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RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING AND SIGNS INTROS 600-A, 611-A, 619-A, 74-A, AND 423-A

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Council Member Vallone and I are not measuring up.

Council Member Paul Vallone: [Inaudible]

Mayor: That's right. Well, welcome, everyone. We have a series of pieces of legislation that we're going to be talking about today and signing. I want to welcome everyone. First, I want to talk about Intros 600-A, 611-A, and 619-A – all of which strengthen the city's ability to support our veterans and help fulfill our obligation to serve them, just as they have served our nation. And Intro 600-A, in particular, requires agencies to report on services provided to our veterans. It's sponsored by Council Member Paul Vallone – your first bill that will be signed into law, correct? Congratulations. It will help the city streamline services to our veterans, ensuring greater transparency. As everyone knows – I shouldn't say everyone – as many people know, my family – both my dad and my wife's dad served in World War II. My dad came back, very sadly, quite grievously injured from the war. And so I saw, firsthand, what our veterans need, and there's something very powerful about making sure that we are constantly looking for the quality of our efforts – the quantity of our efforts to making sure we're doing things right. So I want to thank Council Member Vallone for his leadership.

Intro 611-A expands membership of our Veterans Advisory Board and requires members' emails to be posted online. It will help create a more accessible and transparent board. And is – this bill was sponsored by Council Member Mathieu Eugene.

Intro 619-A increases the number of mandatory meetings of the Veterans Advisory Board. It's sponsored by our Veterans Committee chair, Eric Ulrich. And the meetings will now be recorded and broadcast to reach as many New Yorkers as possible. So these three bills together will allow the city to better connect veterans to the services they need. I want to thank our tremendous commissioner for the Mayor's Office for Veteran Affairs. You can call her commissioner. You can call her general. Whichever title you like, both work – there's doctor, that's right. Loree Sutton, thank you for your leadership. I want to thank our speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito, for her leadership on these important pieces of legislation. Now it's my honor to introduce General, Doctor, Commissioner Loree Sutton. Welcome.

[Laughter]

[Veteran Affairs Commissioner Loree Sutton speaks]

Mayor: Thank you. General, we appreciate your leadership and your infectious enthusiasm, which goes a long way in this work. And we thank you for all you've done for our nation, our city, and all you're doing now. I would next like to introduce a friend for many years before he reached the City Council, and congratulate him again – the day you get your first bill passed and signed is a very special day. I remember that distinctly, sitting in this room when that happened in my life. So I want to congratulate you – Council Member Paul Vallone.

[Council Member Paul Vallone speaks]

Mayor: Thank you. Alright, we don't have anyone signed up for public comments, so we shall proceed now to sign the bills into law – gather round.

[Mayor de Blasio signs Intros 600-A, 611-A, and 619-A]

Mayor: Alright. Now, next – changing gears here – Intro 74-A. Council Member King dressed up for the occasion. I'm going to keep milking this. Intro 74-A will ensure that our streets are clear and New Yorkers are safe. It requires the parks department to develop a protocol for removing downed or damage trees after severe weather – obviously, a real issue of public safety.

I want to thank the sponsor of the bill, Council Member Andy King. Under this legislation, it'll encourage city agencies and utility corporations to work together to ensure that trees are quickly removed and the danger is taken away. So, remember after Hurricane Sandy, we realized the impact of just that one storm – almost 20,000 trees damaged in the five boroughs as a result of Sandy. And we know we're in an age of extreme weather, so this bill is very important. That moment in history revealed to us that we need a better plan. This bill will help us get there.

I want to thank our parks commissioner, Mitchell Silver, and of course, Speaker Mark-Viverito for their support. And now it's my honor to introduce Council Member Andy King.

[Council Member Andy King speaks]

Mayor: Thank you. And I'm glad – thank you – I'm glad that the council member pointed out the Block Association because, as we in government often learn, some of the best ideas come from the people of our communities, come from the grassroots, and folks at the neighborhood level push us to do the things a government should do. So I want to thank everyone from the Block Association who is here for helping to inspire this day, where we move forward.

We're going to – we don't have anyone signed up to speak on this legislation, so we're going to move to sign it in just a moment. But I want to take us just back one step because Council Member Ulrich is here and I want to give him a chance to speak to his legislation, which I have signed and kept a pen for you. We're full service here. And thank –

Council Member Eric Ulrich: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Yes, she spoke earlier. So I want to thank the council member for his leadership as chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee, and we welcome your comments.

[Council Member Eric Ulrich speaks]

Mayor: Alright, gather round.

[Mayor de Blasio signs Intro 74-A]

Mayor: Okay, here we go. Changing gears again, we are now ready for Intro 423-A. This bill will help the city track the progress of worker cooperatives and assess how we can better support them. Sponsors include Council Member Helen Rosenthal and Council Member Carlos Menchaca – thank you for your leadership, Helen – and the Community Development chair, Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo. Now, worker cooperatives are a crucial part of our economy. It's a company where the majority is owned and controlled by its workers. Our

bill requires the Department of Small Business Services and the contract services office to report on the number of and value of contracts awarded to worker cooperatives. Now, the underlying reality here, which I certainly value – and again, I want to thank the council member for having focused on this, because I share her values on this – worker cooperatives historically treat their employees with respect and ensure that all people who work in the firm are able to benefit from their hard work – something we do not see enough of in this country. And worker cooperatives are inherently important allies, important partners in the effort to fight growing income inequalities. So, this bill is near and dear to my heart.

As a city, we must do everything we can to support worker cooperatives to make sure they get their share of business and that their workers benefit. I want to thank our small business services commissioner, Maria Torres-Springer; our director of the Office of Contract Services, Lisette Camillo; and of course, again, I want to thank Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. And with that, I would like to introduce Council Member Helen Rosenthal.

[Council Member Helen Rosenthal speaks]

Mayor: Thank you, Helen. And thank you for personally thanking everyone in the room.

[Laughter]

That was good. From the heart – it was excellent. We do not have anyone signed up for testimony. I'm just going to do a quick summary in Spanish and then we're going to sign this bill.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's step to the table.

[Mayor de Blasio signs Intro 423-A]

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