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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, VICTIMS' FAMILIES, SURVIVORS, SENIORS AND
OFFICIALS DEMAND ALBANY EXPAND SPEED ENFORCEMENT CAMERAS
NEAR SCHOOLS IN STATE BUDGET**

Extension and expansion of speed cameras to protect more schools was included in Assembly one-house budget bill, officials and families urge Senate and Governor to act

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio joined crash survivors, victims' families, seniors and elected officials on the steps of City Hall to demand leaders in Albany include an expansion of New York City's school zone speed enforcement camera program in the final state budget by April 1. With the program slated to expire in June, the City and advocates are seeking not just its extension, but major improvements.

Where installed, speed cameras have been proven to reduce speeding in New York City school zones by 63 percent, with injuries to pedestrians dropping 23 percent. But under the current restrictions, 75 percent of the children who were killed or severely injured in traffic were hit at locations or at times where the City can't legally use a camera. For example, cameras cannot be installed on 9th Street in Park Slope—the site of a crash that killed two young children this month. The New York State Assembly included reforms in its one-house budget bill that increase the number of school zones where cameras are allowed, and allow them to be placed on more dangerous streets.

“New Yorkers are tired of asking for the same thing year after year and getting nothing in return,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “How many more people must be killed before Albany passes common sense legislation proven to save lives? Enough is enough. The time is now to extend and expand our speed cameras program – we cannot afford to wait another day.”

“After four years of declining fatalities of Vision Zero, we know that speed cameras have saved lives, but the law authorizing New York City's speed camera program expires this summer, putting us at a crucial juncture,” said **Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “Most crashes happen in areas and during hours when speed cameras can't operate. To continue the progress we have made, we not only need Albany action to allow speed cameras on more high-crash streets close to schools, we need to expand the hours when cameras can operate. As the Mayor made clear last week, we need even more enforcement tools to

prevent tragic crashes like the one this month in Park Slope – but Albany can help us meet that urgent need by authorizing speed cameras as part of this budget.”

“Traffic deaths are preventable, and we know that speed safety cameras are among the most effective tools in reducing speeding and keeping kids safe on our streets. And as they said in no uncertain terms earlier this month, kids need safe streets. It’s time we start listening to them,” said **Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives**. “There’s no excuse to delay action. Our elected leaders in Albany must do right by the children of New York City, and approve the expansion of this life-saving program.”

“When our leaders in Albany fail to take traffic violence seriously, people die. This deadly epidemic that killed my son has taken the lives of 1,000 New Yorkers since the City started piloting speed cameras in 2014, and caused unimaginable injuries to hundreds of thousands of others, said **Amy Cohen, Founding Member of Families for Safe Streets**. “Speed safety cameras work – like a vaccine. They protect our children. And they also help change the culture of reckless driving and protect all New Yorkers. The Assembly has done their part and included the bill in their proposed budget. Now we need the Senate and Governor Cuomo to stand up and pass this life-saving measure now, before others are killed or seriously injured.”

The Mayor was joined by his Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, NYPD Chief Thomas Chan, Comptroller Scott Stringer, Public Advocate Letitia James, various city council members, Transportation Alternatives, Families for Safe Streets, the United Federation of Teachers, AARP and additional advocates.

Key Reforms to the Speed Enforcement Camera Program:

- Authorize the City to install speed cameras at an additional 150 school zones—more than double the current number.
- Revise the definition of a school zone to allow DOT to address speeding on streets that are near a school, as opposed to only the street or streets on which a school is located.
- Extend the program until 2022

Following this month’s crash that claimed the lives of two children in Park Slope, the City is also pushing reforms in Albany that will escalate fines and suspend the vehicle registrations of repeat speeding and red-light running offenders, and require physicians to notify the DMV following medical events that could cause a driver to lose control of their vehicle.

“It is unreasonable that in our city protecting children is a topic of debate. There should be no discussion when it comes to their well-being. We have an obligation to provide them with a safe environment when they go to and from school. Extending and expanding my proposal to increase the number of school zone speed cameras is a no-brainer, as is implementing additional measures to crack down on speeding drivers,” said **State Senator Jose Peralta**. “For example, I hope my bill that will suspend the driver’s license of a motorist who is caught speeding in a school zone two times within 18 months becomes a reality.”

“When parents send their kids off to school, they shouldn’t have to worry about whether or not they’ll get there safely. New York City’s school speed camera program is a proven success. Albany should not stand in the way of a modest expansion that could be a life-saver for our kids,” said **State Senator Liz Kreuger**.

State Senator Jesse Hamilton said, “There are simple changes we can make that will save lives. Alongside strengthening measures to hold drivers accountable for their actions behind the wheel and linking public health professionals with the authorities to prevent medical emergencies from causing tragic deaths, installing school-based speed safety cameras serves as an essential part of the change we must make. We must honor the memory of all those injured or killed by deadly crashes. Standing united, we must choose to make the changes that will save lives. Our New York communities deserve no less.”

“Speeders put students, teachers, faculty, and crossing guards at a much higher risk for injury or death,” said **State Senator Leroy Comrie**. “Speed cameras being placed along dangerous arterial roadways can play an important role in detecting and deterring speeders, making our school zones safer for everyone. I commend my colleagues for proposing this important legislation.”

“With the new State budget we have a great opportunity to protect thousands of New York City’s children by including funding for more speed cameras in school zones. Additionally, the Senate’s legislation has an important amendment to install speed camera warning signs with each speed camera. This amendment will make sure that motorists are aware that a school speed zone is approaching and that there is a camera there that will be catching them if they violate the speed limit. Knowledge that a speed camera is ahead will have a greater impact on driver responsibility, thus resulting in reduced vehicle speeds, and in turn better protect our city’s children,” said **State Senator Tony Avella**.

“The data is clear: speed safety cameras at schools save children’s lives. Yet, 93 percent of New York City schools, over one million students, are at risk without safety cameras. I’m proud to join Families for Safe Streets, Transportation Alternatives, United Federation of Teachers, and AARP New York to work to add speed safety cameras at every school in New York City. The State Senate should step forward and pass legislation that I co-sponsor to expand this life-saving program and protect kids,” said **State Senator Brad Hoylman**.

“In 2013, I was extremely proud to sponsor legislation that authorized the school speed camera demonstration program in New York City. The simple fact is this program saves lives. As our society continues to discuss the safety of our children in our schools, let us not overlook the danger they continue to face from reckless drivers as they walk to and from school. The time has come to expand this program so that more of our children, school faculty and staff, caregivers, and neighbors can be protected from speeding motorists,” said **Assembly Member Deborah Glick**.

“Speed cameras can help save lives and avoid accidents,” said **Assembly Assistant Speaker Felix W. Ortiz**. “There’s no excuse for auto safety. I support this effort and helped insure that support was provided for speed cameras in the Assembly’s budget. We’ll hopefully have the

support of the Senate and Governor to fund speed cameras in the final budget and move forward with the cameras.”

“I support even more camera-enhanced speed zones around our city's schools to protect our children and other pedestrians. Simply put, the number of injuries reduced and the reductions of speeding violations speak for themselves,” said **Assembly Member Luis Sepulveda**.

"Speeding is the leading cause of injury-related death for children in New York. Under the current speed safety camera program, we have seen speeding violations decrease by 63% and a 23% drop in pedestrian crash-injuries where cameras are currently located," said **Assembly Member Robert Carroll**. "These statistics demonstrate that speed cameras work as a deterrent for speeding drivers and save lives. After the tragic crash that took place just a few blocks from my District Office on March 5th, which took the lives of two innocent young children, it is clearer now than ever before that the state must do all that it can to hold speeding and reckless drivers accountable. The time is now for the state to authorize the expansion of this important speed safety program so that we're protecting all of our children from reckless and speeding drivers."

"We must do more to ensure that kids are safe on city streets and throughout the state. I cosponsor commonsense legislation that would improve street safety, including expanding speed safety cameras near schools, which drastically reduces speeding in those locations. I am proud that the Assembly included this life-saving measure to expand speed safety cameras in our one-house budget this year. We have seen a dramatic reduction in injuries and speeding violations in school zones that have safety cameras, so we must not delay in passing this measure. The recent tragedy in Park Slope that took the lives of two young children is another devastating reminder that we must act swiftly. Thanks to Mayor de Blasio, TransAlt and Families for Safe Streets for fighting for more speed safety cameras," said **Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon**.

“Every day, almost 3 million New York children travel from their homes to their schools and back. As a society we have the urgent responsibility to ensure they are safe not only in school but on the roads they travel to get there,” said **Assembly Member Marcos Crespo**. “It is of paramount importance that we expand speed safety cameras near our schools for this reason. We need to employ every possible deterrent to aggressive behaviors that pose a risk to our children.”

“I was one of the first legislators to introduce legislation to authorize the use of speed cameras in New York City. I have and will continue to support the expansion of speed cameras. They are a common sense solution to slowing drivers down and saving lives,” said **Assembly Member Joseph R. Lentol**.

“The need to expand the speed camera program is a priority to me and my constituents. Everyone is entitled to safe passage, from pedestrians and students crossing the street, to parents driving on the same roads-speeding kills. It is proven that speeding vehicles cause more fatalities and more property damage while leaving pedestrians and other drivers less time to react. Drivers that speed through our communities are reckless and dangerous. They need to be held

accountable to either change their behavior or they should lose their privilege to operate a motor vehicle in the State of New York.” said **Assembly Member Michael DenDekker**.

“This modest increase in the school-based speed safety camera program will keep hundreds of thousands more children out of harm’s way near New York City schools,” said **Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz**. “I’m pleased to support an initiative that has already saved countless lives and forced motorists to take extra care when they’re driving in a school zone.”

"There is simply no excuse to speed in a school zone: it is dangerous and puts the lives of our schoolchildren at unnecessary risk," said **Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz**. "Speed cameras work - it's simple as that. People might be upset the first time they get ticketed but they also probably won't speed in that area again. I'm proud to support the expansion of school zone speed cameras and I urge my colleagues in the State Senate to join us to protect New York's kids."

"As the Assembly Member representing the 70th District in Central Harlem, I am in full support of further testing and installation of school based safety cameras that can be instrumental in saving children and parents from serious physical injuries or death that result from fast and reckless driving," said **Assembly Member Inez E. Dickens**. "Harlem is an educational Mecca of many learning institutions, both public and private, that is in need of additional safety measures for its large pedestrian traffic. Therefore I will support the proposed budget allocation to ensure funds are available for this important safety project."

“Nearly three million kids go to school in New York every day, and we must do more to ensure they reach their classrooms safely. Speed cameras in school zones are proven to save lives, and we cannot rest until our school zones are fully equipped,” said **Assembly Member Linda B. Rosenthal**. “For some students, the walk to school is a perilous part of their day. Speed cameras deter dangerous driving, and our students deserve no less than the maximum protections afforded by speed cameras.”

“I commend my colleague Assembly Member Deborah Glick for fighting for the safety of our children in school zones by introducing a bill to reduce incidents of speeding, as well as Transportation Alternatives and Families for Safe Streets for their advocacy on this important issue, said **Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright**. “Having 140 cameras around all New York City schools is just not good enough. The safety of our children is a priority and not just when school is open. We need to do more to prevent road tragedies near schools, and that means making this bill a reality.”

"Speed cameras are a proven, effective way to keep our neighborhoods and children safe," said **Assembly Member Dan Quart**. "I'm proud to support the expansion of this life-saving technology and encourage safe driving. Speeding kills more New Yorkers than any other driver behavior and we must do all we can to stop these preventable fatalities and injuries."

“No parent should ever have to fear for their child’s life crossing a street in New York City,” said **Public Advocate Letitia James**. “Interventions like speed cameras have and will continue to save lives, but we need more of them at our schools, as well as harsher punishments and

restrictions for reckless drivers. I applaud Mayor de Blasio and all my colleagues who are bringing greater attention to this issue and demanding long overdue action from Albany.”

"There's nothing that's more important than protecting our children. Yet, a lack of cameras and arbitrary state laws put our streets at risk. That's because over 1,000 times a day in this city, a vehicle with multiple violations blows through a red light or speeds through a school zone -- that's almost one potential accident every minute from a dangerous driver. If we want to be a city with safer streets, then we need to remove the artificial cap on red light cameras. It's the right thing — and the commonsense thing — to do," said **New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer**.

"Speed cameras have been successful in making New York City's streets safer where we have been able to implement them. Why should any lawmaker hold up legislation that would make it possible for us to grow those safety gains through extension and expansion of their deployment? In the names of every child we have lost to preventable crashes on our streets, and of the millions of children we have a chance to help safeguard with sensible speed enforcement cameras, I urge the State Legislature to act on this in the impending budget," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**.

“Today’s announcement is important for Upper Manhattan and Bronx neighborhoods as we face persistent danger from motorists exiting or accessing routes along the George Washington Bridge and Cross Bronx Expressway. Drivers often speed through city streets, neighborhoods, and even school districts as shortcuts to avoid highway congestion, thus putting our kids and each of us at risk,” said **United States Representative Adriano Espaillat**. “I have long advocated for speed cameras to give law enforcement better tools to combat reckless drivers and was one of four Senate sponsors of S4459-A, which is now-chaptered legislation authorizing NYC to place a fixed number of speed cameras in 20 school zones with observed motorist speeding. I commend today’s effort to install the additional speed safety cameras near NYC schools to keep our kids and our streets safe from reckless drivers.”

“As Brooklyn’s chief law enforcement officer, I am committed to protecting pedestrians and holding drivers accountable for their reckless driving. Our children deserve every safeguard we can give them and so I urge the passage of The Every School Speed Safety Camera Act. It is a necessary and valuable tool in our efforts to combat reckless driving,” said **Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez**.

“The rules of the road are simple, reckless drivers endanger innocent lives and cause crashes. A driver's license does not give motorists the right of way to speed, cross red lights, or make impaired decisions that turn our city streets and sidewalks into crossroads of life and death. We owe it to the families of those who perished and the survivors whose lives were forever changed to increase enforcement and accountability to prevent future tragedies. Through the expansion and extension of the speed camera program, our roads will become that much safer for pedestrians of all ages. When city and state legislators work collaboratively, our progress becomes immeasurable. I support these life-saving efforts," said **City Council Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo**.

"Crashes are preventable, the data proves that and it's incumbent upon us to do everything in our power eradicate traffic fatalities," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair of the Committee on Transportation**. "I exhort my state colleagues to collaborate with us in furthering our Vision Zero goals and expand the use of speed cameras near our schools."

"The numbers are clear, and they are distressing: while speeding, injuries, and fatalities are down in school zones where speed cameras have been installed, the majority of traffic-related tragedies involving children occur where or when the City cannot operate cameras. When it comes to protecting the health and safety of our children, every tool and resource must be made available. I stand with the Administration and all of the advocates and survivors of those we have lost in urging our leaders in Albany to extend and expand the City's ability to reduce the incidence of dangerous speeding violations in school zones and protect our city's children and families," said **Council Member Mark Treyger, Chair of the Committee on Education**.

"Every life lost on the street is a tragedy, which is why we must do everything in our power to make sure dangerous drivers do not get behind the wheel," said **Council Member Donovan Richards, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety**. "Having safe streets for our families is one of the most important elements of public safety, so we must take action now to protect New Yorkers and support law enforcement to ensure that this never happens again. I'd like to thank Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner O'Neill for their consistent efforts and priorities aimed at making our streets safer for all."

"Today, we are calling on Albany to do everything in its power to protect our children and achieve Vision Zero," said **Council Member Brad Lander**. "Lower speeds save lives, and putting speed cameras in front of all of our schools is a simple step we can take to protect students across NYC and make our streets safer for everyone. Legislators in Albany have a chance to step up and save dozens of young lives across NYC. I want to thank Mayor de Blasio, the courageous victims' families and survivors, and tireless transit advocates for their leadership in pushing for safer streets."

"What part of making sure drivers don't speed near our schools would anyone disagree with? We cannot let politics get in the way of pedestrian safety," said **Council Member Justin Brannan**. "Speed cameras near schools are a proven way to calm traffic and save lives. This is a common sense plea to improve safety for children and pedestrians once and for all. Albany must pass speed safety camera legislation in the budget and expand the school zone program."

"Protecting our schools and the neighborhoods that host them should be a top priority on every level of government. Until all of our schools are equally protected from dangerous drivers, we must continue to push for a more strict enforcement of school zone safety," said **Council Member Peter Koo**.

"Our hardworking families should not be forced to worry about unsafe drivers in their school zones. By increasing the number of speed cameras in our neighborhoods, we are sending an important message that we take the safety of New Yorkers and their children very seriously. We need drivers to be more aware of their surroundings when traveling in residential areas and to understand the tragic consequences of speeding. This legislation is a much needed step towards

decreasing the incidents of reckless driving in our community,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene**.

"We must find and punish any driver who considers it okay to recklessly speed near our schools, putting New York City's children in danger," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**. "For years, Albany has ignored the cries of our children, families, and advocates who just want the tools to keep our kids safe. That must change this year."

"Every time a child is struck by a car we are reminded that pedestrians have lost control of our streets -- we travel at our own peril. As a society we have the tools to address so many of these senseless tragedies. What more do we need to know than these two simple facts: speed cameras reduce speeding in school zones by almost two-thirds, and three-quarters of children who are killed or severely injured in a traffic crash were struck in situations when a speed camera could not be activated. I am joining with our Mayor and thousands of New Yorkers to urge the State legislature to give us the authorization to protect our children when they are simply trying to go to school," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

"Drivers should not speed on heavily transited areas, especially nearby schools," said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca**. "Sadly, that is not the case. Today, I am asking state elected officials to expand the New York City's school zone speed enforcement camera program and to close the loopholes that impede the installation of speed cameras in dangerous locations like 9th street in Park Slope, where little Abigail and Josh lost their lives a few weeks ago. New York City is committed to ensure streets become safe spaces for pedestrians, especially children, and cyclists."

"We have a duty to protect our children from being killed in a collision that could be prevented by a simple traffic camera," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. "Some of the most dangerous intersections where we should not have lost any lives are within feet of schools in my neighborhood. We need traffic cameras anywhere someone has been injured or killed, especially near schools."

"Speeding is dangerous, plain and simple," said **Council Member Stephen Levin**. "There's just no excuse to put everyone's lives, especially our most vulnerable children, at risk. While we have made progress on safer street designs, we need expanded enforcement tools to curb this reckless behavior. Speed cameras have proven to be effective tools at increasing safety where they are deployed. Let's work together and make this tragic loss of life a thing of the past."

"By limiting speed cameras solely to the street that a school is located on we are committing a disservice to our most vulnerable population, our children. We must expand the school zone speed enforcement camera program to allow cameras to be installed near more schools so tragedies like the one that occurred in Park Slope do not take place elsewhere in our city," said **Council Member Andrew Cohen**. "I thank Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to making our streets safer and I stand with him in his efforts to reduce speeding and saving lives."

"Sadly, three years ago, two teenagers in my district were struck while crossing the street in a school zone. One of the victims died from his injuries. At the time, there was no speed camera along that roadway," said **Council Member Andy King**. "It shouldn't take the loss of life before

taking action to control the speed limit in school zones. I commend Mayor De Blasio for pushing our leaders in Albany to expand and improve our city's school zone speed enforcement camera program. And, I hope our Albany leadership will do so."

"I support efforts to expand school enforcement zones to ensure that New York City's children, teachers, and parents are safer. Recent tragic incidents are a harsh reminder of the need to increase street safety and New York should waste no time doing so. Thank you to Mayor De Blasio for his advocacy and to the State Assembly for including this in their one-house budget bill," said **Council Member Keith Powers**.

"Speed cameras are critical and effective public safety tools that save lives, especially in school zones. The renewal and expansion of the city's power to install speed cameras in school zones should be a no brainer. It's a common sense measure that will save lives. I urge my colleagues in Albany to help us keep New York City students safe and extend and expand New York's speed camera provisions," said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson**.

"It is very simple. Speed cameras around schools slow drivers down and save lives - children's lives. Let's get this done," said **Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers**.

"Making roads safer is essential to making neighborhoods more age-friendly, ensuring that older New Yorkers are able to age in the communities they love without fear of injury or death, as seniors represent 17 percent of the city's population but a stunning 47 percent of its traffic fatalities," said **Chris Widelo, Associate State Director of AARP New York**. "This is also an issue of disparities, as our recent report found many 50-plus African American & Blacks, Hispanic and Latinos, and Asian American and Pacific Islanders in New York City are less likely to live in communities with safe streets. Speed cameras have proven to be an effective deterrent against dangerous driving, and AARP fully supports the language in the NY State Assembly budget proposal that would not only reauthorize the existing program but expand it to other high risk areas across the city, in order to make New York a safer place for residents of all ages."

"The first priority of all school leaders is ensuring the safety of students -- not only within the building but outside as well. Speed cameras can make a difference in safety around schools, and if the school zone speed enforcement camera program results in even one serious accident being avoided, the success of this initiative will be immeasurable," said **Mark Cannizzaro, President of the Council of Schools Supervisors and Administrators**.

"We strongly urge the passing of the Every School Speed Safety Camera Bill," said **Charmaine Ruddock, Project Director for Bronx Health REACH at the Institute for Family Health**.

"Children walking to and from school means that they are getting more physical activity and, in the Bronx as elsewhere, that means that the children are engaging in a healthy behavior. Speed safety cameras will go a long way to ensure that they get to do that safely."

Our school children are experiencing mental anguish over school violence for which we do not yet have an effective solution. The irony is that we know how to improve traffic safety in their school zones, but don't yet have the political will to implement effective solutions, such as speed cameras, that have been shown to decrease their risk of traffic injury. My hope for our children is

that our otherwise sound leaders will wake up soon and prioritize our children’s wellbeing,” said **Joyce C. Pressley, Ph.D., M.P.H. of the Center for Injury Epidemiology and Prevention at Columbia University.**

“As a District 15 Representative and mother of two, I can sincerely and wholeheartedly say that the critical work of Safe Streets is creating a better place for everyone in New York City, especially our children and families. The expansion of speed safety cameras in NYC school zones is imperative. The unnecessary loss of our children's lives has got to stop and the passing of this bill is how it can happen,” said **Camille Casaretti, Community Education Council President for District 15.**

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