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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE
INAUGURATION OF COUNCIL MEMBER JUSTIN BRANNAN**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: An impressive display of multitasking Alison. Very graceful down there. So, everybody it's a joy to be with you today. This is really a good news day for this community and for Brooklyn and for all of the city. It is so nice to be in what I call the one true borough.

[Applause]

I love them all, I love them all, it's just good to remember where you come from right? Everyone is gathered here to celebrate the wisdom of this community in making this decision. And I could not be more impressed at the choice that this community made. I want to say at the outset, because I have had the joy of working with him for over 20 years, that Justin, you know it, you have – I'm not going to say big shoes to fill, I'm sure everyone's made that joke already. You have very accomplished shoes to fill. And I want to say from the bottom of my heart to my friend and ally in so many good fights, thank you Vinnie Gentile for all you've done for this community.

[Applause]

I want to say thank you to all the community leaders, all of the elected officials who are here to celebrate. I want to thank Scott Stringer for all that we're doing together for this city. Everyone who is here, thank you, but a special thank you to the Brannan family. Some of you may have encountered Justin's mother. If you've talked to Mary or if you've, in my case, also emailed with Mary, everything she does has a certain strong personality and colorful nature to it. And it's not hard to see where some of his good influences come from. So I want to congratulate Mary, I want to congratulate his wife Leigh, and I want to congratulate the whole family, this is your victory too. Congratulations to all.

[Applause]

Yes, Justin Brannan has a lot of personality. So I have this vivid memory of – we were campaigning in the 2013 mayoral race and we were down in the subway on the R train, do you remember which station that was? 86th Street. So we're down in the platform campaigning and

someone comes over and says 'I want to take a picture' so I'm like sure, cool and they had, you know, their tablet out and Justin's standing there, he's taking the picture and he's, you know, doing all the things to get the picture right and making it – it seems like it's going on a while and I said 'hey, Justin what's going on?' and he says I'm on eBay.

[Laughter]

And I was like – I was like I like that kid. So if you know his irreverent sense of humor and you know his passion for this work, then you know he's someone who doesn't take no for an answer and he's never afraid of a tough fight. This is someone who, from the beginning, you could tell what kind of leader he was going to be. And I had the joy of working with Justin in our administration and before when he worked for Vinnie. And you could just tell he had that spirit that we need more of in public service. And something that really energizes me. When you see the next generation coming up and you see someone of this character, this energy, this passion, it gives you a lot of hope. So I want to say as we celebrate today, Justin I'm glad you made this decision because it's not just about the people you will serve in this community it's also a message to everyone else, you know what a lot of really good people choose to go into public life and that's sending such a powerful, positive message. Let's thank Justin for having made that choice.

[Applause]

It's also important to recognize we need people in public life who have done things that maybe are a little bit out of the ordinary. Not just the standard path. So yes, he played guitar in a punk band for a while, that gives you perspective doesn't it? Right? It gives him a little edge. And – and he understands what it means to connect with people of the grassroots. Because this is his neighborhood, this has been his neighborhood throughout his life. He understands that really change comes from grassroots. You serve people of the grassroots, but it's not just about that, it's not just about you get elected, you solve constituent problems – he knows a whole lot about that – you pass good legislation – he knows a whole lot about that – you hold hearings to keep government accountable – Justin knows all about that. It is also that changing our communities and changing our city means people at the grassroots demanding change and organizing for change. This is the time we're living in. By the way, what a day to be talking about it. I'll tell you I was out yesterday marching with over 200,000 New Yorkers.

[Applause]

Over 200,000 in this city, millions around the country sending a very clear statement that the people will take matters into our own hands. You know it's so powerful, the same day the government was shut down in Washington people were out in the streets demanding change here and all over the country. What a juxtaposition. And what a reminder of the fact that the power ultimately resides in the people. That becomes more and more real when you have leaders who understand that, and who act with that understanding, and that's who Justin is. He has been someone who believed change could happen. And he's been willing to roll up his sleeves and knock on the doors and talk to everyday people on the street corner, in the subway, wherever it

was to help make things better for the community. That's the kind of person we need in government.

And look, it's a good time for this city, but people worked hard to get this city to the point we are. And we now need to go farther. What a beautiful time to be a New Yorker and let's take a moment to thank, we have folks here from the NYPD, we are the safest big city in America, let's thank them.

[Applause]

Safest big city in America, police and community working together like never before. When it comes to our schools, and Justin has been a part in helping us achieve this success, we have pre-K for all our kids and soon we're going to have 3-K too.

[Applause]

We have more jobs than we've ever had in our history, and we're building more affordable housing than we've ever had in our history, and we need it right?

[Applause]

It's a great time to be a New Yorker, it's a great time to be in public service, but the only way we can fill our promises to go farther, we have to become an even fairer city. We have to become a city where there's more and more opportunity. We have to become a city where people can actually afford to live in their own neighborhood, who right now are worried about it falling away from them. We have to get even safer. Our schools have to get better. There's a lot to do to address both the great progress we've made but to build on it we need really dynamic, energetic leaders. And I'll tell you something, and this is what I'll conclude on, I've met a lot of promising, up-and-coming young leaders over the years I've been in public service, I can say from the bottom of my heart when it comes to passion, and focus, and energy no one can beat Justin Brannan. Congratulations, Justin.

[Applause]

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