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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 8, 2016

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**MAYOR DE BLASIO, DYCD COMMISSIONER CHONG AND HRA COMMISSIONER BANKS
ANNOUNCE ENHANCED SERVICES TO ADDRESS YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

City adding 300 youth beds over three years and dedicated youth homelessness staff at DHS shelters

*Builds on prior investments by de Blasio Administration supporting runaway homeless youth, totaling over
750 beds*

NEW YORK—As part of Mayor de Blasio’s comprehensive review and restructuring of homeless services, the Mayor, Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steve Banks, and Department of Youth and Community Development Bill Chong today announced a series of services to target the issue of youth homelessness in New York City.

The enhanced services include the addition of 300 beds for homeless youth over the next three years, deployment of additional staff to coordinate services for youth entering Department of Homeless Services’ shelters, and a pledge to work with the state to extend the length of stay for those in existing crisis beds administered by the State.

"From counseling, to GED support, to youth-specific employment and training programs, youth shelters have the right services and environment for young people to stabilize their lives," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "With this major investment, we’ll triple the total number of youth beds since we took office and ensure even more young people are connected to the resources they deserve to rebuild their lives."

"Under Mayor de Blasio’s leadership, the City has seen unprecedented growth in services for runaway and homeless youth. In addition to funding for 200 new beds over the last two years, a 24-hour drop-in center specializing in the LGBTQ community, and the first-ever City-funded facility specifically for transgender youth, there are enhanced mental health services for vulnerable young people. DYCD and the community-based organizations we support look forward to continuing the City’s commitment to every young person seeking a safe space to get back on their feet and lead an independent life," said **DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong**.

"As part of the Mayor’s 90-day review of all homeless services, it’s clear that we need to ensure that we can meet the special needs of homeless youth," said **Human Resources Administration Commissioner Steve Banks**. "We can’t miss this opportunity to help our young people get back on track."

This announcement follows a series of homeless services restructuring steps: 1) launching the Shelter Repair Squad 2.0, substantially increasing the City’s ability to monitor and correct unacceptable shelter conditions, 2) ending use of cluster apartments for shelter over the next three years, 3) re-iterating requirement to keep shelters open during the day for residents, and 4) announcing HOME-STAT, the nation’s most comprehensive street homelessness outreach effort.

The enhanced services announced today provide for:

-100 new beds a year for the next three years, totaling 300 by FY2019 – with a \$14.7 million annual investment at full ramp up;

-Deployment of City staff at the entry points of the DHS shelter system to offer placements in youth beds for individuals between the ages of 16 and 21; and

-A pledge to work with the State to extend the length of stay in crisis beds.

The addition of 100 beds a year over the next three years builds on the 200 beds already added under Mayor de Blasio for homeless youth through the Department of Youth and Community Development. Currently 392 runaway homeless youth residential beds are available, and the remaining 61 beds will become available in January and February of 2016.

This additional investment, which will be reflected in the Mayor's FY2017 Preliminary Budget, will be \$4.9 million in FY2017, ramping up to \$9.8 million in FY2018, and \$14.7 million in FY2019. In total, the de Blasio Administration will have added 500 additional beds for runaway homeless youth, for a total of 753 beds that will now be in place by FY2019.

In 2014, the City of New York requested that the State allow initial stays in crisis shelters to be extended from 30 days to 45 days, and that extensions be allowed up to 90 days. The City is now renewing this request, in order to provide additional time for services to young people who may need them.

Since July 1, 2014, the de Blasio Administration has funded and implemented new rental assistance programs and shelter exit pathways helping over 22,000 individuals exit shelter, expanded homelessness prevention programs and services to support over 91,000 New Yorkers with homeless prevention services, launched a plan to create 15,000 supportive housing units, dismantled the 30 homeless encampments, and ended chronic veteran homelessness.

"Ending youth homelessness is a moral imperative," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "I applaud the Mayor's action to add these new beds, and agree that we should lengthen stay times for crisis beds."

"I applaud the Mayor's continued commitment to our city's most vulnerable. These additional 300 youth beds and new staff placements will help reduce the number of kids turned away from our shelter doors and ensure they are connected to vital services," said **Congressman Jerrold Nadler**.

State Senator Brad Hoylman said, "The new resources for new shelter beds for homeless youth and additional staff announced today by Mayor de Blasio will help reverse the impact of years of budget cuts that have forced hundreds of New York City kids to sleep on the streets through no fault of their own. As a result, we'll help expand the safety net for homeless kids, many of whom are ostracized by their families because they're LGBTQ or forced to flee unsafe situations at home. I'm extremely grateful to the Mayor for making this important issue a priority and pledge to support his efforts in Albany."

"Homeless youth need a safe and decent place to stay, and supportive services to help get their lives together. Mayor de Blasio understands those needs, and today we're seeing an important example of that. I will work to get more support from Albany for the City's program," said **Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried, Chair of the Committee on Health**.

Council Member Stephen Levin, Chairman of the General Welfare Committee, said, "Today's announcement of a significant increase in runaway and homeless youth beds and support staff is the latest example of the de Blasio's administration's commitment to addressing the challenges of homelessness head on.

Advocates have been asking for years for this level of attention and funding to runaway and homeless youth, and I commend the de Blasio administration on today's announcement."

"Our greatest responsibility is our young people," said **Council Member Corey Johnson, Chair of the Committee on Health and Facilitator of the LGBT Caucus**. "We must care for them, make sure they are safe, sheltered, nurtured and given the opportunity to succeed. We have a special responsibility to runaway and homeless youth. This historic commitment by Mayor de Blasio is sending a message of hope to young people all across our City. I want to thank the Mayor, HRA Commissioner Steve Banks, DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong for making this possible. We must not stop until no young person is forced to sleep on the street."

Creighton Drury, Executive Director of Covenant House New York, said, "Mayor de Blasio is a proven champion for homeless youth and for organizations such as Covenant House. As a result of the Mayor's efforts to date, we have been able to serve more youth and dramatically reduce the number of young people on waiting lists. With the Mayor's initiatives announced today, we now can see a day in which we will be able realize the dream of a bed for every young person in need."

Carl Siciliano, Executive Director of the Ali Forney Center, said, "Having fought so long and hard to make NYC a place where no young person is forced to sleep in the streets, I am immensely gratified that the Mayor is expanding youth shelter capacity in this manner. I look forward to working with his administration to determine that the particular needs and vulnerabilities of homeless LGBT youth are addressed."

Ariel Zwang, Safe Horizon CEO, said, "We applaud Mayor de Blasio and DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong for taking this much needed action. Adding 300 new age-appropriate beds over the next three years will greatly improve the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable young people. We are heartened that these young people, so often overlooked, are receiving increased attention and support."

Douglas O'Dell, Executive Director of SCO Family of Services, said, "We applaud the Mayor for his encouragement of innovative initiatives to support homeless and runaway youth and young adults in New York City."

Sister Paulette LoMonaco, Executive Director of Good Shepherd Services, said, "As a strong and vocal advocate for the needs of runaway and homeless youth, Good Shepherd Services applauds Mayor de Blasio's commitment to expanding the number of RHY beds in NYC, as well as calling on the State to extend the length of stay at crisis programs. With a safe and secure place to stay, runaway and homeless youth who will be served in these new beds will have the opportunity to not only have their basic needs met, but also to set and accomplish goals for themselves and become productive citizens of our great city."

Elizabeth McCarthy, CEO of Sheltering Arms and Safe Space, said, "We are pleased to see an expansion of the Runaway and Homeless Youth program. Far too often, our city's most vulnerable children lack more than housing; they don't receive the timely care and holistic support they deserve. This announcement is an important step in the right direction and we look forward to working with the City to expand RHY programs in the years to come."

Jim Bolas, Executive Director of Coalition for Homeless Youth, said, "The Mayor has taken the suggestions we laid in the steps of City Hall years ago and is remaining true to his word! We are uncluttering the back up of waiting lists and turn aways by trying to streamline the entry process to emergency housing and extend the length of stay to better prepare youth for permanence; as well as expanding units in emergency as well as supportive housing in hopes to reduce the 'bottleneck' and risk having youth fall out of care. The Coalition, and our NYC Homeless Youth Association, is very excited for these desperately needed additional beds to be added and the Mayor's commitment! Once again, NYC is leading the charge on the ground in a national movement to appropriately house and support our homeless youth! We will actively work with the state and federal

government to recognize the leadership of NYC towards creating sustainable housing resources and supports for homeless youth!

Julie Shapiro, Executive Director of The Door – A Center for Alternatives, said, “The Door applauds the de Blasio administration for adding a significant number of beds to the system for young people over the next three years and for improving points of access for youth. These are important initial steps in what must be a multi-pronged strategy to end youth homelessness.”

Jawanza Williams, Youth Organizer of VOCAL-NY, said "As a former homeless young person, I know how hard it is to get by without a safe, affordable place to live. This issue is especially important for LGBT youth, who are an estimated 40 percent of the runaway and homeless youth population in New York City. We applaud the de Blasio administration for taking these great strides towards alleviating the effects of homelessness on young people in need."

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