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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS SIGNS TWO BILLS TO DAM ADDITIONAL
RIVERS FEEDING SEA OF GUN VIOLENCE**

Sylvia Hinds-Radix, Corporation Counsel, Law Department: Good morning everybody. Thank you for joining us. My name is Sylvia Hinds-Radix and I'm the city's corporation counsel. Today, Mayor Adams will be signing two pieces of legislation to address the issues of gun violence in our city and to keep our New Yorkers safe. It is now my pleasure to introduce the mayor of the City of New York, Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you, judge. And really want to thank our partners here. DA Bragg, Councilman Powers, as well as Councilman Abreu and the entire City Council and state lawmakers — Governor Hochul and state lawmakers for coming together on an area that we all agree. The Supreme Court decision is really going to impact our public safety, not only here in New York, but across the entire country. And that's why we're here at Times Square. As I talked about over and over again, there are many rivers that we must to dam to end the sea of gun violence that is really destroying our country in general. But specifically here in New York, we are going to continue to dam those rivers that is impacting our city. And today I'm signing two bills, Intro-518 and 602 that would help reduce the flow of illegal firearms in New York City and designate Times Square as a sensitive location zone.

Extremely significant — we receive millions of visitors here. Every time you turn, you come to this city for tourism, people come through this area. This is the heart of our city and you don't want a city, particularly here, that people are carrying illegal or, based on the Supreme Court, legal guns in this area. Earlier this year, the decision to overturn New York State's long standing gun licensing requirements really impacted our city and state. It took aim at the safety of New Yorkers and opened another river that we have to dam and these two bills are going to assist us in damming those rivers. The Supreme Court decision came down less than six weeks after 10 New Yorkers were shot and killed in a Buffalo supermarket. It made a mockery of our justice system, made a mockery of our ability to keep New Yorkers safe.

Gun violence is a national nightmare, not a local nightmare, but a national nightmare. The gun industry generates over \$9 billion in revenue, yet it costs everyday Americans \$557 billion in revenue because of the negative fallout from gun violence. It's not a big city problem, it's an American problem and we're going to continue to partner with our municipalities all over the country, so we could come together with information sharing and address this real crisis we are facing. So again, I want to thank the governor. I want to thank my lawmakers and I want to thank

our partners here on a local level that assisted us in moving this legislation forward. Millions of tourists flock here every year. We are projected to receive 56 million tourists in this city. Many of them come through Times Square, it has become a signature of this city and we want to make sure that they're safe.

We're not going to live in fear and we're going to make sure we create an environment where those who visit the city, such as Times Square, won't have to be paralyzed with the fear of knowing that someone is carrying a gun in this area. Today, we enshrine in law that Times Square is a gun-free zone. Licensed gun carriers and others may not enter this area with a gun, unless otherwise specifically authorized by law. But we're not stopping here just to deal with this area. We are fighting back against illegal guns coming into our city and prosecuting those who carry illegal guns, a major focus on our part and we're happy to see DA Bragg's here with us.

The New York City Police Department removed over 5,000 illegal guns off our streets. They'll continue to do the job every night, battling against the iron pipeline that's feeding guns here in our city, many coming from the southern part of our country and that is having an endless flow of guns in New York and other cities across America. So I want to thank the City Council again, Speaker Adrienne Adams, Council Member Abreu, Council Member Powers and all who have come together to mobilize to get rid of our common threat, and that is illegal guns and those legal guns that could be made harmful and dangerous due to the Supreme Court decision. I want to now turn it over to the council member, Council Member Shaun Abreu, to talk about Intro-518A. Councilman.

City Council Member Shaun Abreu: Thank you, brother. Thank you, Mayor Adams, for gathering us here this morning. The truth is that gun violence has taken too many lives in our city. We've seen it outside barbershops and in restaurants, outside schools, in front of station houses, in parks and on the subway. The violence is often arbitrary. Every day, we're reminded that it doesn't matter what job we do or where we live, where we eat, or where we shop. At the wrong day at the wrong time, violence could reach us or someone that we love. It is time to confront the reality that the guns on our streets are often from a faraway state. They come on the iron pipeline. 70 percent of guns trafficked into our city travel along I-95 from states with loose gun regulations all along the East Coast. The bill the mayor will sign today will fight back against the manufacturers and traffickers who flood our streets with weapons.

It will mandate a study and report on the locations of firearm seizures in this city, along with the type of firearm and its manufacturer. It will advise on ways that the states and municipalities coordinate with one another in pursuit of preventing gun violence and require critical reporting on the dealers who sold guns used in crimes, revealing potential bad actors. Most importantly, the bill takes a holistic approach, requiring recommendations on youth programming, mental health support, and environmental design to further reduce gun violence.

Finally, because New York can't tackle this crisis alone, this bill will identify methods of interstate coordination to stop the flow of guns along the iron pipeline before they get to New York. As chair of the Council's Committee on State and Federal Legislation, I am committed to ensuring coordination between municipalities and states in order to tackle this complex challenge. Mayor Adams has demonstrated an unprecedented commitment to interstate cooperation and reducing the gun violence in our city. I know he is up to the job. I also want to

thank Speaker Adams, my colleagues, for securing the passage of this critical bill and for keeping up this good fight, as well as to the DA Bragg. Thank you so much.

Hinds-Radix: Now I would like to invite to the podium, Council Member Keith Powers, who's the Council member for this area. And finally he will be followed by the Manhattan district attorney, Alvin Bragg, a critical partner in keeping New York safe.

City Council Member Keith Powers: Thank you. First of all, thank you to Mayor Adams for signing these bills today. I thank you to all my colleagues and of course Council Member Abreu for leading the fight on this. I think every New Yorker knows, right, and every American knows right now where we are when it comes to the fight on guns and gun safety. As a representative for Times Square, I am very, very proud to represent an area that belongs to not only New Yorkers, but to the entire world. But we have a responsibility to keep every single person who comes here or lives here safe. Just about a month to a couple months ago, I was proud to stand with Mayor Adams when we opened a new DNA unit in my district to make it easier to fight against gun crimes here. And I am very proud to watch the numbers go down when it comes to gun arrests here in the city because of Mayor Adams' tactics here to go after this crisis.

Yes, with enforcement, you need to enforce against guns here in this city. But to send a message that we're going to use every single tool in the toolbox to go after guns, whether they're legal or illegal guns, because the facts are pretty clear. If you carry a gun in this city, you present a threat to every New Yorker and every person visiting here. We have to do, as elected officials, everything in our power to keep people safe. So first of all, I want to give Council Member Shaun Abreu a very big shout-out for doing common sense things to put tools into the toolbox. And I want to thank this administration for taking those tools and making sure that every New Yorker, every person visiting here, will feel safe against the sickness of gun safety and gun violence that's in this country. So thank you and I'm very proud to be standing here and to have voted aye and be a sponsor of these bills. Thanks so much.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg: Good morning. I want to thank the mayor and the speaker and in particular, the Council members who are here. Council Member Abreu, whose bill it is and Council Member Powers whose district we are, and our partners in the courtroom, the corporation counsel, the New York City Law Department, and our partners in all of our enforcement work, the New York Police Department. Enforcing our strong gun laws is a top priority at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. So far this year, we've brought more than 400 gun prosecutions. That's up more than 20 percent from last year at this time. That work is critically important. In the spirit of the bill today, we have been focusing not only on those who carry guns within our island, but also on those who are trafficking them on the iron pipeline, as Council Member Abreu said.

So we have brought cases from gun component parts coming from Pennsylvania, guns coming from down South, in particular North Carolina. And we will continue to do that work to vigorously enforce our laws to ensure safety on this island. In addition to that work, as Council Member Powers said, we have to use all of the tools in our toolbox. So in addition to enforcement, we've also been focusing on investing in our communities. This summer we had a grant process and invested in 10 groups working with our youth, and not just any youth, but those youth who are most at risk for gun violence.

So we will also continue side by side with our enforcement work to do our prevention work. While we know we have more work to do across the board, we have encouraging news, which is that, in Manhattan, homicides are down more than 20 percent year-to-date and citywide, more than 14 percent. So we will continue this work. We pause today for these two very, very important bills. Again, I want to thank Council Member Abreu for bringing forward the bill on trafficking, which is so important — that public transparency. And I want to thank the legislature, the governor and the mayor and the entire City Council for taking the other step today of really safeguarding this place. It is just plain, good old common sense that no one should have a gun in Times Square. So thank you to all my colleagues in city government.

(Crosstalk.)

Question: Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Mayor. Can you address how this comports with the federal judge's ruling in Syracuse that overturned part of the state law that said (inaudible) can't designate Times Square as a gun-free zone. How do these two things work out?

(Inaudible.)

Steven Lewis, Law Department: I'm Steven Lewis.

Mayor Adams: Identify yourself so they don't think you're a tourist. (Laughter.)

Lewis: That's right, yes. I'm Steven Lewis from the Law Department. But very briefly, that decision, the judge himself stayed that decision. It is not in effect, the law is the law, the law remains in effect and will continue to be enforced both in the city and throughout the state. We're waiting on an appeal. Well, the attorney general has begun the appeal process to the Second Circuit and until they make some further determination, we will continue to enforce the law.

Question: Just a follow-up question, because many of us are not lawyers and so reading that this morning, it was confusing to me because I thought it said that the stay was for three days. Did I misread that?

Lewis: He initially allowed for three business days to give the state a time to appeal. And so the state, the attorney general, is proceeding with that and it is fully anticipated that before the expiration of that three business day period, there will be some further determination by someone in the Second Circuit.

Question: (Inaudible.)

Lewis: That would be Friday. Remember, Monday was a holiday, so you have an extra day, tomorrow.

Question: I wonder if both you and the mayor could address this — given the fact that this is a city law and the law that was appealed was a state law, is it possible that the city law could still be in effect because it wasn't challenged by the gun lobby?

Lewis: Let me just remind people the city wasn't even a party to the litigation. That litigation was against the state and certain upstate municipalities. So the city was not a part of that case. But separate, more directly to your point, the city law was about implementing the state law. State law permitted the city to define what is the Times Square area. That's the major focus of the city law. So the city law is in tandem with the state law. I don't want to predict what ultimately will happen by the Second Circuit, by anyone else, in terms of further court proceedings, but right now we just have to wait and see what happens.

Question: Mayor, could you just address the fact that if whatever happens in the federal court strikes down the state law, can the city pass its own law making New York City, making Times Square a sensitive area where it's a gun-free zone?

Mayor Adams: This is going to be played out in the courts and whichever way our court counsel indicates, that's what we're going to comply with. We're going to make sure we are in complete conformity — whatever the court determines and that's the way it's going to play out.

Question: But is it your wish to try to do whatever you can to make this a gun-free zone anyway?

Mayor Adams: I'm sorry?

Question: Is it your wish to make Times Square a gun-free zone no matter what happens?

Mayor Adams: We would love to, as long as it complies with whatever the judicial body states. This is what we want to do. But we're going to be in complete compliance with whatever the courts hand down.

(Inaudible.)

Question: Hi. So it's the contention of the gun owners of America that it's not the people who have permitted guns that you should worry about, it's the people with the illegal guns, which you spoke about. So why, if they're legally holding a gun and they've applied for the permit and they've done the background check, why shouldn't they be able to carry a gun into Times Square?

Mayor Adams: I think you got a fan back there. One out of the million that comes through here. Here's where people get it wrong. We get here in Times Square close to 475,000 people that can visit here at any given time. If you just be conservative in your estimate of having a thousand people, just a thousand carrying a gun at that given time, a gunshot goes off. All of those legal gun owners now take out their guns. Don't know who the bad guy is, who the good guy is. So all of the legal gun owners who are trying to exercise their constitutional right, now, you have a thousand people with guns out trying to determine who's a good guy and who's a bad guy.

There's no sign on your forehead saying, "I'm the good guy, I'm the bad guy." And anyone who believes a place like New York could become Dodge City and all of a sudden, you are in danger and your loved ones, your family members, your children, because now all the legal gun owners are now carrying a gun in a city like New York, as densely populated like New York. There is no place like this that has the volume of people we have, compact in one location.

So idealism collides with realism when it's played out in our real streets. It's difficult for trained law enforcement officers to make the split second decision of who legally is carrying a gun. So how is the average public going to make that determination? I own three guns. I believe in the right to be a responsible gun owner. This is not an assault on gun owners. This is an assault on making bad decisions that can impact the lives of innocent people.

Question: I'm not sure who can answer this, or maybe McCarthy here, given that gun possession is not a bail eligible offense does... is that make it more difficult to enforce this? Obviously, you have people who don't go to jail right away when this happens, if they were caught with a gun. Does law enforcement, anyone have or do you have an opinion about that?

Mayor Adams: Well, DA, you want to talk about that. Because I think it's inaccurate. That's not a...

District Attorney Bragg: Yeah, the premise is incorrect. We seek and get bail on a number of gun cases. So the sort of starting...

Question: Just possessing the gun?

District Attorney Bragg: I can tell you in Manhattan the majority of our gun enforcement work, the gun enforcement work I talked about, was unaffected by bail reform changes. So we are sadly, almost every day, I told you, we have more than 400 gun cases are going into court and seeking and getting bail in gun cases.

Mayor Adams: One thing for sure, one law that was passed is clearly being practiced right now because I smell some weed. Someone is smoking. Someone is smoking. (Laughter.)

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