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**MAYOR ADAMS AWARDS KEY TO THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
TO FORMER U.S. CONGRESSMAN EDOLPHUS “ED” TOWNS**

**NEW YORK** – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today awarded the Key to the City of New York to former U.S. Representative Edolphus “Ed” Towns in recognition of his lasting impact on the Brooklyn community and his lifelong service to the nation. During his 30-year career in the U.S. House of Representatives, Rep. Towns worked to improve health care and higher education and protect American consumers serving on key committees, including Oversight and Government Reform, Energy and Commerce, and Public Works and Transportation — eventually rising to chair the full Oversight Committee. His legislative work focused on transparency, government accountability, and protecting student-athletes, including helping pass the Student Right to Know Act.

“Today, we honor a towering champion of Brooklyn, who during his 30-year career in the U.S. House of Representatives, selflessly served his borough, the City of New York, and our nation,” said **Mayor Adams**. “Throughout my career, I have turned to Ed for advice, and he has always been there for me — as he has for all New Yorkers. From serving as Brooklyn’s first African-American deputy borough president to winning a seat in Congress in 1982, he kept serving his district for an incredible 15 terms. Our city and Brooklyn would not be the thriving places that they are without Ed’s advocacy and contributions. I congratulate him on a lifetime of service and am honored to present him with the Key to the City of New York.”

“I am deeply grateful for the incredible honor of receiving the Key to the City from Mayor Adams. This city means so much to me, and I have dedicated my life and career to giving back in every way I can,” said **former U.S. Representative Ed Towns**. “This moment belongs not only to me but also to my family and the communities I represented for 30 years. I accept this honor with profound gratitude and pride, and I will always cherish the opportunity to have represented the people of this great city.”

Rep. Towns rose from a sharecropping family in Chadbourn, North Carolina, to the U.S. Army, New York City classrooms, and leadership posts at two major hospitals — Metropolitan Hospital and Beth Israel Hospital — all while building a distinguished career in public office. Rep. Towns built his political career through deep engagement in Brooklyn, beginning with his 1972 election as a state committeeman and his later appointment as the borough's first African American deputy borough president. He won his seat in Congress in 1982 and went on to represent one of New York's most diverse districts for 15 terms, regularly earning overwhelming support from voters.

Informed by his background as a hospital administrator, Rep. Towns's top priority was New Yorkers' health, fighting to expand access to medical services in underserved communities, improving preventive care, and strengthening protections for women's health. As chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, he helped advance civil rights legislation and pushed for stronger representation for communities of color. In his later years in Congress, he oversaw investigations into the financial crisis and federal stimulus spending before deciding not to seek re-election in 2012, concluding a distinguished career in public service.

The Key to the City of New York was first awarded in 1702 by New York City Mayor Phillip French, when he offered "Freedom of the City" to Viscount Edward Cornbury, governor of New York and New Jersey. By the mid-1800s, it became customary to award the Key to the City of New York as a direct symbol of the city's wish that a guest feel free to come and go at will. Today, the Key to the City of New York is a beloved symbol of civic recognition and gratitude reserved for individuals whose service to the public and the common good rises to the highest level of achievement.

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