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RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE 35th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE FBI NEW YORK FIELD OFFICE'S JOINT TERRORISM TASK FORCE

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, thank you. I want to thank Assistant Director in Charge Rodriguez for great leadership and the partnership that we have enjoyed with the NYPD, and the FBI, and all the agencies that are present. Thank you for your leadership. And I just want to take a moment – you know, this is a – this is an extraordinary day, and a day to celebrate a lot of achievement, and Commissioner McGuire really captured just how amazing the journey has been over 35 years and how tenuous the beginnings were, which makes the achievement even greater.

Let me take a moment to thank some of the key folks in this room. And again the spirit of cooperation, or, as Commissioner Bratton likes to say, collaboration in the way that – I give Commissioner Bratton for setting this tone from the very, very beginning – that all agencies had so much to offer each other if we could get to the ideal point of coordination, collaboration, communication, and we are at that high water mark now. We are at that level of coordination and shared mission, I think, such as we've never seen before. And that is to the credit of all here, but to the benefit of all our people who are being kept safe because of it. So, Commissioner Bratton, thank you, for epitomizing that spirit, but especially thank you for leading men and women of the NYPD with such [inaudible]

[Applause]

I want to state something to all of you – I think everyone in this room will understand immediately – I was asked in the days leading up to Thanksgiving many, many times – are we safe? Are we going to be safe? Should people come to the parade – etcetera, etcetera. And one of the things I'd like to say is – think about 14 years since 9/11 – every single person in this room deserves credit when I say this – 14 years where all of you stopped another attack. I understand why people feel, legitimately, that it is a complex world and a world where there's lots of challenges and dangers, but I also think it's important to stop and take stock of just how much success there has been since 9/11. 14 years of victory over the forces that would try and change us and our way of life. So, everyone in this room deserves a lot of credit. To our friends in the FBI, we thank you. I know Director Comey was hoping to be with us, but the weather intervened. I want to thank our U. S. attorneys, Preet Bharara and Robert Capers, for your great leadership, thank you so much; the Queens DA, Dick Brown, and New York State Police Superintendent Joe D'Amico; I want to thank the FBI chaplain, Father Franco, and everyone who is a member of the joint-terrorism task force executive board.

Hearing about the origins – I hope this story gets talked about – now, we all know it's a good news story – it's a story that probably won't get all the attention it deserves, but it's one that might not have happened. And Commissioner McGuire, I think, if this is what you look back on and say this is the thing you're proudest of, well, that's hell of a thing to be proud of. You have a lot to feel good about because this is an achievement that was lasting, and how many lives were saved? How many people were protected because of your perseverance and others like you who help to found this task force?

The world has changed a lot since the 1980s. The threats are more diverse and challenging than ever before. The quality and the value of this task force has proven itself many times over – in fact, I would say growing all

the time. And people in this city, will never know what you prevented, and that's as it should be, but there is so many examples that people could hear that made clear what this extraordinary effort achieved. If people had that opportunity to be a fly on the wall, if they had seen your work over 35 years, I think they would walk the streets a little more confident. I think they would have a little more appreciation for just how much work it takes to prevent these acts of violence against our people. But, in fact, that work happened – that collaboration happened you succeeded, day-in, day-out, year-in, year-out. People will never get to see how that great achievement was done. But you'll know, and we will be eternally grateful, and all those people who come to our city – 56 million people came to our city last year – we wouldn't have 56 million people coming to our city to enjoy all it has to offer, to strengthen our economy – we wouldn't have that if this work hadn't happened. Over 35 years of success – one of many examples you should be proud of.

We also know the challenges are not just from outside – we know all across this country, there are internal challenges, there are the militias. We've seen the shootings recently at Planned Parenthood. We've seen the shooting directed at the Black Lives Matter protestor. We've seen so many different instances to remind us of the different threats. But one thing that we can say that is a response to all of these challenges, foreign and domestic, is the extraordinary work of this task force. If it gives you a little comfort that – even though the details of the work aren't well understood, but the results are – look what happened, again, referring to Thanksgiving Day. All the dire warning projected in the news media, and yet, as Commissioner Bratton saw and I saw with our own eyes, the biggest – the biggest attendance at that Thanksgiving Parade, ever. An extraordinary and visible effort on the ground to protect it, which I think was reassuring to all New Yorkers and people all over the country who got to see that success. So, you've achieved something extraordinary. You've taken the phrase “joint” and “JTTF” and made it real and powerful. And you've shown that we need not ever be intimidated by those who seek to change our values, our way of life – that we can fight back in such an extraordinary range of ways, and preserve all that is great.

Some of the very best and the brightest assembled here in this room. I just want to say thank you on behalf of the eight-and-a-half million people of this city. Job well done, and you've created an extraordinary foundation for a safer future. Thank you and God bless you all.

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