

Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams Delivers Remarks With Governor Kathy Hochul at School Zone Speed Camera Bill Signing

June 24, 2022

Mayor Eric Adams: Really, really an exciting moment, but also a teaching moment. A moment where I believe Amy has really inspired many of us, as well as the group's membership. I remember as a child, a mom saying, "Baby, if you live long enough, you're going to have some dark and painful moments." How do you turn pain into purpose? And that's really the question that we need to continue to symbolize and show our young people, as you go through this journey, when you leave school and take on the awesome responsibility of adulthood. And even now you are not leaders of tomorrow, you're leaders of today. And when you feel the painful moment, how do you turn it into purposeful moments? And that's what was done when I marched in AIDS walks – is because people lost their loved ones to HIV and AIDS. When I march to ovarian cancer – it is people who lost loved ones to a cancer.

Mayor Adams: All of the things that you see, all of the inspiration from change comes from a painful moment. And if you live long enough, as mom stated, you're going to find painful moments and you're going to find dark moments and you are going to make that decision. If those dark moments are burials or plantings. Families for Safe Streets, they took their dark moments and they stated that other families should not have to experience that. And they turned it into purposeful moments. And when Andrew and Deborah, when they saw this and heard and listened, they decided to come together in both Houses, in the Senate, in Assembly and said, "How do we do something legislatively where the numbers are just right?" I mean, why do we say go to school and learn how to look at the numbers and the facts. And then we ignore them when it's time to put in place the governance or the laws that are impacting that.

Mayor Adams: 72% of the fatalities were taking place when the cameras were not operated. That's basic math. You don't have to be a mathematical expert to say, "What did we do differently?" And so the teamsmanship between transportation authority.

When you look at Families for Safe Streets and so many other advocates who experienced this horrific issue decided to come together and make a difference. And, but you could come with the greatest ideas possible, but if they fall on deaf ears, you wasted your time. Fortunate for us, we had a governor that listened. We had a governor that had enough compassion to state that this is logical. This makes sense. And let's get it done. And it was a hard fought battle because some people thought that cameras were a way of being punitive, when it was not. It was a way of deterrence because once you get that ticket one time, you're not going to speed again, and then it's the halo effect that you are not going to speed in the area. So it's about using a tool to change and retool how we think and how we do the right things.

Mayor Adams: And so I'm encouraged with the school, with your principal. I'm encouraged. There's a question mark that lingers over our entire existence because of what is happening. But when you walk into a school like this, that question mark turns into an exclamation point. We're going to be alright. We're going to be alright because you are focused, you are driven. You understand what you want. I don't know if we ever had a generation of young people like the generation of today. Don't kid yourself. Adults don't blow the winds of change. They don't. They like to act like they do. But the reality is, if you look from the civil rights era, if you look for the wars that have been protested, if you look for all the changes we have ever experienced globally, it has been young people like you. You blow the winds of change.

Mayor Adams: Today, this piece of legislation is saying to you, take a deep breath and blow the globe in a direction that you wanted to go into. I'm so excited about the future and the country is a great place, but the country could only be great because of one thing, because of New York City. We are the best of the best. We are America's city and the young people in this city, everyone duplicates you, everyone wants to be like you. Everyone wants to look at your music, your hairstyle, your dance, your culture, your food. It all starts right here in New York. So this bill is going to cascade throughout the entire country. And it's going to say it's possible to marry technology with safety. And we have a lot of challenges in front of us. Let's not kid ourselves, but I know we are going to defeat those challenges because of the partnerships of the two.

Mayor Adams: I'm 62 years old, we will push back on a lot of things. You're supposed to push back on me. I pushed back on my parents, my parents pushed back on their parents. That's how change happened. We're not supposed to agree, but we're not supposed to be disagreeable. When we come together, we can do this. We can pass laws that protect us. That is what's great about this moment. And so, I too, I want to

thank Andrew and Deborah for having the foresight, the vision to not give up and say, we can make this happen. And to the Families of Safe Streets, I knocked on a lot of doors in my time.

Mayor Adams: I knocked on a lot of doors in my time as a police officer, and I told family members that their loved ones were not coming home. And there was no consolation, if it was because of metal from a gun bullet, or the metal from a speeding, reckless driver. The pain is the pain, and you relive it every time you hear a horn, every time you hear of another person that loses a loved one, every time you hear a car brake hard, you relive it. That's the reality. But what you're doing today is you're taking that reality out of the lives of those people who are potentially the victims of vehicle crashes. And so on behalf of all of our babies and our families, I want to say thank you. New York State is a better place because we came together as lawmakers, as advocates, and as governor. Legislate, negotiate, and agitate. And you agitated, and now we got the bill done. Thank you.

###