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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 2, 2015

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MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS LEGISLATION TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY OF FDNY HIRING PROCESS

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio today signed into law nine pieces of legislation – Intro. 579-A, in relation to reporting on the racial and gender makeup of applicants for firefighter civil service examinations, and admission and graduation statistics from the probationary firefighter school; Intro. 222-A, in relation to building owners providing notice to their tenants for service interruptions; Intro. 702-A, in relation to developing a guide for building owners regarding aging in place; Intro. 764, in relation to amending the district plan of the Lower East Side Business Improvement District; Intro. 240-A, in relation to filing semiannual reports on catch basin cleanup and maintenance; Intro. 742-A, in relation to the community engagement process in the Percent for Art law; Intro. 592-A, in relation to the preservation of certain hotels; and Intros. 761 and 772, in relation to technical changes to certain pet shop requirements.

The first bill, Intro. 579-A, requires the Fire Department to report on the racial and gender makeup of applicants for the firefighter civil service examinations. The FDNY will be required to provide an annual report on the number of women and people of color who progress through each phase of the hiring process, starting with its most recent written examination in 2012. The report will also include admission and graduation statistics from the probationary firefighter school. FDNY is also required to report on its recruiting activities, including expenditures, recruiting events, and preparatory materials for potential applicants. This bill was passed during the Stated Meeting on May 14.

“Diversity is strength – and the world’s greatest fire department will grow even stronger when it more closely resembles the city it serves. This bill will deepen our understanding of the FDNY’s hiring process, and help New York’s Bravest strengthen its workforce while increasing transparency and diversity,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “I want to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito for her leadership, and Council Members Crowley and Rosenthal for sponsoring this legislation.”

“From making our residential buildings a more comfortable place for New Yorkers to age in their homes to diversifying our city’s fire department, the Council is proud to continue our work to improve New York City,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “All of these laws will help make the city more prosperous, livable and fair. I thank my colleagues on the City Council and the de Blasio Administration for their partnership in our ongoing work to make a better New York City.”

“This bill will bring a necessary level of transparency and accountability to the FDNY. It is the next step in breaking down barriers deterring well-qualified women and minorities from becoming New York City firefighters. By reporting gender and race at every stage of the application process, we are ensuring the FDNY is not only maintaining the strongest trainees to protect our communities but that the applicant pool reflects the great diversity of our city. I thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and Council Member Rosenthal for their leadership on this issue,” said **Council Member Elizabeth Crowley**.

“The numbers just don’t add up: 13 percent of San Francisco’s firefighters are women, roughly 15 percent of the active-duty U.S. military are women, 17 percent of New York police officers are women – and less than half of a percent of New York firefighters are women. I am eager to learn what is so unique about being a firefighter

in NYC that it excludes women. The data we will receive from this bill will shed light on how many women apply to be firefighters and where they drop off along the long application process, which can take several years from start to finish. I am grateful to Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, Chair of the Committee on Fire and Criminal Services, who has been persistent in pursuing this issue for years, and I am proud to have introduced this bill with her,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

The second bill, Intro. 222-A, requires building owners to notify tenants in advance of non-emergency repairs that would cause service interruptions. The bill requires landlords to provide occupants with notice prior to performing work that would interrupt building services for more than two hours, with the exception of emergency work or repairs. Landlords must notify building occupants of the type of work being performed and the estimated start and end dates of the service interruption. This bill was passed during the Stated Meeting on May 14. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsors, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Council Member Mendez.

“Before this law, a wheelchair-bound tenant could leave for work in the morning and return in the evening to find the elevator offline for hours, having never heard a whisper about it. Now tenants will have a right to fair warning and an opportunity to plan around disruptive maintenance work,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “It’s also no secret that no-notice quality-of-life disruptions labeled as ‘maintenance work’ are a frequent harassment tactic to push tenants out of rent-stabilized apartments. The new notice requirements will be easy for honest, everyday landlords and building managers to respect, but they will take another harassment tool away from abusive landlords.”

“This legislation codifies common sense and common courtesy. No longer will tenants come home from a hard day’s work to find out that work in their building is interrupting some basic service or possibly obstructing access to their apartment. This law requires that landlords notify tenants when such work will affect services and for how long. I want to thank Gale Brewer for years of work on this legislation that will now become the law in NYC,” said **Council Member Rosie Mendez**.

The third bill, Intro. 702-A, requires the Department of Aging – in collaboration with the Department of Buildings, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, and business and nonprofit experts – to develop and distribute a guide for building owners to assist aging tenants and make it available on the DFTA’s website by July 1, 2016. This guide will include information on accessibility for individuals with limited mobility related to lighting, grab bars, technological improvements, and width of doorways and hallways. This bill was passed by the City Council during the Stated Meeting on May 14. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsors, Speaker Mark-Viverito and Council Member Chin.

“Seniors are projected to represent around 20 percent of our city’s population by 2030, and our efforts to improve life for older New Yorkers must keep pace with this rapid growth,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “By providing building owners with the informational tools to make their properties more age-friendly, this housing guide will play an important role in helping to keep seniors safely and securely within the communities they call home.”

The fourth bill, Intro. 764, amends the district plan of the Lower East Side’s Business Improvement District to modify the existing services, which will now include additional services such as capital and technical assistance to BID stakeholders. The bill also amends the method for district assessments by creating two sub-districts within the BID – one comprised of the five tax lots within the Seward Park Urban Renewal Area, and the other comprised of the remaining tax lots. This bill was passed by the City Council during the Stated Meeting on May 27. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsors, Council Members Ferreras and Chin.

The fifth bill, Intro. 240-A, requires the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to submit semiannual reports on catch basin cleanup and maintenance to the Mayor and City Council. The bill requires that the Department inspect every catch basin at least once per year and respond to complaints to unclog or repair catch basins within a nine-day window. This bill was passed by the City Council during the Stated

Meeting on May 27. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill's sponsor, Council Member Williams, and Council Member Richards, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection.

"Ensuring that our catch basins are clean and clear on a yearly basis is yet another improvement for communities such as Southeast Queens, which have been ravaged by flooding for decades," said **Council Member Donovan Richards, Chair of the Council Committee on Environmental Protection**. "Thankfully, Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Lloyd are dedicated to solving systemic issues caused by inadequate infrastructure and poor maintenance. I'd also like to thank Council Member Jumaane Williams and his staff, as well as the great staff of the Committee on Environmental Protection, for all their hard work to get this bill passed."

"For parts of this city – including several residential roads in my district – the rain causes larger headaches than it should because of frequently clogged catch basins. It's an issue that not only inconveniences neighborhoods, but can cause significant water damage to property. Though the Department of Environmental Protection checks these drains every three years, we know that's not enough to adequately ensure that problematic drains are cleared. I am proud to sponsor Intro. 240, which will require annual inspections of catch basins and a semi-annual report by the DEP to the Council. I would like to thank Mayor Bill de Blasio, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and the Council's Chair of Environmental Protection Donovan Richards for supporting this important legislation," said **Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Housing and Buildings Committee**.

The sixth bill, Intro. 742-A, increases public notice for Percent for Art projects by requiring the Department of Cultural Affairs to present on works of art for the Percent for Art program at a public meeting, such as a community board meeting in the affected district. The Department must also post advance notice of the public meeting and the intent to include works of art in a Percent for Art Project on the DCLA website. This bill was passed by the City Council on May 14. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill's sponsors, Council Members Van Bramer and Cumbo.

"The arts have the power to change the face of our city and beautify the world around us," said **Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair of the Committee on Cultural Affairs**. "Under my public art bill the Department of Cultural Affairs will be required to go into the community and engage residents with proposals for public works of art. I thank Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl and the Administration for working with us to increase community engagement in the City's Percent for Art program. These are meaningful changes that will increase transparency and more thoroughly engage the public."

"As a lifelong lover of the arts and as the founder of Brooklyn's first museum dedicated to the African Diaspora, I value artistic freedom, self-expression and the vital role that it plays within our society. It is imperative, now more than ever, that we support open dialogue and active civic engagement around art in our public spaces. For the past 33 years, the Percent for Art program has operated successfully under the guidance of the Department of Cultural Affairs, but one important voice has been left out – the public. In collaboration with my colleagues, Council Member Van Bramer, Intro. 742 was introduced to increase community input and greater transparency within the Percent for Art program. I thank the Members that have signed on to this legislation for their support and applaud Mayor de Blasio for signing this bill into law today. Art in our public spaces remains one of the greatest forms of collective community expression. As a member of the Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, it brings me great pleasure to unite the diverse voices of our artistic communities," said **Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo**.

The seventh bill, Intro. 592-A, requires the City to produce a report on the impact of the hotel industry on the City's economy. This report will include an analysis of recent and projected conversions of hotel space, short- and long-term impacts of these conversions on the economy, impacts of restrictions on conversions, and recommendations for the preservation and enhancement of the hotel industry. The bill also places short-term restrictions on substantial conversions of hotels in Manhattan with at least 150 rooms. A property owner may apply for a waiver from the bill's restrictions to the Board of Standards and Appeals, which will determine whether the owner can demonstrate a need under the bill's standards. This bill was passed by the City Council on May 14. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill's sponsor, Council Member Johnson.

“New York City’s hotel industry is a bedrock component of our economy,” said **Council Member Corey Johnson**. “It funds critical services in our budget and provides many stable, good-paying, middle-class jobs to hard working New Yorkers. This vital sector of the tourism industry and the jobs and positive community impacts that it creates are presently at risk as a result of the residential conversion of hotel rooms. This moratorium on certain substantial conversions will allow us to determine a long-term fix to protect vibrant neighborhoods, local business, the tourism industry and middle class jobs. I thank my colleagues for supporting this legislation and Mayor de Blasio for signing it into law.”

The final two bills, Intro. 761 and Intro. 772, make technical changes to certain pet shop requirements, as added by local laws 5 and 7, and 6 and 8, respectively, for the year 2015. These laws make important reforms to the sale of animals in New York City and set standards of care for animals in pet shops. Intro. 761 and Intro. 772 amend certain definitions and clarify provisions of the laws. These bills were passed by the City Council on May 14. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsor Council Members Johnson and Crowley.

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