de Blasio’s bold plans to address New York City’s affordable housing crisis. New York City needs to be the greatest city in the world not just for the wealthy elite but for average New Yorkers who struggle to pay their bills. I am optimistic that this effort will help lessen the burden of housing costs, which is for most New Yorkers their biggest expense. New York City needs to think big, and thankfully Mayor de Blasio is doing just that,” said **Assemblyman Karim Camara**.

“My top priority for this current legislative session is the renewal and strengthening of rent protection laws. With homelessness at an all-time high, and a record number of apartments becoming deregulated, it is more important than ever that we take every possible step to protect tenants and ensure that people of all income levels can afford to live in New York City. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to building and preserving 200,000 units of affordable housing, and for outlining an ambitious, multi-faceted plan to achieve this goal,” said **Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz**.

“Today’s State of the City address signals a brighter future for New York City,” said **Council Member Donovan Richards**. “Harkening to our city’s historical tradition as a beacon of opportunity, Mayor de Blasio reaffirmed his commitment to building a city that provides opportunity for all. This commitment includes residents of Council District 31 who can look forward to a number of benefits; including increased Build it Back reimbursements, an affordable ferry for the Rockaways and all five boroughs, and the establishment of Bus Rapid Transit through dedicated partnerships with the MTA and the Department of Transportation. I would also like to thank the administration for highlighting the Rockaways as a site for responsible development to address the lack of affordable housing available and look forward to continued cooperation with the Mayor on behalf of hardworking families living in New York City.”

“I applaud Mayor de Blasio for the strong commitment to affordable housing that he made at today’s State of the City address. We are on the right path to meet this commitment after the landmark agreement that we secured for the Astoria Cove development. Our historic agreement on affordable housing was made even

stronger with a commitment to bring ferry service to Astoria. I am proud that the Mayor has also affirmed our investment to expand ferry service even further along the East River. Our waterfront communities, like those in Brooklyn and Roosevelt Island, have recently become booming technology corridors or will soon bring technology development. We are a city surrounded by water, and we need to take advantage of the water's resources, especially as we work to reach our commitment to reduce our carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050. I look forward to working with the Mayor on these innovative pledges," said **Council Member Costa Constantinides**.

"I commend Mayor de Blasio for his vision of a more progressive and inclusive future for the City of New York by tackling the overwhelming need for the creation and preservation of affordable housing. Today, thousands of New Yorkers face an uncertain future due to the rising cost of rent—a reality that threatens the cultural and economic diversity of our city. As millions of tourists and locals continue to frequent venues across New York City annually for our unique cultural experience, local artists will no longer have to fear gentrification with the support of the city in the creation of affordable spaces to live and create. Through Housing New York, we are investing directly into our seniors, veterans, and artists—the very people who have contributed immensely towards the growth and development of our communities. Our city must remain an affordable place where people from all walks of life can comfortably live, work, and raise their families," said **Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo**.

"This morning, Mayor de Blasio showed great vision in his plans to expand Bus Rapid Transit and citywide ferry service to better connect so many transit hungry neighborhoods. I am committed to working closely with him to ensure that together our city's transportation infrastructure is expanded and improved to be both safer and efficient," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez**.

"New York City must be affordable for all New Yorkers, and today's announcements are a major step in closing the inequality gap in our city. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to affordable housing," said **Council Member Stephen Levin**.

"I applaud Mayor de Blasio's efforts to provide free legal services to tenants facing landlord harassment in upzoned neighborhoods. I look forward to working with the administration to expand this excellent program even further, so all tenants facing landlord harassment will benefit from it. As Chair of the Contracts Committee, I'm particularly excited about the Mayor's commitment of a 57 percent increase in awards to MWBEs, and I will work with the administration to ensure we reach that goal," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

"Mayor de Blasio's speech today showed an understanding of what matters in our communities," said **Council Member Brad Lander**. "The Mayor's commitment to affordable housing for veterans, seniors, artists and musicians, as well as his support for expanded transit options like full featured Bus Rapid Transit and expanded ferry service will make sure that New York continues to be a city that is accessible, livable, and as full of energy as ever."

"We're taking back the waterfront and improving commutes through expanded ferry service for New Yorkers," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**, whose district will be receiving ferry service. "Thank you to Mayor Bill de Blasio for investing in our waterfront and transportation through ferry service, which I have been proud to advocate for following the leadership on a federal level by Senator Chuck Schumer and Congress member Carolyn Maloney."

"Mayor Bill de Blasio is making affordable housing a major priority, helping to ensure that the New Yorkers who contribute to our great city every day can continue to live here," said **Council Member Mark S. Weprin**.

"After listening to Mayor de Blasio's annual address, I believe that the state of our city is optimistic. I am gratified that housing was central to this address—as ending the affordable housing crisis must be central to anything we do as elected officials," said **Council Member Jumaane D. Williams**. "I am pleased that our administration continues to develop a strong affordable housing plan. As Chair of the Council's Committee on

Housing and Buildings, it has been my priority is to ensure that we do everything we can to end this housing crisis, and I plan to expedite legislation and hearings that will help this effort. I look forward to hearing more specifics on this plan and working with Mayor de Blasio and my Council Colleagues to get this done.”

“Mayor de Blasio laid out a bold vision for serving New Yorkers,” said **Jennifer Hensley, Executive Director of the Association for a Better New York**. “His thoughtful and ambitious plans to secure housing and create jobs and economic opportunities for all New Yorkers are critical steps forward. ABNY pledges to work with the Mayor and his administration to make his vision a reality for our city.”

“The five borough ferry system is a breakthrough that will bring connectivity to parts of the city that have been isolated from centers of employment,” said **Kathryn Wylde, President & CEO of the Partnership for New York City**. “The Partnership has long recommended this type of investment in ferries and we congratulate the de Blasio administration on their bold initiative.”

“Ensuring affordable housing for all is one of the most critical challenges of our time. Mayor de Blasio has taken important steps to spur the development of affordable housing. In the coming year, we welcome his leadership to ensure that higher levels of affordable housing are included in every new housing development—and that affordability must extend to low-income New Yorkers earning 30 percent of Area Median Income. We welcome the Mayor’s commitment to mandatory affordable housing in areas like East New York and his wise investment in legal defense for tenants in areas undergoing rezoning,” said **Javier H. Valdés, Co-Executive Director, Make the Road New York**.

“The Mayor’s call for an additional 160,000 market-rate units, above and beyond the 200,000 affordable units the administration plans to build or preserve over the next decade, is bold. It will go a long way to keeping New York the greatest city in the world in which to live, work, and raise a family. Building more new market rate and affordable housing and preserving and enhancing our current inventory of affordable housing is the only way to address our decades-long housing shortage. Without such bold initiatives, the City’s housing market will tighten further and become even more expensive. Our industry stands ready to work with the Mayor and other stakeholders to put shovels in the ground and cranes in the sky to tackle this important goal,” said **Real Estate Board of New York President Steven Spinola**.

“The severe shortage of affordable housing in New York City remains a crisis for millions of people struggling each month to pay their rent or mortgages. The only way to solve this problem is by preserving the affordable housing we already have, and creating new units for low-income New Yorkers. Mayor de Blasio’s plan to rezone our communities so we can build more housing makes sense, and we need make sure this is housing for the lowest-income tenants in every neighborhood in the city. The Mayor’s plan to provide legal assistance is a good step on the right path to protecting tenants who are being pushed out by speculating landlords in gentrifying neighborhoods. Low-income and moderate-income New Yorkers are also in dire need for good jobs that have a path to the middle class. Not only should there be a strong preservation component in each re-zoned neighborhood, but the City should only use a development model that creates housing affordable to local residents and hires locally for good union jobs. We also applaud the Mayor for addressing the rallying cry of fast food workers and low wage workers across our city by fighting for a minimum wage of \$15 per hour by 2015,” said **Jonathan Westin, Executive Director, New York Communities for Change**.

“Today, Mayor de Blasio outlined a bold initiative to help make New York City more affordable. The 50+ are working and retired, raising children, sending them to college, caring for their parents and most are watching and worried about the bottom line. Housing costs have the biggest impact for most,” said **Beth Finkel, State Director for AARP in New York State**. “For many elderly, paying their rent comes down to a budget balancing act, and AARP thanks the Mayor for his commitment to tackling housing costs. AARP looks forward to working with Mayor de Blasio and the City Council to address a primary concern of so many New Yorkers—the cost of living here—and continuing to make New York a great place to live, work and play for all age groups.”

“We applaud the Mayor’s initiatives which put the needs of working families front and center. The Mayor is moving us toward the NYC we’ve always advocated for: one that works for everyone, not just the wealthy and well-connected,” said **Bill Lipton, Director of the New York State Working Families Party**.

“In his affordable housing plan, the Mayor has rightly honed in on the South Bronx as a neighborhood in need of investment and ripe with opportunity. The rezoning of the Jerome Avenue Corridor and investments in the Southwest Bronx will create thousands of desperately needed affordable homes, and build the foundation of thriving neighborhoods that residents can be proud of. Helping New Yorkers fight evictions will combat displacement in our communities and stave off homelessness. And because access to culture is so crucial to healthy neighborhoods, dedicated housing for artists—like our forthcoming Bronx Commons development—will ensure that the Bronx continues generate and provide access to art for generations to come. We look forward to continuing to partner with the city on making these plans a reality,” said **Nancy Biberman, affordable housing developer and Founder and President of the Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco)**.

“This is a thrilling vision on the part of the Mayor and his team,” said **Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation**, which has invested in similar types of artist spaces in recent years. “Artists bring vibrancy to urban spaces, make neighborhoods more exciting and diverse, and help generate the creativity and ideas that define any great city. I look forward to partnering in any way we can to help make this vision a reality for New York, where artists are so central to the life of the city.”

“Mayor de Blasio inherited historic levels of homelessness. Building more affordable housing is paramount to reversing this crisis. The Mayor’s proposal for tackling veteran homelessness is the right approach and one positive step. We look forward to seeing more policies like it. New York is a city of compassion. Now more than ever, we need every neighborhood to do its part to end homelessness,” said **Jennifer Flynn, Director of VOCAL New York**.

“ALIGN commends the Mayor’s vision for housing, jobs and climate as spelled out in this year’s State of the City address. We look forward to working together for greater equality through development that prioritizes deeply affordable housing, creates good local jobs, and reduces our carbon footprint with expanded public transportation,” said **Matt Ryan, ALIGN New York**.

“As people of faith, we are urged to love our neighbor, but the housing crisis is making this increasingly difficult to live out in New York City. We commend Mayor de Blasio for putting housing at the center of his agenda to fight inequality, because this issue is critical to the future of New York City. As a city, we are at a crossroads, and the way in which we address the housing crisis will determine if we will be a city of inequality or a city of equity. We support a holistic development of affordable housing, so that the diversity that has made this city great can continue,” said **Onleilove Alston, M.Div., MSW, Interim Executive Director, Faith in New York**.

“Bus Rapid Transit could transform New York City by providing faster, more reliable bus service for residents in the outer boroughs who need it most,” said **Jess Nizar, Senior Organizer at the Riders Alliance and member of the BRT for NYC Steering Committee**. “We applaud Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to improving public transit and expanding access to jobs and opportunity for all new Yorkers.”

“We applaud the Mayor’s initiative to rezone Long Island City and support the continued growth of this important commercial center and neighborhood. There is a fast growing tech community in Western Queens, and these new urban planning efforts are needed to create the space that will support the growth of these entrepreneurs and businesses,” said **Jukay Hsu, Founder and Executive Director Coalition for Queens**.

“As the plans to redevelop the Rockaways move forward, we look forward to ensuring that local residents benefit first and foremost from all revitalization efforts. Local hiring, green technology, housing that is accessible and affordable to our friends and families, shared community space. These are our priorities, and we



will continue to organize and advocate for them, in solidarity with neighborhoods throughout New York City,” said **Kalin Callaghan, Coordinator, Rockaway Wildfire.**

“Congratulations to Mayor de Blasio on his State of the City address and on a very successful first year,” said **Carlo A. Scissura, President & CEO of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce.** “The Brooklyn Chamber fully supports the Mayor’s proposed housing rezoning in East New York, and I look forward to working with him and his administration to create a proper balance of affordable and market rate housing—particularly for working New Yorkers. Furthermore, the new ferry, with stops in Red Hook, Sunset Park, the Brooklyn Army Terminal and Bay Ridge, is a substantial win for the innovation economy and Southern Brooklyn, and something the Chamber has been calling for, for two years. The increased transportation options along Brooklyn’s waterfront will continue to spur development and job growth in the area, as well as additional housing. I want to thank the Mayor for his continued efforts to improve the lives of all New Yorkers, and I anticipate even greater things in his second year.”

“Preserved and new affordable housing for low, moderate and middle-income families is extremely important for the future of our great city. East Harlem is ready to work with the Mayor to address these needs,” said **Matthew S. Washington, Chairman, Community Board 11.**

“We see many of our low-income immigrant families with many children living in crowded conditions in one bedroom apartments, often with extended family members. Many of these children don’t even have their own bed, which can be a risk to their emotional and physical safety. Adequate and affordable housing is a cornerstone for healthy families. We applaud the Mayor prioritizing this issue and confronting inequality head on,” said **Lena Alhousseini, Executive Director, Arab-American Family Support Center.**

“Affordable housing will be one of the major human rights issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. I am excited to have a mayor who has a visionary plan to meet a real global community need,” said **Rev. Dr. Demetrius S. Carolina, Sr. Central Family Life Center.**

“Under Mayor de Blasio, New York City has become more welcoming and a beacon of hope for immigrants. Yet again, the Mayor takes this another step further by proposing policies that protect all New Yorkers from displacement and loss of their homes. Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights applauds the Mayor for his brave leadership in protecting those who are most vulnerable in our city,” said **Angela Fernandez, Esq., Executive Director of Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights.**

“We are pleased with Mayor de Blasio’s accomplishments in increasing resources in UPK, afterschool and IDNYC, and are excited for his continued investments in affordable housing, mental health and education. We look forward to continuing to work with the Mayor and administration this year to ensure the Asian Pacific American community can access these services and all communities can thrive,” said **Sheelah A. Feinberg, Executive Director of Coalition of Asian American Children and Families.**

“Five-borough ferry service from the Rockaways to Soundview, as affordable as a subway ride, is a dream come true for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers,” said **Roland Lewis, President & CEO of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA).** “This is an enormous step forward to address inequality, and connect outer-borough communities with economic opportunities. Bravo, Mayor de Blasio!”

“The development of the Sunnyside Yards will have an enormous impact on the future of LIC, as well as the city, and we look forward to working with the Mayor and our Queens elected officials to explore the opportunity for development at the Yards and ensuring that it enhances our mixed use community by providing jobs, services, and amenities for a sustainable Western Queens,” said **Elizabeth Lusskin, President, Long Island City Partnership.**

“Sunnyside Yards, with its extraordinary size, location and regional accessibility, is a terrific opportunity for creating a connected, sustainable, mixed-use, mixed-income community that will generate jobs and housing for New Yorkers of every type,” said **Tom Wright, president of Regional Plan Association.** “RPA applauds the

City's commitment to move ahead with plans for Sunnyside Yards. The City should look at the ambitious and innovative proposals that have come forward in the past and work with the surrounding communities and entire city to implement a new plan that will promote opportunity and affordability for the next century."

"Mayor de Blasio's State of the City address talked about the impact of changes in the built environment on people's lives. Changes in zoning and transportation connections impact not only statistics but on the quality of life for New York families. Important announcements about new health clinics, increased density, a new public ferry system and more bus rapid transit routes spoke to a vision of an interconnected city for all. From Sunnyside Yards to the Rockaways, from the South Waterfront to Red Hook, the Mayor outlined a physical vision of a city that is and will remain, in the words of his conclusion 'a city that is for everyone,'" said **Rick Bell, FAIA, Executive Director of the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter**.

"The facts are clear: New York is one of the most expensive cities in the world, and will become increasingly so in the face of a growing population, unless we substantially build up our housing supply and the infrastructure that serves it. Today, Mayor de Blasio laid out a broad and bold vision for a more equitable city by proposing a bigger, better and more balanced New York, one in which new mixed-income housing, new ferries and transit, and new entrepreneurial mixed-use neighborhoods can provide the social mobility we sorely need and the united city we all desire," said **Vishaan Chakrabarti, Professor, Columbia University and Partner, SHoP Architects**.

"United Neighborhood Houses applauds the proposals outlined in the Mayor's State of the City speech today to create more affordable housing as the anchor for safe and stable neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs. As an organization that has been dedicated to creating safe, stable, economically integrated neighborhoods across NYC for over 90 years, we are particularly impressed with the Mayor's understanding that strong neighborhoods must include affordable housing, but not only affordable housing. Access to parks, transportation, schools, shopping, and community centers also are key ingredients for successful neighborhood life and the sense of community that supports residents across the income spectrum. UNH member agencies—settlement houses and community centers—provide important community services like child care, afterschool, senior centers that also are essential to the health and well-being of a neighborhood. We look forward to working with the Mayor and his administration to make sure that every neighborhood in the City has the housing and social supports that create the kinds of neighborhoods every one of us would like to live in," said **Nancy Wackstein, Executive Director, United Neighborhood Houses of New York**.

"For far too long, the Rockaway Peninsula has been neglected by the City of New York. Now, it finally feels as though we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. A citywide ferry service would connect the young people of Rockaway to the countless resources job opportunities our City has to offer," said **Milan R. Taylor, Chief Executive Officer / Founder Rockaway Youth Task Force**.

"No single factor contributes more to the growing inequality in our city than does the issue of housing," said **José Calderón, President of the Hispanic Federation**. "For far too many of our families, the cost of housing has become their single greatest expense; an expense that compromises their financial well-being and that of their children. By mandating affordable housing in six select communities in the city and setting aside monies to help build new affordable housing, Mayor de Blasio has renewed New York City's historic commitment to middle and lower income families."

"We are thrilled that Mayor de Blasio announced today that the Rockaway ferry is included in the City's plans for future ferry service to the outer boroughs. This will give residents more transit opportunities and better connect the rockaways to the rest of the city," said **Jeanne DuPont, Executive Director, Rockaway Waterfront Alliance**.

"Our community is very grateful that the Mayor has announced plans to reestablish ferry service for so many of our hard working Rockaway residents. This important service will allow so many of our community members a reliable and affordable method of transportation as they work to support their families," said **Rabbi Boruch B. Bender, President, ACHIEZER Community Resource Center**.

“The healthcare workers of 1199SEIU passionately support Mayor de Blasio’s efforts to ensure more affordable housing, address income inequality, and make our city a place where all New Yorkers can thrive. Mayor de Blasio’s initiatives to build more affordable housing units, raise the minimum wage, protect tenant rights, end homelessness among veterans, expand senior housing, support artists and enhance public transportation represent the kind of bold progressive leadership that our city and our country desperately needs right now. Not only will these initiatives help working New Yorkers, they will protect the core spirit of what makes our city great—our diversity, our creative minds, and the opportunity to achieve your dreams through hard work. Our 400,000 members will do whatever it takes to continue to support the Mayor’s progressive vision of making New York work for everyone, not just the wealthy few,” said **Kevin Finnegan, Political Director for 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East**, the largest union in New York and the largest healthcare union in the country.

“As cities across the country are heeding the call by workers that they need at least \$15 an hour to make ends meet, we welcome Mayor de Blasio’s call to raise the minimum wage in New York City to \$15. This will be a real family-sustaining wage for hard-working New Yorkers and by including indexing, the Mayor’s proposal offers a long-term solution to ensure that the minimum wage rises with the cost of living. We hope that the state legislature will show the same kind leadership around this issue. We also welcome the Mayor’s ambitious affordable housing plan that will provide hundreds of thousands of new apartments for working people across the city and protect the homes of those who face unscrupulous landlords. We commend the Mayor for his continued focus on the creation of good jobs, access to affordable housing and quality education and the need to include all New Yorkers, immigrant or native born in the city’s future. We look forward to continuing the fight to make NYC a place all working families can comfortably call home,” said **32BJ President Hector Figueroa**.

“The Mayor’s affordable housing plan will produce much-needed benefits for all of New York City, and especially its working people. Too many families are struggling just to make ends meet. The RWDSU is confident that Mayor de Blasio’s targeted new developments will create good jobs in the short term and hopeful that they will result in good permanent jobs also,” said **Stuart Appelbaum, President, Retail Wholesale & Department Store Union**.

“Mayor de Blasio’s emphasis on affordable housing builds on the commitment he made to help end inequality in our city. Working families, our members among them, keenly feel the shortage of affordable places to live. Linking the construction of affordable units, along with parks and amenities, to any new development, as well as preserving existing affordable housing and strengthening rent regulations, is essential to maintaining New York City as a diverse and vibrant world-class city. The members of DC 37 live and work in the communities Mayor de Blasio spoke about, and we feel the issues of New York’s working families as our own. That is why we embrace the positive changes he outlined today—from adding ferry service and bus rapid transit to underserved areas, raising the minimum wage, and fixing struggling schools to rezoning industrial and underutilized areas citywide to make room for affordable housing and vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods. With today’s speech, Mayor de Blasio built on the successes of the past year, including the establishment of universal pre-kindergarten when critics said it could not be done. Universal pre-K is now a reality in our city, and widespread affordable housing can become a reality, too. District Council 37 stands in support of this timely and much-needed effort,” said **District Council 37 Executive Director Henry Garrido**.

“Building a vision for Sunnyside Yards points to the right direction for the City to solve the affordable housing crisis. We look forward to working with the administration to create good quality jobs, leading to sustainable careers in the process, and addressing income inequality in a real way,” said **Gary La Barbera, President, Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York**.

“As the President of our Nation’s largest regional labor federation, I look forward to continuing to work with the de Blasio administration to build ‘One New York,’ through the creation of good jobs, paying fair wages and benefits, with union protections. Income disparities can only be reduced if residents have the financial ability, through higher wages and salaries, to care for their families, pay rent or mortgages, and invest in their local communities. The 1.3 million working men and women of the New York City Labor Movement stand ready,

willing, and committed to working with the de Blasio administration to continue rebuilding our city, while protecting and creating good jobs to allow working New Yorkers to live and thrive in what we all know to be the greatest city in the world,” said **Central Labor Council President Vincent Alvarez**.

“What resonated most for me was the Mayor’s insistence that New York City not become a gated community: the Mayor reminded us that the greatness of cities depends on their inclusivity—not their exclusivity. A transformation of housing in New York City will also transform educational opportunity: 42 percent of CUNY students experience housing insecurity. When our students become secure about housing, they will be free to take the fullest advantage of college education,” said **Barbara Bowen, a professor at CUNY and president of the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY**.

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