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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT NEWARK CITY
HALL**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well I'm honored to be here, and it is, as Maria said, it has the potential to be a historic day. I'm going to go one farther and say I guarantee you it's a historic day for Newark, because when people can stay in their home, regardless of all the change happening around us, when people can stay in their home, when they can avoid an illegal eviction, when a family stays together, that's historic. And that means that that apartment – that home will remain affordable for years and years to come. That's good for everyone. So I think it is historic that Newark is taking this big step forward.

And I want to tell you – Mayor Baraka and I have been talking for years together. Last time, as he mentioned, we got into detail on this was at the Conference of Mayors meeting in Washington. I'm a fan of his. I respect tremendously what he has achieved here in Newark, but he's right. It's not just Newark, it's not just New York City, its cities all over the country are facing this profound challenge. We went through the lean years. I can testify at lengths to what New York City was like in the 70s, and 80s, and 90s, all the challenges we faced. I spent a lot of time in Newark over the years as well, and I know the challenges Newark faced. What an irony that things turn around and things get better and the city becomes greater and then a new problem comes with that. And you can stand still and not address it, or you can come up with a creative solution. And this is what's so powerful about this announcement today, is that it means that people will be protected in these changing times. And we need that.

Look, Mayor Baraka has gotten a lot done, and I really want to give him credit because a lot of people –

[Applause]

I remember when he was first elected a lot of people were counting Newark out and a lot of people were counting him out. And they didn't know Mayor Baraka. They didn't know what he was capable of. It's very kind what he said about New York City, and what he said about the work that my administration is doing, but I want to return the compliment because I've watched carefully. And Mayor you've been a progressive champion. You really have. And look, I want to

give you examples of what it means to me when I say progressive champion. And I don't use that lightly because I honor what that means.

When Ras Baraka took on Governor Christie and said the people of Newark should get to determine the futures of their children and their school system and he won, that's what's a progressive champion does.

[Applause]

And he mentioned inclusionary housing, inclusionary zoning is something we're very proud also we've achieved in New York City. Well those words sound very technical, I like to talk about it in very tangible terms. It used to be that big developers called the tune, and when they came in they would develop essentially what they wanted. I want to tell you Mayor that was true in New York City for a long time. They were not required to create affordable housing for people in the community. It was a one sided deal. Well, it's not a one sided deal in Newark anymore. It's not a one sided deal in New York City anymore because now we require the creation of affordable housing. It's hard and fast – it's a rule now, and that makes a difference.

[Applause]

And when you talk about peoples' standard of living, there's nothing more important than the wages they make. There's been a movement all over this country to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. A lot of people for years thought that movement wasn't going anywhere. Well one of the days when it moved forward was when Newark acted. And Mayor Baraka is one of the people who propelled that movement forward, and now the entire State of New Jersey has the potential to be a \$15 an hour state. Well a lot of that started right here with this mayor.

[Applause]

So, a lot has been achieved and Newark is a much stronger and better and fairer place. But let's talk now about protecting peoples' homes, protecting people against illegal eviction. And these are – who are we talking about protecting? We're talking about working people. Folks who struggle to make ends meet. And before were defenseless if that eviction notice came. That eviction notice was a death sentence for their home. It's as simple as that. The vast majority of the time. I will note with appreciation it is International Workers' Day today. So let's talk about how we support working people, how we protect them, nothing is more basic than protecting their homes.

Here's how it used to be in New York City, here's how it used to be in Newark before these kinds of policies were put in place. The eviction notice was put up and at that moment, people would come home and see that notice, and they felt right there, ball game over. They didn't have a place to turn. A bad landlord was trying to evict you illegally, unquestionably has the money and the power and the lawyers to get it done. Typical tenant was defenseless. Could not afford a lawyer, didn't have a place to turn. That was a David and Goliath story except unfortunately in that version, Goliath would win every time.

The power of offering legal council is that you create an actual level playing field. If the eviction is illegal, it can be stopped and that family can stay in their home. Imagine what it means to someone, God forbid they see that notice, to now know they've got a lawyer on their side who can defend their interests. By the way, because of this new policy, I think a lot of people are not going to see that notice, because the landlords will know better than to try an illegal eviction that they would have gotten away with in the past. So that's why I think it's historic.

We went our journey in New York City. We started experimenting with the use of legal services and I talked to the Mayor about our journey and it culminated last year with the Right to Council Law. And in New York City the message is simple, if you're faced with an illegal eviction, you can get legal help. I can't tell you how many people have come up to me and said what a difference that has made in their lives.

Well, I also like to think about what it means in total. Over years, potentially thousands of people get to stay in their homes. By the way there is so much – rightfully – so much concern about our children who go through disruption in their lives at an early age and how much that can undermine their education and future. We want to see children stay in their home. This is another way to do it. To avoid those disruptions that in so many cases force our children on the wrong path.

So this is going to be a game changer for Newark. And I want to say, thanks to Mayor Baraka, a lot of people are going to be able to stay in their home, a lot of illegal evictions are going to be stopped, that's a new day for Newark.

[Applause]

Mayor, I – unfortunately in this instance get to pay a brief visit - I next time would like you to take to one of your favorite restaurants of which there are many fine examples in this town. I know that for a fact. This time I only get to visit briefly. But I visit with a full heart and real appreciation for what you have achieved but also for taking this policy and now bringing it to so many more people and just like you and I always experience. Mayors, we encourage each other, we support each other, if one's got a good idea they tell the next one. If one's got a problem, we talk it through and help each other out. So, Mayor, thank you for making sure so many people are going to benefit from this idea, and now let's pass it on to the next person, and the next city, and save more tenants from evictions.

[Applause]

Now if you indulge me one more moment Mayor, I've made it habit in my press conferences in my City with now almost three million Latino New Yorkers, I would like to offer a few words in Spanish – *en español*? It will not be the best Spanish you've ever heard.

[Laughter]

But we are going to try anyway.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

Our City is proud to support the working people of Newark as well. Thank you.

[Applause]

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