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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, COUNCIL SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO, FIRE COMMISSIONER NIGRO, COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH, CITY COUNCIL AND NY RED CROSS CEO JOSH LOCKWOOD ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF HOME FIRE SAFETY PROGRAM #GETALARMEDNYC**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Welcome, everyone. It is great to be at Engine 255 and Ladder 157 today to announce the launch of Get Alarmed NYC. It's a very important initiative that we think is going to save lives and do a lot of good for the families of our city. It's the largest smoke alarm giveaway and installation program in the nation. And it's another great example of the many ways the FDNY protects the people of New York City.

I want to talk about this very important effort in a moment, but just want to say something different at the top because we're at an important moment in terms of the obligation we owe to those who protect us –and not just the members of the FDNY, but all our first responders. A little over a month ago, the United States Congress let the World Trade Center health program expire. That was, to me, an unconscionable act and an unacceptable act by the Congress. There are more than 72,000 first responders who aided in the rescue and recovery at Ground Zero, and are still suffering the health impact of their service.

And I remind you, obviously, so many of them came from New York City and came from the metropolitan area, but in fact, people came – first responders came from all over the nation. I think essentially all states of this country were represented, ultimately, as part of the effort because this was an attack on our entire nation. And the rescue and recovery was a herculean task and took a huge number of people under dangerous conditions. This is why the Congress should think of this as something that we do for all first responders and a symbol of our commitment to them – now, the 72,000 heroes on the road to losing medical monitoring and treatment because the World Center health program was allowed to expire.

The new bill in Congress simply doesn't go far enough to give first responders the healthcare and support they deserve. The solution is to recognize just how important the problem is; just how noble their service was, and follow the lead of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and the entire New York delegation with a call for the – not only the reauthorization of the Zadroga Act, but in fact to make it permanent. And to make sure that the funds will be there to help all those who need it for the long haul. The health of our nation's heroes must not be sacrificed on the altar of politics, and that's what's going on here. This is putting – unfortunately for some in the Congress – they're putting politics and ideology ahead of the needs of first responders. That's never acceptable. This has to be addressed. There is a solution, and I'm going to work very closely Senator Gillibrand and the members of our delegation to make the breakthrough we need for these 72,000 heroes.

Let me speak about this extraordinary initiative today, and you're going to hear from a number of my colleagues about it as well. Starting today, a hundred thousand free smoke alarms will be given away across the city thank to a \$4 million dollar public-private partnership. We're very proud of these public-private partnerships. We've been doing them in a number of areas, this one is going to be literally a life-saver – protect tens of thousands of lives, and we'll be targeting the communities where the risk of fire is still the greatest, which often means some of our lower-income communities, and most densely populated communities. Now let's be clear, smoke alarms are not a luxury, they are a necessity. It is required that every home have a smoke

alarm, but it is one of the most fundamental things a family can do to protect themselves. And no one knows that better than the brave men and women of the FDNY who serve all of our communities every day. They believe in this initiative, and they are, obviously, crucial partners along with nonprofits in this initiative. And I particularly want to thank the City Council for stepping up with the public side of the funding of this equation that made this possible. As I've said, you're going to hear from a number of people including Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito in just a moment. I also want to thank, from the FDNY, First Deputy Commissioner Robert Turner, Chief of Department Jim Leonard for their good work.

Now, again, smoke alarms – they are a matter of life and death. They can make all the difference. In this city, 70 percent of fire-related deaths occur in homes with no working smoke alarm. That's a stunning correlation – 70 percent of deaths occurring in homes with no working smoke alarm.

I'm sorry to say that the men and women of this house know that so well. And they've seen the human impact all too vividly. I was here with them in the aftermath of the tragedy at 3371 Bedford Avenue seven months ago. A fire roared through a house killing seven children. The entire city felt sorrow and felt a connection to that family that day. It was a horrific loss and I spoke to some of the firefighters and it was something that for many of them they have never seen anything so bad their entire career. And it would have been a very different, obviously, if there had been a smoke alarm functioning. We must do everything we can to ensure that no family has to endure this kind of pain.

Now, it's important to recognize, I said that 70 percent figure a moment ago, clearly this is one of the things where we can go farther; we can do better; we can protect lives, but it's very important at the same time to recognize what extraordinary success the FDNY is having overall in their mission. In the last five years, we have had fewer fire deaths than in any other five-year period since records were first kept in 1916, a century ago. And in fact, this is amazing, June of this year was the first month in the fire departments 150-year proud history where there were zero fire deaths in an entire month. That is a real testament to the work the men and women of this department, but I'll state the obvious, one fire death is one death too many. That is the approach we take, and we know smoke alarms could make a tremendous difference. And we know that where there is no – excuse me – where there's no smoke alarm there's a cause for alarm. It's as simple as that. The absence of a smoke alarm suggests vulnerability. And we know there's more we have to do to protect people. So, a message today to all New Yorkers is, come and get your free smoke alarms. If you don't have one there's one available for you. And we'll make sure – either you can install it yourself or the Red Cross working with the FDNY will install it for you. Anyone who needs a free smoke alarm can call 3-1-1; it's as simple as that. Call 3-1-1, make an appointment, and they'll make sure that the smoke alarm is installed in your home. This is another example of the FDNY going the extra mile to protect people. And again, anyone who doesn't have a smoke alarm should take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity.

Just a few words in Spanish.

[Mayor speaks in Spanish]

[...]

**Mayor:** We're going to be taking questions on the topics we've discussed today, but I just want to note that Engine 255 – it just got called. It was called in response to a report of a carbon monoxide alarm that activated – so, just to give you a real life example of how this is something so important, happening right before our very eyes – a private dwelling that had a carbon monoxide alarm activation, and – and off they went to deal with it, which we deeply appreciate.

Okay, let's take questions on any of the topics we've discussed here today – anything on these topics. Yes?

**Question:** [Inaudible]

**Mayor:** Okay. Red Cross can speak to some of that, I assume – [inaudible] or Commissioner? Whoever wants to –

**Commissioner Daniel Nigro, FDNY:** They are not donating all of the hundred thousand alarms – smoke alarms.

**Question:** [Inaudible]

**Commissioner Nigro:** Do we know?

**Unknown:** [Inaudible]

**Commissioner Nigro:** Half of them.

**Mayor:** Any other questions on these topics? Going once – yes?

**Question:** Mayor, three people were killed in a crash in the Bronx this weekend, and some people are questioning your commitment to [inaudible] –

**Mayor:** That's – happy to discuss that with you tomorrow. Obviously, I'm deeply committed to Vision Zero, but we're talking about the topics here before us today.

**Question:** In terms of the Zadroga bill, [audible]?

**Mayor:** Yeah, and I have to say that Senator Gillibrand has been outstanding and very aggressive on this, and there's been a lot of unity in the New York delegation. And that's been bipartisan unity – Congressman Donovan and Congressman King have been leaders in the effort, along with Congresswoman Maloney and a number of others – Congressman Nadler. So, we'll keep working with them, but I think the real thing we have to do here is to remind all of the leadership of the Congress of their obligation to our first responders. Again, this is not just a local issue. The United States of America came under attack that day. The first responders ultimately came from all over the country, because, as you remember, people came in – people who were able to help streamed in and volunteered to help from all over the country, and they're paying the price for it now. This should be a matter of – bluntly – of patriotism and out of respect for our first responders. So, we're going to do everything we can with the New York delegation to educate the members of the Congress. And if [inaudible] that, we have to put more pressure on them and make this more of a public issue, we will do that as well, because our first responders need the help.

**Question:** Is this something that you think your – the candidate that you're supporting for president, Hillary Clinton, should be talking about on the campaign trail [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** She's been outstanding on this issue. And remember how much she did for the first responders, to get this kind of support for them to begin with, because it was in doubt, even in the beginning, whether they would get what they deserved. So I think she's been outstanding, and I think she's continued to make that point clear.

**Question:** What about making it sort of an issue in the presidential [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** I – I think it is obviously something that has to be dealt with in the Congress. I don't think it's – again, I think part of the problem in the Congress right now is it has been politicized on one level, because of – instead of thinking about it from a patriotic point of view, and thinking about it through the prism of first responders, somehow some members of the Congress are putting some other prism on this. So I wouldn't – I wouldn't assume this should be politicized. I think it should be a national consensus that we take care of our first responders. Yes?

**Question:** [Inaudible]

**Mayor:** Again, we're talking about the topics – I think I was pretty clear – we're talking about the topics here. Tomorrow, we'll be talking about other types of topics. Last call?

**Question:** What about the firefighters [inaudible] last night at the Mets game? [Inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Say it again, please?

**Question:** Did you see, in the Mets game, the firefighters [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Absolutely. Outstanding. Outstanding.

**Question:** Things sort of went downhill from there.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** I think – I think it was eight good innings. Let's – let's put this in perspective – eight good innings. Eight good innings, and some tough, tough luck thereafter, so. Alright everyone, thanks very much.

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