



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS LEGISLATION TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE CULTURAL PLAN

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio today signed into law four pieces of legislation – Intro. 419-A, in relation to a comprehensive cultural plan; Intro. 51-B, in relation to requiring the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to issue an annual report regarding hepatitis B and hepatitis C; Intro. 178-A, in relation to price displays for second-hand automobiles; and Intro. 181-A, in relation to notice requirements for hotel development plans.

The first bill, Intro. 419-A, requires the Department of Cultural Affairs to develop a comprehensive cultural plan, which must address several topics related to cultural activities in the City, including: the availability and distribution of cultural activities in the five boroughs, the relationship between cultural activities and social and economic health and welfare, housing and studio needs of artists, and increasing arts education and activities in public schools. The legislation also requires DCLA to establish a Citizens' Advisory Committee, which will advise the development and implementation of the plan, and will review DCLA's biannual reports on the progress of the plan – which are also required by the legislation. The plan itself will be reviewed and revised every ten years as necessary, and the CAC will be dissolved after making recommendations following its review of the second biannual report, or after five years. This bill was passed during the Stated Meeting on April 28.

“There’s no doubt New York City is a cultural center of the world, and the arts are essential to our economy, our schools, and our vibrancy as a city. We are committed to ensuring all New Yorkers have access to cultural activities, and this comprehensive plan will help unify our initiatives aimed at lifting up all New Yorkers through arts and culture,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “I want to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito for her leadership; Council Member Van Bramer, the Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee; and Council Member Levin for sponsoring this legislation.”

“From improving public health to protecting consumers to bolstering our city’s cultural community, the Council is proud to make New York a better city for all residents,” said **Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. “These laws will make New York City more welcoming and livable for communities across the five boroughs. I thank my colleagues on the Council and the de Blasio administration for their continued dedication to an agenda that improves New York City.”

“Today is an important day for the cultural vitality of our City,” said **Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair of the Committee on Cultural Affairs**. “The signing of the Cultural Plan legislation will initiate the development of a comprehensive cultural plan that will lay out a blueprint for increasing access, opportunity and equity so that all New Yorkers may have meaningful engagement with culture and the arts. I thank and congratulate Council Member Stephen Levin, Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl and the entire cultural community for rallying behind this legislation which will strengthen our entire City.”

“New York City would not be the cultural capital of the world without our artists. The passage of this legislation provides a unique opportunity to promote the vibrant culture that gives our city life while fostering

an equitable, inclusive and artist-friendly environment,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin**. “By developing and implementing a comprehensive cultural plan, we can make sure the contributions of all five boroughs are recognized and celebrated as integral parts of our city’s rich cultural fabric. Once again, I would like to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, all of the advocates and cultural groups, and extend a special thank you to Commissioner Finkelppearl and the Department of Cultural Affairs for working with us to make this exciting and important legislation a reality.”

The second bill, Intro. 51-B, requires the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to submit an annual report to the Council Speaker and the Mayor detailing the Department’s efforts to identify and prevent the spread of Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C. This report will include statistics on new cases of Hepatitis B and C and the prevalence of the diseases, and other information related to the Department’s efforts to identify and prevent the spread of Hepatitis B and C, as well as identifying best practices in current programs that could be implemented by the Department and other entities that address Hepatitis. The report will be made available on DOHMH’s website. This bill was passed during the Stated Meeting on April 28. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsors, Council Members Chin, Johnson, and Koo.

“This legislation will provide health care providers with powerful new ammunition to fight against the spread of Hepatitis B and C,” said **Council Member Peter Koo**. “This disease has proliferated in Asian American communities for far too long, and I am thrilled that we will now have consistent, measurable data that will be used for prevention and education. I’d like to thank Mayor de Blasio and my fellow co-sponsors for acting quickly and ensuring this issue receives priority.”

The third bill, Intro. 178-A, requires price displays for used cars to state the total selling price of the vehicle including administrative fees and service fees. The used car industry is consistently at the top of the list of consumer complaints, and this legislation will reduce deceptive practices that involve “bait-and-switch” advertising, high pressure sales tactics, and obscure add-ons that raise the advertised price and result in many of these consumer complaints. Price tags must now state the total price including fees, and note that add-on purchases are optional. This bill was passed during the Stated Meeting on April 27. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsor, Council Member Jumaane Williams.

“I would like to thank Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Chair Espinal, and the Council for passing this important legislation. Sometimes, the best legislation comes from personal experience. As someone who has purchased a used car, I had the experience of being hit with a series of undisclosed fees that I would have liked to have known about before being suckered into making discussions. This legislation will bring much needed transparency into the vehicle buying process by requiring used car dealers to disclose all fees, upfront, to buyers,” said **Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, Deputy Leader**.

“Many New Yorkers have felt the sting of paying much more than they anticipated when buying a used car. Int. No. 178-A will make the buying process more transparent by requiring used car dealers to include all additional costs and fees in the sticker price advertised for the car. With the passage of this bill, consumers will be armed with the information they need to make informed decisions and benefit from a much fairer marketplace,” said **Council Member Rafael L. Espinal, Jr., Chair of the Committee on Consumer Affairs**.

The fourth bill, Intro. 181-A requires the Department of Buildings to provide written notice or notice by e-mail of any proposed hotel to the elected officials and community leaders that would be affected by its construction. This bill was passed during the Stated Meeting on April 27. In his remarks, the Mayor thanked the bill’s sponsor, Council Member Jumaane Williams.

“Whenever a new hotel is planned to be cited anywhere within the city, it has the potential to bring with it a strain on local resources and upheaval on a community not used to the hotel industry. Such was the case in my district when I first introduced this legislation. I thank the Administration and Speaker for working with me to pass this bill so that going forward, Council Members, Community Boards and, where applicable, Borough Board will be aware of, and be able to notify residents when plans to develop a hotel occur,” said **Council Member Jumaane D. Williams, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Committee on Housing and Buildings**.

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