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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE FAMILIES FOR
SAFE STREETS RALLY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you. Thank you so much. Emily, thank you for the conversation we had just a day or two ago. And I could hear the passion in your voice, as someone who has fought for a long time for changes. Everyone, it's time for profound, real change to protect the people of this city. Our colleagues in Albany who are here are the difference-makers. They are the ones who understand there's been too many crashes, too many deaths, too many injuries that didn't have to happen. I want to thank everyone who represents us in Washington, Albany, and the City Council for standing up and protecting people who walk the streets of this city, and ride bikes in this city, and making sure that we change what is a broken status quo. Let's thank all of them for standing up and making a difference.

[Applause]

For years, we have been trying to undo the car culture – laws which favored cars and motorists, regardless of what happened to people. We brought Vision Zero to this city. In the beginning, people said – oh, Vision Zero, the people wouldn't accept it, the people and neighborhoods all over New York City would be so much more interested in their cars than in human life. Guess what? New Yorkers proved them wrong. Human life matters a lot more than cars and trucks in this city.

So, it's time for a change. It's time for change. Vision Zero has taken us somewhere better. There's much, much more to do with Vision Zero. I'm going to talk about that in a moment, but what we need right now is action in Albany, and we have only two more weeks – only two more weeks to make a change we need. We need the Crash Victims Rights and Safety Act. We need it now. We need it now to save lives.

[Applause]

Everyone here is thinking about this issue in the most personal terms. This is not a piece of legislation that's just something happening far away. This is about saving lives. And, unfortunately, this community, you are feeling pain and loss right this moment. To everyone from P.S. 110, I'm so sorry that you're gathered here in pain and mourning. Matthew Jensen wanted to help kids. He's the kind of human being we need more of – loved kids, served families, loved life. He loves soccer. He loved gardening. He was a good human being, trying to give back to the world. And now, he's gone. And this community is in mourning. He's gone because of a hit-and-run crash. He's gone because someone killed him and then left the scene. And this is what happens too often. Just weeks ago – and I was there, I was in the room when we had to tell the wife of Police Officer Anastasios Tsakos that her husband was not coming back, because he was killed by a hit-and-run drunk driver. Somehow over the years in

our society, the notion that someone would get behind the wheel drunk became normalized. It's not normal. It's not acceptable. The penalties have to be much greater. That's what this legislation would do. It does a lot of things, but one of the things it does is it says this actually can't go on like this, there have to be consequences. We lost another teacher, Helen Sink, in Harlem. We're losing people who serve us. We're losing every-day people. We're losing moms and dads, seniors, kids. It has to stop.

So, everyone, I know everyone here feels it, but I have to ask you to tell everyone else in your life how urgent this is. We have good leaders here. We need everyone in Albany to understand this is their responsibility. They cannot leave Albany until they pass this act and protect our children, protect our teachers, protect our seniors, protect our lives. Are you ready to tell them that?

[Cheers]

Are you ready to make your voices heard?

[Cheers]

We need you. And we're going to apply Vision Zero right here, right now on McGuinness Boulevard, because it's long overdue. We are putting money in the budget immediately to redesign and fix McGuinness Boulevard once and for all.

[Applause]

I want to thank Assembly Member Gallagher. She told me the history. We said, it's time, we're putting the money there. We're going to come to the community and say, how does this need to look? That it will work for everyone. We're going to just plain do it. We have to do it now to save lives.

So, some of you will get this reference, as I conclude, but it's something that's moved me a lot. When I was coming, we all have music that speaks to us and I was always inspired by The Clash, and the simple phrase, "the future is unwritten." The grip that cars have on our lives doesn't have to be. We can create a people-centered society. We can write new laws. We can change our streets. We can change our way of life. It does not have to be just because it was before. We, in this time, get to write a new future. Together, we get to write a new future for them. Thank you. God bless you all.

[Applause]

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