

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 18, 2021, 12:00 PM
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT 32BJ RALLY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: One of the things that I appreciate about Kyle Bragg is that he feels deeply when working people need help. He feels it, he does something about it. He does not accept the world the way it is. He says, we've got to keep going, we've got to keep going farther all the time to reach workers in need. And one of the things I love about 32BJ and about SEIU is constantly recognized that more and more workers need to be organized, deserve their rights, deserve better, pay, deserve better benefits. What this union does not only helps its own members or members that you bring into your fold, you help all working people through your actions. I say, God bless you for that.

[Applause]

And Kyle, thank you. From the very beginning when I knew you, you're the kind of leader that is grounded in the lives of working people. And what you do every morning, you wake up and you just think about how can we make more happen? The fact that we're standing here today, we're about to immediately improve the lives of thousands of workers in their families, because of your leadership. Thank you, Kyle.

[Applause]

Speaker Corey Johnson, Council Member Francisco Moya, thank you. We have gotten together on many an occasion to change the rules of the game for working people. And to prove that what I've talked about, you might have remembered about eight years ago, at this time, I used to from time to time mention the tale of two cities and the income inequality plaguing our city. We've done a lot together, all of us to change that. We did a lot to put money back in the pockets of working people, whether it's paid sick days or pre-K for children and families, or afterschool, all the things we've done to get health care to people, including something I'm very proud of, NYC Care. Any New Yorker who cannot afford health insurance gets health care coverage for free through NYC Care. These are the ways we go at income inequality and address the injustices that still pervade our society. But we've got to keep at it every single day.

So, now, let's talk about the good people who provide security in our homeless shelters. You all will remember for years, as we've tried to take on the challenge of homelessness – this has been with us as a city about 40 years or more as a major challenge – we've heard, understandably, that folks who are living on the streets were worried about going into shelter, because they needed to know shelter would be safe. And we've done a lot to make shelter safer, but it only works because of the folks at the frontline who do the security work. They help keep everyone safe and

they are part of the solution to homelessness for that reason. Let's thank them for being part of that solution.

[Applause]

But you can't ask someone to help us solve one of the most challenging problems we face as a society, but not have enough to put food on their own tables or pay their own rent or take care of their own families. We're asking them to do something for all of us. We've got to do something for them. We've got to get it right. So, Kyle and I have talked about this many times, and Kyle says here's the solution. Here's what would make it right. It would be fair to these families, these workers, but it would be the right thing to do for the whole city. And after conversations with Kyle and Corey and his team, we all came to the same place. We decided the time is now to take this action. We're about to pass a City budget, and I am proud to announce today \$40 million will be in the City budget to provide better pay, better working standards for these shelter security workers.

[Applause]

I want every single one of the folks who provides security to have decent pay, to have decent benefits, to have health insurance. And what is this going to mean? Not only are we able to get great people to do this work, we're going to be able to keep them, because you can't retain really good people if you don't give them the compensation they need. This is going to allow us to have a better and better workforce. So, in the next few months – it'll go into the budget in these next days ahead, and then in the next few months it will be implemented for over 4,000 working families. Their lives are going to change this year – this year, 2021. Thank you to everyone who organized together. Thank you to Corey and Francisco for their leadership. And thank you, Kyle Bragg, for always standing up for working people.

[Applause]

###