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MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS SPEED CAMERAS LEGISLATION

Collaborative effort by the Mayor, Speaker Johnson, City Council and Governor Cuomo comes on the heels of inaction by leaders in the State Senate that jeopardized the safety of NYC children

NEW YORK—A day before 1.1 million children return to school, Mayor Bill de Blasio held a public hearing for and signed Intro. 1089, which preserves and expands the use of speed cameras near schools where speeding is prevalent. The law will immediately be enforced at 140 schools where speed cameras previously existed. The City will be expanding the use of speed cameras to an additional 150 schools, bringing the total number of protected schools to 290.

In the 2018 legislative session, a similar bill was introduced in the State Legislature, which had originally enacted the speed cameras program five years earlier. The bill, A7798C/S6046C, passed the Assembly overwhelmingly. However, the bill was never brought to the floor for a vote in the State Senate even though a bipartisan majority of State Senators co-sponsored the legislation. As a result, the Mayor, Speaker Corey Johnson, the City Council and Governor Andrew M. Cuomo worked together to find a legislative solution that will continue to keep our children and other pedestrians safe.

“The clock has been ticking, and the State Senate has refused to provide speed cameras to protect the lives of our school children,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “We refuse to let their politics endanger our children, so the City is stepping up to provide these life-saving tools just in time for when 1.1 million children return to school. I would like to thank Governor Cuomo, Speaker Johnson and the rest of the City Council for working with us to get our speed camera program back on in the nick of time.”

“We know that speed cameras save lives, and yet the Senate Republicans let this critical program expire and put our children in jeopardy. We will not stand idly by as the Senate Republicans play politics with the lives of our children. With the school year upon us, I took emergency measures to reinstate the speed camera program, and I thank Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson for working together with the State to keep our children safe. This is an extraordinary action for an extraordinary situation, and it is not a substitute for the State Senate acting responsibly and passing the life-saving speed camera legislation,” said **Governor Andrew M. Cuomo**.

“School starts this week. The time for playing politics is well past over. I promised that we would do everything in our power to make sure kids were safe on the first day of school, and I am proud that we were able to make this happen today. I would like to thank Mayor de Blasio and Governor Cuomo for working with us on this life-saving legislation, as well as the Transportation Committee Chair Ydanis Rodriguez for his tireless commitment. And I remain ever grateful to the advocates who have shown us the definition of determination and strength time and time again this summer. Together we have made our streets safer in the name of 1.1 million school children,” said **Council Speaker Corey Johnson**, Sponsor of Intro. 1089.

“As 1.1 million students return to school for the start of a new year, I'm relieved that this life-saving safety measure will be in place in more school zones than ever before,” said **Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza**. “Nothing is more important than the safety of students and staff – thank you to Mayor de Blasio, Governor Cuomo and Speaker Johnson for taking action to protect our students.”

“Thanks to the Mayor, the City Council, with Speaker Johnson’s Leadership, and the Governor, New York’s schoolchildren will return to school tomorrow protected again by speed cameras,” said **Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “We know the cameras have saved lives over four years of Vision Zero, and DOT looks forward to expanding them to more schools that need them.”

"Speed cameras play a critical role in keeping students, school staff and families safe and losing them would have been devastating. As we welcome students back this week, it is a major accomplishment that speed cameras will continue to calm traffic and save lives," said **NYPD Chief of Transportation Thomas M. Chan**.

Speed cameras installed in New York City school zones have reduced traffic injuries to pedestrians, motorists and cyclists by 17 percent, while reducing speeding by 63 percent on average. 81 percent of cars that received one speed camera violation do not receive a second.

Beginning immediately, vehicles caught exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour by a camera in a school zone will be issued a \$50 ticket.

Before this legislation passed the City Council, Governor Cuomo signed an Executive Order directing the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to share car owner data with the City for enforcement purposes.

"I applaud Mayor de Blasio, Governor Cuomo, Speaker Johnson, and every leader who came together and answered our city's plea to turn our speed cameras back on before the first day of school. People over politics is what New Yorkers expect; we need more efforts like this," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**.

“The Speed Camera initiative was not possible without the leadership of Speaker Johnson and the cooperation between Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio. I thank them all for their dedication. As Chair of the Transportation Committee, and as a former educator, one of my main objectives has been that we protect our schoolchildren and continue to find new urban design solutions to improve pedestrian and traffic safety. The safety and wellbeing of our students goes beyond Party lines. This is not about being a Democrat or a Republican. It is about the

responsibility of all leaders in the City and the state of New York to protect and represent all residents: regardless of their Council district, their political affiliation, or any other demographic data. With the City's speed camera law, we will be able to hold those liable for endangering students traveling to and from their schools. Today is a step in the right direction to safeguard our students," said **Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair of the Committee on Transportation.**

Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuels, co-Sponsor of Intro. 1089, said, "We need to keep our children safe on New York City streets and protect them from reckless driving. There are ways to ensure that our children are protected and implementing laws that can prevent injuries and the tragic death of children seems like common sense. I am glad that children will be safer within their school zones tomorrow as they start their first day of classes."

"After a stunning abdication of leadership from the New York State Senate that failed to reauthorize the life-saving cameras before they expired on July 25, I'm thrilled that the City was able to turn the cameras back on in time for the first day of school, and I thank Speaker Johnson and Mayor de Blasio for their leadership," said **Council Member Brad Lander**, co-Sponsor of Intro. 1089. "Enormous thanks also go to the heroic efforts of Transportation Alternatives, Families for Safe Streets, and partners who never let up in ringing the alarm bell. Speed cameras save lives – it's as simple as that. I'll continue my efforts to help end reckless driving in New York City through the Reckless Driver Accountability Act, which targets the 1 percent of drivers who get ticket after ticket, are using their cars as weapons against their neighbors, and for whom turning on the speed cameras simply won't be enough. By confronting reckless driving to prevent future deaths, we will do all that we possibly can to make the memories of those lost to traffic violence into a blessing."

"I thank Mayor de Blasio for his swift action signing this bill so that when schools open tomorrow speed cameras will be there to help slow down drivers. We know from the numbers that speed cameras are a crucial tool to keep kids safe around schools. Today's action is the first step towards ensuring their continued use, but the Senate must return to Albany to pass legislation I've introduced to expand the program and codify their use," said **State Senator Jose Peralta**, Sponsor of A7798C/S6046C.

"The start of the school year should be an exciting time, and ensuring that children and families will be safer from vehicular traffic crashes is essential. I applaud the Mayor, City Council and Governor for devising a temporary authorization to operate speed cameras in school zones. This temporary measure must become a permanent tool to protect New York's school children. My bill to restore and modestly expand this vital program has passed the State Assembly. It is shocking that the State Senate has refused to pass it. Now the Senate must return to Albany to pass this essential legislation," said **Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick**, Sponsor of A7798C/S6046C.

"It shouldn't be this hard to take steps everyone agrees would protect children as they come and go from school, but Senate Republicans insisted on putting politics first. I am glad this creative solution was found to put the cameras back to work," said **State Senator Michael Gianaris, Chair of the Senate Democratic Conference.**

“This is a shameful day for the New York State Senate but a hopeful one for the parents of school kids across New York City. The will of the people has prevailed over the outrageous Albany horse trading and infighting that has endangered children’s lives. Thanks to Mayor de Blasio, the Governor and the City Council for coming up with this solution to turn on speed traffic cameras in time for the first day of school in New York City,” said **State Senator Brad Hoylman**.

"Deaths and injuries caused by speeding vehicles are one hundred percent preventable, and the City's speed camera program has done a commendable job of decreasing the risk of these tragic accidents in areas where large numbers of children walk and play," said **Assembly Member Steven Cymbrowitz**, a co-Sponsor of A7798C/S6046C. “Thanks to the Mayor and the City for taking the initiative and ensuring that the cameras are back in business in time for the new school year.”

Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz said, “There is no refuting the data: Speed Cameras Save Lives. While Republican leadership in the New York State Senate has failed to do their jobs, putting children’s lives in danger, I am happy to see that the Governor and City Council were able to come up with a temporary solution that will cause drivers to think twice before speeding near schools. I join Mayor Bill de Blasio in celebrating a safer walk to school for millions of kids and their parents, however I cannot ignore the blatant disregard by Republican State Senate leadership for the safety of our children in the Bronx and all over New York City. We did our jobs in the Assembly to protect these kids by passing two different bills to extend or expand this life-saving program, but their insistence on using our kids as a political pawn is a dereliction of their moral and constitutional responsibility to protect the lives of all New Yorkers – regardless of political affiliation or geographic region.”

"Thank you to the Mayor and City Council, whose teamwork with the Governor averted a life-threatening situation for 1.1 million school kids as they begin their school year. The safety of our children should not be a partisan issue but Senate Republicans have shown they’re all too happy to play politics with our kids’ lives – I hope these senators will take the opportunity to right their wrongs by going back to Albany and renewing the program," said **Assembly Member Harvey Epstein**.

“The data is clear: speed cameras prevent crashes and save lives,” said **Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried**. “I’m grateful to Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio, and City Council Speaker Johnson for moving to protect public safety in the face of the State Senate’s callous and disgraceful failure to act on school-zone speed cameras. Additionally, Albany should let New York City decide for itself how many speed and red light cameras we should have and where they should go.”

"The paramount importance of safety is of the utmost concern to residents of New York City, the Mayor’s initiative on curbing excessive speeds with additional speed cameras and protecting innocents is to be lauded as not only an accomplishment but also a wonderful addition to the protection for all New York residents, one in which I am personally proud to support and compliment,” said **Assembly Member Jaime Williams**.

Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance, Jr., said, “Speed cameras reduce traffic fatalities through consistent, certain, and fair enforcement of speed limits. They are proven to

reduce speeding, which is the main factor in 31 percent of traffic fatalities across the U.S. The Senate must reconvene and renew this program – our children’s lives depend on it.”

"Mayor de Blasio, Governor Cuomo and Council Speaker Johnson found a way to reactivate New York City's speed cameras not simply because they recognize that speed cameras save lives, but because they believe that saving lives is more important than politics," said **Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives**. "Thanks to their hard work identifying a new legal pathway to reinstating this life-saving program, 1.1 million schoolchildren will have a safer walk to school."

"Traffic violence is a public health crisis in New York City, but instead of trying to solve this crisis, the Republicans who control the state Senate instead tried to exploit it. But while these depraved lawmakers worked to shut down the speed safety camera program, our Mayor, our Governor, and our City Council put everything else aside to make sure kids across the city would be protected when they head back to class this week. That's something to be grateful for," said **Amy Cohen, Founding Member of Families for Safe Streets**.

"Turning the speed cameras back on, in time for the start of school, will save lives and protect our students, parents and staff. Credit goes to Gov. Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Corey Johnson for finding a way to solve this problem. They put the safety of our communities front and center, where it belongs," said **Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers**.

“AARP thanks Mayor de Blasio for taking this important step to make city streets safer for New Yorkers of all ages, and for working with Governor Cuomo, Speaker Johnson and the City Council to ensure the reinstatement of this proven deterrent to pedestrian accidents. New Yorkers 65 and over are most at risk of being killed in pedestrian accidents, accounting for half of all pedestrian fatalities even though they make up just 14 percent of New York City’s population. As a long term solution we need state legislation, and AARP strongly believes the state Senate needs to follow the Assembly’s lead and pass the speed camera extender and expansion bill as soon as possible,” said **Beth Finkel, Director of AARP New York State**.

"The issue of pedestrian and bicyclist safety on our city’s streets must be viewed and treated as a public health crisis. When we have chosen to address public health issues in the past, whether it be smoking or the opioid crisis, we have chosen to use multi-faceted interventions that are proven to be effective. Speed safety cameras around our schools are proven solutions that make the streets safer for our children," said **Nicholas Gavin, MD, Chief of Emergency Medicine at NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn**.

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