



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 9, 2018
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO ATTENDS RALLY CELEBRATING THE
PASSAGE OF FOR-HIRE VEHICLE LEGISLATION**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Everybody, this is a beautiful day in every way. It is a day of victory. How sweet it is, everybody.

[Cheering]

How sweet it is. And this is a victory for everybody here, every hardworking driver, everyone who went out and unionized and organized and talked to people and mobilized people. This is a victory for the people. So, give your neighbor a round of applause right now.

[Cheering]

To Bourema – for his passion, for his leadership – this is an example of someone who knows how to fight and win. Let’s thank him for all he has done.

[Cheering]

Three years ago we took a stand against corporate greed. But corporate greed won the day then. Well, this time the people won.

[Cheering]

This time the drivers won.

[Cheering]

It didn’t matter – up against a huge multinational corporation. It proved once again, power resides in the people.

[Cheering]

This City Council deserves such respect and appreciation for the leadership they have shown.

[Cheering]

And you're going to hear from Speaker Johnson. You're going to hear from Council member Levin. I want to say a thanks to all Council members, but to them, these two in particular – it is not easy to stare down Goliath but they ever wavered. Let's give them a big, warm round of applause.

[Cheering]

It's a day of victory – a day of victory for the Taxi Workers Alliance.

[Cheering]

It's a day of victory for an organization that begins with the number 32 –

Audience: B-J!

Mayor: I'm sorry, I can't hear you. 32 –

Audience: B-J!

Mayor: This is a victory for you as well. I want to thank everyone who is here – all the elected officials, all the Council members in particular, everyone who has been a part of this fight. I want to thank from my administration someone who – you're going to hear from Meera in a moment but I also want to thank someone who was right in the middle of this in such an important way, our Commissioner for the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, Victor Calise. Thank you for your leadership.

[Cheering]

And today we celebrate but we also know there's been some tragedies, tragedies that deeply moved the people of this city, that everyone felt very personally. And one of the families is here. I want to thank Richard Chow and his whole family for being with us, for their strength, for their leadership. This is your victory and this is a reminder. We will not forget Kenny. This is a way to honor Kenny's memory. Let's thank the Chow family.

[Cheering]

Let's be very blunt about what's happened in this city. It's the greatest city in the world, that's true, but for five years app-based cars have flooded our streets unchecked and it was based on a very cynical, corporate plan to oversaturate, to purposefully flood the market, to purposefully dominate regardless of the consequences.

Here is a fact. Forty percent of app-based cars drive around empty today, at any given moment. Forty percent empty. Horrendous for the drivers, horrendous for our environment, a horrible element of congestion all because of a corporate and greedy strategy.

And what has meant for the people who do the work, for the taxi drivers, for the for-hire vehicle drivers? It has meant their livelihoods are being steadily destroyed. People who once expected a good income and a pathway to the middle class, are now forced to live on poverty wages.

You know, if you're talking about – I don't need to convince anyone here. Drivers who can work not just five days, not just six days, but seven days a week – in too many cases, no break. But what do we learn from the University of California study? Eighty-five percent of for-hire vehicle drivers living on poverty wages now because of what these companies did to them.

I don't have to tell you that meanwhile someone is laughing all the way to the bank. The corporate leadership, the shareholders of Uber, in particular, pocketing billions on the backs of working people. That was true until yesterday.

[Cheering]

But it won't be true anymore in New York City.

[Cheering]

Because the people have spoken.

[Cheering]

And, by the way, a lot of everyday people have said to me they are sick of corporate exploitation and they're sick of congested streets, and they see, in one fell swoop, this City Council attacked both these problems at once. In a decisive manner. It also is going to send a message around the world: that cities can fight back, and that we will fight back. And it sends a message about the resolve of New York City. No big corporation will tell us what to do. Not big oil, not the big pharmaceutical companies, and certainly not Uber.

[Cheering]

They don't get to set the rules.

This is first in the nation legislation. The Council did its job. I will do my job on Tuesday when I look forward to signing this legislation making it law.

[Cheering]

And 100,000 workers and their families will start to benefit immediately.

[Cheering]

New licenses capped for a year, with the obvious exception of accessible vehicles and we need more of those.

[Cheering and applause]

And, by October, a new minimum compensation rule, the thing we've need for so long, this guarantee that drivers get a decent income. You will hear what our opponents are already preparing to already preparing to say. You're going to hear it now, you'll hear it time and again: they say because of this action, there will less service for consumers and there'll be transit deserts. And they will paint a bleak picture—

Audience: Not true!

Mayor: And it's not only not true my friend. They're lying.

[Cheering]

They are lying. There are plenty of vehicles. Now, finally, those vehicles will have plenty of work and better wages. That's the whole idea.

[Cheering]

I'll finish with this. If you talk to everyday New Yorkers you will learn one thing very quickly: It doesn't matter if you're low-income, working-class, middle-class; most New Yorkers are struggling to make ends meet. Most New Yorkers in the greatest city in the world are struggling to make ends meet. It is our job every single day to help relieve them of that burden; to help make it easier to live in this city. What this city council did yesterday, took a 100,000 people who were struggling just to survive and gave them a pathway to a good life and I say God bless you to all the members of the City Council.

[Cheering and applause]

And this is a big step towards a goal of these four years ahead, to make this the fairest, the fairest big city in America. A place where people get treated decently and a hard day's work equals a good days pay. Amen?

[Cheering]

And I'll do a few words in Spanish. Now I must say for this industry I could do a hundred different languages and I wouldn't be done —

[Cheering]

— and I wouldn't be done! But I'll just do one.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

A fairer city and better city for all, and at this point, someone who deserves just the greatest credit, because, I've watched for years and years and years and I know when you're Speaker of the City Council, a whole lot of pressure comes your way, a whole lot of different interest groups make their views known. Some of them like to even threaten. But they don't know Corey Johnson.

[Laughter]

He knows how to stand up for working people.

[Cheering]

And he said he was going to do it, and guess what, brothers and sisters, he did it.

[Cheering]

Our Speaker, Corey Johnson!

[Cheering]

[...]

Mayor: Our next speaker is small in physical stature but she is powerful and strong and Lord knows she's borne the brunt of all of those corporate interests. There's ever been a good for Meera Joshi, this is that day, and congratulations on a long journey to justice, Commissioner of TLC, Meera Joshi.

Audience: Thank you.

[Applause]

Commissioner Meera Joshi, Taxi and Limousine Commission: Thank you. This has been more than marathon. It's been a ultra-marathon, so I'll try to be brief. Yesterday was a great day for local government. Yesterday was a great day for good government. Yesterday was a great day for drivers and a great day for everyone who uses our city streets.

Which struck me the most as I was watching the roll-call vote, was how much the Council Members care, the empathy, and they represent all of our communities. It was evident that they care about drivers. They care about people who want outer borough service after years of not getting it. They care about people that are refused because of their color and they care about who never get a ride because the car they're trying to get into can't accommodate their wheelchair. And they care about congestion and how it reduces our quality of life.

The package of bills that was passed yesterday addresses all of these concerns in a way that makes sense. And that's a huge achievement in a world where legislation more often looks like sausage and is not reflective of our community values. I want to thank Speaker Johnson for his leadership and his amazing team for the time and energy that they spent learning about this complex industry to draft the best possible legislation.

I want to thank my incredible boss, Mayor de Blasio, for his unwavering –

[Applause]

Audience: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Commissioner Joshi: -- Commitment to do the right thing for all New Yorkers. It's clearly his fundamental determination in the face of extreme odds that got us to this day. I want to thank the many drivers, and many of the drivers and their family and friends for those that we have tragically lost, they are advocating today. I want to thank the labor leaders for your active participation. Your voices were heard.

And I am honored by the City's confidence in the ability of the TLC to resolve the complex challenges of underutilized vehicles and underpaid drivers. I know my amazing team is up to the task. Thank you.

[Applause]

[...]

Mayor: Alright we are now turning to the news media to take questions about this legislation. We will take questions about other topics after but let's first see any questions about this legislation, Grace.

Question: So there's been some talk from many of the speakers about congestion and the role that this bill will play in improving the congestion situation or at least not making it get worse. For a lot of New Yorkers they say congestion pricing is the best way to address congestion in the city yet you have not been supportive of it. What do you say to them?

Mayor: I would say first of all to recognize this legislation achieves so many things at once. It achieves fairness for working people, it's going to raise wages, it's going to improve the environment and I want to thank the environmental groups who've been part of this fight as well. It's going to help respect the rights of folks with disabilities. I also believe it is one of the tools we will use to address congestion. There's going to have to be a lot of different pieces that come together and for example we have a very important effort right now to see if ending deliveries during rush hour will help reduce congestion. We have an important effort that we are going to be doing to do more enforcement in HOV lanes. There's a lot of pieces. But look I said it before and I'll say it again, show me a new congestion pricing proposal, a specific proposal and I'm looking at it – I think it's really good that the Governor's commission came up with the idea of getting away from bridges and that opens up new possibilities. But I also would say to you there

is not a formal congestion pricing proposal in Albany and when there is one I'm certainly going to look at it. Please.

Question: Is this an issue that you would take the lead on as the Mayor of New York City, a bill that would directly affect –

Mayor: Again I'm open to a solution and I'm looking at all possible elements of that solution. Alright on this legislation, yes?

Question: Council Speaker said that this wasn't a specific war against a segment of the industry but in your comments you did make it sound you know, fairly specifically targeted towards corporate greed, how big of an element did that play in this legislation?

Mayor: Look I will speak for myself and the Speaker will offer his view. My view is this was a legislation that achieved a lot of things at once. Most importantly it was good policy because it addressed wages and the environment and congestion all at once. And I think it is very smart legislation. I think the backdrop is we had a number of corporations, particularly one very powerful corporation trying to dictate to the people of this city. And the Council showed that that's not going to happen. Other questions on this, yes sir?

Question: Mayor what do you think is different this time that when you proposed this legislation three years ago and can you tell us a little about what you have been doing between the last time the legislation failed and now? Have you been doing behind the scenes work, what's been going on?

Mayor: Look I think three years ago we were right. And I appreciate what Bhairavi said very much and she was right and a lot of people here were right and we had to keep working for the day.

City Council Speaker Corey Johnson: I was wrong.

Mayor: It's all good, brother. We had to keep working for the day and the idea was kept alive for sure. But we had to wait for the right moment where it could actually be achieved. So no one ever gave up, I won't go into a whole lot detail, I'll say we all kept talking, we all kept the idea alive, we all kept waiting to see the moment where we could get it done. And I think people all over the city, increasing felt the impact of something that was broken. They saw, I mean I heard from plenty of constituents, why are all of these cars driving around empty? We didn't hear that as much three years ago. That's what we feared was coming. But in the last three years people say it, they felt it. So I think you know, the world changed and it became the right time to act.

Question: Mr. Mayor is there anything that you could say, that the company, you talked about the corporate giant and they had a lot of influence last time around, and that was a big part of why that effort failed. Do you see their effort against this this time around as being any different? Do you think they were less aggressive?

Mayor: I think, yes they were plenty aggressive, again Corey jump in at any time you want you were an eye witness, I think I'll speak to it and then you should. They were very aggressive and they had lots of resources and they were using them. Any time people go up on TV with a big TV buy, that's plenty aggressive among other things they tried to do. I think the most important point here, is it was more and more obvious for the people of this city that something was wrong and had to be addressed. We had a Council with strong leadership ready to act on this issue. Let's face it, the world's gotten wise to Uber in the meantime too. You know Uber a few years ago tried to be, you know some white knight and now people understand just how much damage Uber has done in so many ways. And that was important and that you can't advertise your way out of the truth. And I think that was an important part of the equation.

Speaker Johnson: I would just say, Gloria that you know they were very engaged and very involved and I think in a responsible way on our part, we gave them a full seat at the table so that they couldn't say that they didn't get to participate. And we listened to their concerns, we looked at the data with the TLC and we tried to come up with a sound public policy solution. But I will tell you that the 11th hour offer of \$100 million for us to change our legislation, I think showed you how much of a fight they were putting up to try to make that offer at the end. It was an offer without any real specifics and I'm not saying that there was any coercion or potential quid pro quo at play but they knew that the decision that we arrived at we did because we were looking out for the best interest of the city and workers. And I just want to say this one other things on these companies to go in line with what Hector said and with what the Mayor said with what Carlina said which is Uber made \$375 million in revenue last year in New York City, \$375 million with \$50 million of overhead, so they made \$325 million in profit last year in New York City. Their drivers, the Independent Drivers Guild came out in favor of this package of legislation because their drivers are struggling and in this gig economy Uber's drivers should be full time employees. They deserve unemployment, and disability and sick days and vacation days. They deserve that dignity that other workers have and I hope that will be part of this conversation moving forward.

Unknown: [Inaudible]

Mayor: It started here, Corey.

Question: How do you address the concerns that –

Mayor: Hold on, let's our friends in the media ask their question. Go ahead.

Question: How do you address the concerns of the New York Urban League, the National Action Network, the three Democrats who voted against the bill yesterday of racial profiling or outer borough's unreachability with this bill? How do you address the concerns there?

Mayor: I'm going to speak as an outer borough person. You've seen a flood of these for-hire vehicles on top of the other forms of transportation like car services that have been there for a long time. There are options. The problem is with a flood of vehicles what's ended up happening is a lot of empty vehicles that aren't transporting anyone and aren't make any drivers any money and are just clogging the streets. So, we know this for a fact and that's true in Manhattan, that's

true in the outer boroughs. There's tons of congestion problems in the outer boroughs. Ask anyone from outer borough neighborhoods, they will tell you.

So, I don't buy the argument from the companies because I know there's so much excess capacity out there and what it's going to mean is those drivers will now have fares and will actually rationalize the situation.

On the question of discrimination – we will not tolerate it. I want to be very blunt and clear. I know Corey won't tolerate it, the Council won't tolerate, I know Meera won't tolerate it. By the way, I checked with her again today – of the cases brought of discrimination against a rider, failure to pick up a rider, 50 percent of those cases have been substantiated and there's been a penalty to a driver who did that.

The first penalty is a substantial financial fine. The second penalty is a suspension of the driver's license. The third penalty is revocation of the driver's license. So, there is real teeth in the current rules and there's real follow through with 50 percent of the cases people are being found responsible. But we're going to be doing a lot more.

We have a new office that the Council really helped us to innovate, of inclusion. We're going to do a lot more outreach. We're going to train drivers to make sure they're sensitive and understand the ramifications. But it's as simple as this. We will not tolerate discrimination and anybody, New Yorker or visitor, who suffers discrimination from any driver, needs to report it immediately.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: On this topic? We'll come to you afterwards.

Question: Sir, is this [inaudible] –

Mayor: Is what now?

Question: The city's leadership [inaudible] open to more regulation once the study is over?

Mayor: By definition. I mean, I'll start and feel free to jump in. This legislation very smartly says we're putting this cap in place. We're going to have a formal study for a year and then the TLC is going to look at what we have to do next and that will be governed by the facts. So, by definition, we're open to more regulation if that's what the facts demand.

Speaker Johnson: Yeah, there was a package of bills that introduced yesterday which I think is 2.0 of what we need to do moving forward. One of the bills, I think – very, very important, it's a bill that would create a health care fund for taxi drivers in New York City so they could have health insurance. The TLC previously tried to do this by rule but the court ruled that it needed to be done by legislation in the Council and I look forward to moving that legislation forward to give taxi drivers health insurance in New York City through a fund. That's number one.

Number two is the Mayor and I have talked about this and some of the members have bills in this. We have to go after, as much as we can potentially with the Department of Consumer Affairs, these predatory leasing companies that have been preying upon drivers. That's number two.

Number three – what you're going to see, I think with the quarterly data reports that the TLC is going to receive moving forward, is we're going to have to look at real utilization standards that are going to be put in place. The industry is changing quite a bit so I don't know what the right number of cars is that should be on the road. Is it 104,000? Is it 110,000? Is it 80,000? There will be natural attrition. What we want to do is we want to maximize cars being occupied and doing that through rule that the TLC will do based off of data and working with the for-hire vehicle companies and the taxi companies.

I think there were five or six bills that were entered at the Council yesterday and I think all those bills will have a hearing this fall.

Question: Corey, what's the timeline on passing them?

Speaker Johnson: I can't tell you when we're passing them. We'll have a hearing this fall and then we'll go through the legislative process in working with the TLC, again, all the stakeholders involved so it's a fair and inclusive process.

Mayor: One quick point to make visual what Corey was saying about how you'd like to see vehicles utilized. Remember that point I raised earlier? Over 40 percent of these for-hire vehicles are now driving around empty at any given moment. That's madness. Classic image of a New York City taxi – the taxi pulls up to let someone off and someone new gets in right then. That's the perfect world, right? That's not always the case but that's the perfect work.

So, we want to see these vehicles – whatever that number is – used all the time. That's good for the drivers. That's good for the environment. That's good for reducing congestion. The last thing we want to see is a bunch of empty vehicles driving around.

Okay, on this topic – yes, sir?

Question: Practically speaking, how are you going to carry out the minimum wage part of this bill? Some drivers are part time; a lot of them are driving in Uber saturated areas. Just the problem you're trying to solve.

Mayor: So, Mary, you want to speak to how you will build those minimum standards?

Commissioner Joshi: Sure, so drivers don't work by the hour. So there is no such thing really as a minimum wage. But we did put together a proposal that was reviewed by two economists, one from Berkeley, and one from the New School. And that proposal really takes a look at what you do get paid per minute, and what do you get paid per mile. And it puts a price on the minute and the mile, and that price builds in the fact that you're not working that whole hour. So you need to be paid extra to account for your downtime. And on top of that, that whole minute/mile formula

is going to go up or down depending on how well a company can keep a driver occupied. If they cannot keep a driver occupied for the hour then they are going to pay more per trip. And if they can keep a driver occupied they're going to pay a little less, but the driver will end up making more because they'll be busier. Although we we've used the word minimum wage because its an easy term to use when we talk about pay. It's not actually accurate to how you regulate in this space.

Mayor: Thank you, okay last call on this topic. Yes, sir?

Question: Can Ms. Joshi talk about [inaudible]?

Mayor: Say it again.

Question: Can you talk about the importance of dead head and what that means?

Mayor: Are you trying to impress us [inaudible]

[Laughter]

Commissioner Joshi: Dead head, nice, nice.

Mayor: What is it? Dead head?

Commissioner Joshi: Dead head is the empty time when you get the call until you get to your passenger. We consider the dead head time as down time. That's the same as when you're cruising. You're not getting paid, you don't have a passenger. And all of that downtime has to be factored in because that's still worktime. The app is on, and you've got to be attentive, and you've got to be ready, willing, and able to pick up a customer. So that dead head and downtime cruising is all factored in and it goes into the minute and the mile calculation.

Question: [Inaudible] if you're a yellow cabby, you're given money to drive back to the city. That's not [inaudible] – some of the drivers [inaudible] yesterday want to expand that [inaudible]. Are you willing to do that?

Commissioner Joshi: If you pick up a trip under our accessible dispatch program, yes we threw a fund will pay the dead head portion of the trip. Taxi's generally work by hail, so dead head is more of a foreign experience for them. But in a proposal that we have on wages, the drivers of accessible vehicles would get paid more to account for the fact that those accessible vehicles cost more to maintain.

Question: I just wanted to clarify. Did the TLC actually require the City Council to pass legislation that'll allow you to set that minimum rate or were you able to do that regardless?

Commissioner Joshi: We can do it through rule making. It is a much stronger statement of our entire city sentiment on how we think people and workers should be treated that as a city, as an entire city, City Hall, the TLC, and City Council together stand strong on this issue.

Mayor: Other topics? Yes, Sir?

Question: Sorry, just one more question about this topic.

Mayor: You may.

Question: Okay, thank you. And back to the question I've asked before. How do you respond to calls I've been hearing about you know from the Republican nominee for the New York Attorney General, however slim that chances may be. Civil rights groups are saying they will press a civil rights suit against the city, against this law. How do you respond to that?

Mayor: I don't even understand that concept. We are, we are going to – if you're talking about the question of fighting discrimination. Again, we have very strong standards. I would say please everyone report on this if you're interested in the topic. Financial penalty leading to license suspension, leading to license revoking in three steps. That's pretty tough stuff. And a 50 percent rate of these complaints being found substantiated and penalties being applied at strong regulation and we're going to strengthen it further and do a lot more outreach, and a lot more education. I think it's quite clear we're fighting discrimination with a lot of strong tools. So anyone who wants to meet with a TLC about other things we can do, we're game because we want to fight discrimination in every way we can.

Question: Can you respond to the new numbers out of Puerto Rico of the death count from Hurricane Maria?

Mayor: I've got to be honest with you because I was working on a number of matters before I came over here. Tell me what the latest is because I have not heard it.

Question: Over 1,400.

Mayor: It's horrible. It's painful. And it is, you know, this is our – this is the place we're closest to in the world, right? As New Yorkers, this is the ultimate sixth borough and you got 800,000 New Yorkers for whom Puerto Rico is their ancestral homeland. So we're all suffering when we hear that truth and made worse by the fact that I think a lot of us don't feel like the federal government told us the truth about what was happening and they certainly haven't taken responsibility for fixing what happened.

Question: Do you think that this legislation –

Mayor: A little louder.

Question: Is it an example in other cities, other countries, like Spain [inaudible]

Mayor: On the – on the – we're talking the for-hire vehicles again? Look, I think what is happening now as we confront multi-national corporations is that cities around the world are banding together and supporting each other and learning from each other. We've seen some

extraordinary efforts by cities saying no to companies that tried to dictate to them. I hope today's progress will be felt around the world and it will remind cities to take power and not allow multinational corporations to do things that hurt these people. Yeah?

Question: Mayor, your administration is proposing, as one of several options, building more luxury or market rate housing than originally planned on property adjacent to some NYCHA developments as part of the sort of NextGen program. Have you changed your thinking on what the mix of affordable and market rate housing should be on NYCHA property?

Mayor: So there's two different questions in my opinion. The first is this particular site, which is the only place where we're having this discussion. We wanted to offer the idea to local leaders because we saw the differential in terms of the amount of money it would provide to NYCHA. NYCHA – we now know and it's tragic because of decades of disinvestment, the needs in NYCHA now exceed \$30 billion. We have very little new federal money coming. We have still have not seen any new State money in years for all intents and purposes.

We've got to get money for public housing and so we're going to, in this case on the West Side, look at this option to see if it's going to bring us a lot more money for public housing, we need to consider it, but it will of course go through a ULURP Process and that will be the ultimate decision. We have not decided which model to go with. We're going to talk to local leaders and decide.

The second point is where we go in the future with NYCHA. We have not decided that yet either except to say, we know one thing for sure, we have to find models that will bring in resources. People are very frustrated for good reason. The public housing is in such tough shape in this city. We can't just be frustrated. We have to find solutions which means finding literally billions of dollars more to address what people are going through. That's something we're going to come forward in the coming months with new solutions for.

Question: Mayor, if I could just follow, I mean this was something that sort very similar to what was provided by Mayor Bloomberg, you had some – and lots of people had strong opinions about that and building market rate housing and green space or parking lots on public housing - I guess – are you going to balance, you know, I understand the rising capital need, for you, personally, how are you balancing all of the issues at play here? You know, it strikes some people as unfair to build luxury housing next to –

Mayor: So the first point is, again, in the name of accuracy, we do not have a decision on what the bigger policy is going forward and we don't even have a decision about this site. It's a new – just for clarity – it's a new idea that is being ventured. The original idea is on the table as well. The Bloomberg administration now seems like a long time ago but I remember vividly part of why I was uncomfortable, and I think a lot of public housing residents were uncomfortable, because there was not a clear policy to stop privatization.

So the profound difference from day one, is we've talked about any potential development on NYCHA land, is it comes with a very clear strategy to protect the public ownership of that land and to protect the long term affordable housing that is there. And also to put legal guarantees in

place, which unfortunately the previous administration, there were too many times when things related to affordable housing, promises were made and they were not kept. So I think it's a very different reality. But I can only say to you, one way or another, we have to find billions upon billions of dollars to fix public housing in this city. Marcia?

Question: Sir, I have three very short questions.

Mayor: Okay.

Question: First of all, there was a fight that broke in a nail salon in Brooklyn last week. Now black leaders are demanding that the nail shop not to be allowed to open again, your feelings about that?

Mayor: I think a better solution is for the owners of that shop to apologize, to retrain their staff, and to make sure it never happens again. I think we need to move forward.

Question: An ACS worker turned out to have a record of [inaudible] convicted murder, served 28 years in jail, hired to deal with children – your feelings about it and also what should be done to find out if there are other people with records who have been hired [inaudible]?

Mayor: So, my feeling, as a parent – it absolutely disgusts me. It's unacceptable and it never should have happened. That individual will not be working for ACS in the future and will go nowhere near children. It should not have happened and I believe – because I've asked this question in real detail – that it could not happen anymore. There's a whole new series of employment background checks now that would have stopped that had they been in place – I believe he applied in 2013, got hired in 2014. Those rules were not in place then. They are in place now. Someone like that could not be hired.

Question: [Inaudible] are your people –

Mayor: We are looking and, so far, thank God, we have not found any other case like this, but we are absolutely looking at all hires in the last few years to make sure there's no one else who possibly should not be in that kind of role.

Unknown: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Hold on – hold on. Go ahead –

Question: Cynthia Nixon has said that the public service employees should be allowed to strike, that the Taylor Laws should be changed. How do you feel about that?

Mayor: I have a lot of respect for Cynthia, but I disagree with her on this. I acknowledge and appreciate that she said there should be an exemption for first responders, but I don't agree with changing the Taylor Law. I think the Taylor Law serves an important public purpose and, at the same time, there are lots of ways for worker's rights to be acknowledged and their voices to be heard. I think we have the right law now.

Question: What do you say to the Inwood Residents who are furious and critical of the rezoning plan passing yesterday?

Mayor: Some residents were against, some residents were for. Continue –

Question: [Inaudible] just saw what happened in the Chambers yesterday, they were pretty [inaudible]. What do you say –

Mayor: Again, my friend, I just want to make a point. I was a Council member, there's 160,000 people in that Council district. Now, unless you've talked to all of them, what I would advise is there are some strong-willed activists who are against it, there are a lot of community leaders and every-day people who are for it. I respect all voices, but I can tell you that the number of people who show up at a hearing is a very, very small number compared to the residents of the community. And the real question is, what's best to help the residents of the community and what does their representative believe is in their interest. Ydonis Rodriguez is someone who has served that community as an activist and elected official for decades. I think he really has his finger on the pulse and he demanded a lot of affordable housing, a lot of investment in schools and parks, and that's what people in the community wanted, and I think it was a fair outcome.

Question: Just to follow up on Inwood, Francisco Moya, the Councilman who is the chair of the subcommittee on zoning and land-use, said last week that he would no longer negotiate with your office over upcoming neighborhood rezoning because he doesn't feel the process is fair, he had issues with some of the contractors who were selected, even one labor unions have come out. I mean, what do you say to that? I know you said I haven't spoken to everyone in Inwood. You probably haven't spoken to everyone in Inwood either, and there's clearly some issues with these rezonings. What's your response?

Mayor: I respect Council member Moya – disagree with him. It's very clear, from the City Council as a whole, that this process has been fair. The fact is, the Council has decided – the leadership, the member representing the community, and the Council majority in favor of rezoning in East New York, East Harlem, Far Rockaway, Jerome Avenue in the Bronx, and now Inwood – that's democracy. So, that process is going to continue.

Question: [Inaudible] clearance from the Conflicts of Interest Board to fundraise on behalf of the Fairness PAC? And if so, are you willing to share –

Mayor: Again, the Fairness PAC is governed by electoral law. It is a campaign committee, it's governed by State and federal law. That's where the guidance is.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: We seek guidance on all sorts of specific situations from them and we always will. But again, the law is abundantly clear. The Conflict of Interest Board plays one role, but in terms of how you create political committees – for example, if you create a City political committee, it's

the Campaign Finance Board; federal is the Federal Election Commission; State, the State Board of Elections. The guidance is very clear.

Question: As the days go on, you seem to endorse anti-IDC, or former-IDC members – you're endorsing their opponents.

Mayor: I endorsed one, but stay tuned, but yes –

Question: Former secretary – your former press secretary –

Mayor: Well, again, we've done one. We've done one – Zellnor Myrie. I don't know what you're assuming. We've done one so far.

Question: I know your opinion of the former IDC leader, so do you have any plans to endorse the former IDC leader's opponent?

Mayor: I'll say what I've said to a lot of your colleagues before, every campaign, every race is going to be looked at individually. Everything is case by case. I have made one endorsement for Zellnor Myrie in Central Brooklyn, who I hope will be elected the next State Senator from that community. And his district reaches into some of the areas I used to represent as well. And we are going to look at each specific set of candidates and come up with specific ideas about each, but that's going to be case by case. We'll announce them as they are decided.

Media question – last one. Is it a media question? You're media? Okay –

Question: Mr. Mayor, my question has to do with noise pollution.

Mayor: Yes, sir.

Question: And specifically in the neighborhood over on East 26th Street and Second Avenue has had a great influx of ambulances and helicopters, and the residents – we're talking like every five minutes [inaudible] –

Mayor: So you want to know what we're going to do about it? I think noise is a serious problem and issue in this City. In some ways it's gotten worse. Our Deputy Mayor for Operations, Laura Anglin, is putting together a new plan to address a variety of elements of noise pollution. And it needs a little more work, but we'll have something to say on that soon.

Thank you, everyone.

###