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**MAYOR DE BLASIO APPOINTS NISHA AGARWAL AS SENIOR ADVISOR TO
DEPUTY MAYOR THOMPSON AND APPOINTS BITTA MOSTOFI AS
COMMISSIONER OF MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today appointed Nisha Agarwal as a Senior Advisor to the Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Phil Thompson, to advance the Administration's recently announced DemocracyNYC initiative. Bitta Mostofi, currently Acting Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, today assumes the title of Commissioner.

"In my decades in public life, I have had the pleasure to work with hundreds of fierce and dedicated women. These two stand out," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "Nisha has made it her life's mission to bring the voices and needs of marginalized communities to the forefront. Her service to this city's millions of immigrant residents will reverberate for generations of New Yorkers to come through programs like IDNYC, and I have no doubt her work on the DemocracyNYC initiative will be equally meaningful.

"I'm proud to appoint Bitta Mostofi to the important role of Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. Bitta has demonstrated that there is no challenge too great when we work together with a clear vision and strategy. Relentless attacks on immigrant New Yorkers from the White House will be met with unflinching leadership under Bitta Mostofi."

Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives Phil Thompson said, "From the Center for Popular Democracy to IDNYC, Nisha has a track record of success in building organizations and initiatives from the ground up. Her skills and passion are exactly what we need to ensure DemocracyNYC is inclusive of all New Yorkers. As Deputy Mayor overseeing the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, I know no one better to take the helm than Bitta Mostofi. I have the utmost confidence in her ability to direct the Office of Immigrant Affairs in serving, uplifting, and fighting for the over 3 million immigrant New Yorkers."

Agarwal will take on the role of Senior Advisor to the Deputy Mayor to boost civic engagement among New Yorkers and build DemocracyNYC's efforts on immigration, disability, and healthcare. Agarwal served as Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs since the beginning of the de Blasio Administration, building landmark initiatives like IDNYC, the City's municipal identification card, and Cities for Action, a national advocacy coalition of local

elected officials. Prior to joining the Administration, Agarwal, the daughter of immigrants, worked with the Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit to establish the Immigrant Justice Corps, a nonprofit that pairs recent law school graduates with non-profit legal services providers to offer free legal representation to immigrants. Agarwal was also the co-founder the Center for Popular Democracy and served as its Deputy Director.

“We are in a moment of unparalleled attacks on the rights of people across the United States to take part in our democratic process, access government services, and assert their voices. The Trump White House has made it their mission to spread falsehoods about voters, limit critical social services, and suppress participation in the census. These assaults have immense impacts on New Yorkers in the short and long term,” said **Nisha Agarwal, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Mayor**. “It was the honor of a lifetime to serve as Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs in a city like New York. As I continue to deal with cancer and the recovery from my stroke, I’ve zeroed in on the way I can give the most back to New Yorkers in this moment. Over the last several months I have met people across the five boroughs – at the hospital, on the street, even at the dry cleaner – and while everyone experiences difficulties in life, they also have the solutions. By working together and empowering our people, we can implement those solutions. I’m thrilled to join the team of Deputy Mayor Thompson to build the DemocracyNYC initiative from the ground up.”

Mostofi will assume the role of Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, where she has served since the start of the de Blasio Administration. In 2014, Mostofi was chosen as Campaign Director for IDNYC, was elevated to Assistant Commissioner for External Affairs in 2016, and has served as Acting Commissioner since August 2018 during Agarwal’s medical leave. Mostofi previously worked as an immigration attorney, fighting for the rights of immigrant crime victims and asylees, as well as providing legal defense for immigrants facing deportation and those experiencing discrimination because of their Middle Eastern or Muslim origins. In her work at the Mayor’s Office, she has played a central role in the development of major City initiatives such as IDNYC and ActionNYC, the City’s free and confidential immigrant legal services program.

“As the daughter of immigrants, it is an honor to serve as Commissioner of Immigrant Affairs in the ultimate city of immigrants. New Yorkers aren’t known to back down from a fight, and I will use this platform to ensure our communities are heard in local government as well as in Washington, D.C.,” said **Bitta Mostofi, Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs**. “It has been an incredible opportunity to work alongside Nisha the last few years building innovative programs and implementing policies that make New York City the most immigrant-inclusive city in America. I look forward to working with partners in City government and beyond to learn from, empower and uplift the over 3 million New Yorkers who make this city great and who came to this country to build a better life for their families. I thank the Mayor for this opportunity.”

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