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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE CIVILIAN
COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARD'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you so much, Fred. And Fred referred to the halcyon days when were young staffers together here in these hallowed halls. It was a kinder and gentler time, and it was great working with you back then Fred, and it's been great ever since. I want to thank you for your extraordinary service to the City, all you have done to help us achieve a lot in these last five years, but particularly your service on CCRB and now your leadership of the CCRB which is making a big difference in the city and helping to show the people of New York City we want to get it right. We want to create a relationship between the police, the people of New York City, that is truly respectful and a partnership and one that moves us all forward together. And that is core to the CCRB mission and I think we are very good hands with Chair Fred Davie, let's thank him for all he does.

[Applause]

One of the challenges that all Mayors have – and I know Mayor Dinkins will affirm this – is that we have to navigate the vagaries of the federal government, and I will beg forgiveness, as I've said to the Mayor and the Chair, after giving my remarks, forgive me I have to step out because we are in some ongoing discussions with the federal government on some important matters and I've got to get on the phone.

But I really, really wanted to be here to express my feelings about this moment and to honor a visionary, because I can tell you because I was in this building at the time, it took a visionary to get to the establishment of a truly independent and effective CCRB. It was not easy. It was a tough mission and one that someone with less vision, less heart, less commitment would not even have attempted. But David Dinkins was willing to do what was difficult because he knew it was right and he knew it would have a lasting positive impact in the City. And once again, Mayor Dinkins, I want to tell you something – you were right. It has had a lasting and positive impact on this City, congratulations.

[Applause]

I also want to say in the vein of good karma that is a very wonderful thing when you can do something historic and powerful that helps people and that was the creation of the CCRB. It's also an extraordinary thing when you can be there a quarter-century later to celebrate it. You've done something right is all I can say.

[Applause]

Now a lot of people put a lot of effort into creating and sustaining and building the CCRB, it was not just first act that mattered, it's everything that's happened since. A lot of people in the Dinkins administration who worked here in City Hall and people who have served in City Hall since, a lot of people at the NYPD who believed that it actually was the right vision to have the kind of oversight that gave confidence and built trust and worked to create a CCRB that was fair to all. Success has many mothers and fathers, so we celebrate today the visionary who got us to the point of actually having an independent CCRB, but I want to thank all the folks who built it over time. I want to thank the former chairs, I want to thank the former members, and of course the current members. I want to thank the staff. I want to thank everybody who participated in this extraordinary work. It's no surprise to me it's a model, this being looked at around the country and around the world, but it didn't spring up out of the earth perfectly formed, it was something that had to be worked on for years and years to get it to be all it could be and we're still doing that work.

I especially want to thank folks who have played a central role. Commissioner Jimmy O'Neill, I want to say not only have you and your team been central to the continued development of a fair NYPD and a fair CCRB, but because of neighborhood policing we have a paradigm now that meets all the underlying ideals of the CCRB and it takes us to the next level, I want to thank you for your leadership. I want to thank Executive Director Jonathan Darche for his leadership. Again, all the staff, everyone who is at CCRB now, members and staff, thank you. And we get a lot of support and the occasional prodding from the City Council, and I want to thank a very active and activist and effective chair to Committee on Public Safety, Donavan Richards, thank you, and to all the other members of my administration who are here and I know believe in this mission.

Let me say this very quickly this very quickly, if you look at the history, and you know rarely do we get that moment of pause to look at the history, the idea, the progressive idea of civilian oversight of police goes back to the 19th Century and it was a debate that raged in this city for many years without resolution. I saw a video that literally sent chills up my spine. There was an exhibit on the mayoralty of John Lindsay at the Museum of the City of New York. And there was an extraordinary clip of video that had Bobby Kennedy, then United States Senator from New York. Standing next John Lindsay, I believe it was 1965 arguing why we needed an independent CCRB. It took another quarter century from that moment until Mayor Dinkins achieved it. But the idea – it burned in people's souls because they understood what it could take us to. They understood that an independent CCRB was one of the gateways to actual trust and accountability and could actually heal the relationship between police and community done right. We've seen that play out in so many ways. And I also want to say that Mayor Dinkins understood the full equation. He did not just say a CCRB is going to cure all of our ills. He understood that we needed a number of things to make the city safer. And I've said it many times

publically, Mayor, and I am going to say it again – we're the safest big city in America today. And thank you Jimmy O'Neill, and thank you men and women of the NYPD. We are the safest big city in America and we will continue to be the safest big city in America.

[Applause]

But we never would have had the opportunity to be the safest big city in America if David Dinkins had not done the right thing years and years ago and got the more officers on the street, and got the support we needed from Albany and created the programs to help our young people that started to turn the tide and took us away from an era of crime, and chaos, and toward the success we have today. If you want to know where that path started – look to that man right there.

[Applause]

We're getting toward the end of another year, and Jimmy O'Neill and I always know as we get toward the end of another year that we do not predict specific outcomes, we knock on wood a lot. But what we see as we close out 2018 is the potential for even more records to be set for safety, in this city. Even lower crime, achievements that would have been inconceivable when all of us were in City Hall in 1990. We could never have guessed then, how low-crime could get. We could never have guessed then, how much stronger our social fabric could become. But we did know that we had to start down the road, we did know that change was possible. And I have to say to Mayor David Dinkins, I've told you before you've inspired so many of us. And you taught so many of us, and you gave us an example. And you had to walk through the fire more than once. But you really stayed the course, and believed. And it is gratifying to me to be able to say to you not only were you right, not only did your persistence pay off, but today in New York City there are people who are enjoying that safety, who are enjoying the quality of life we all dreamed of them having, who are enjoying the respectful relationship between police and community that once was only a dream. But you helped us get to this day by starting us on the road to that dream. So I know Fred Davie is going to come back up and has a special presentation. But I want to say from the bottom of my heart, Mayor Dinkins, God bless you. You were the right man at the right time, and you helped us get to this good time.

Thank you, and God bless you.

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