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**CITY'S EXPANDED TAX CREDIT CAMPAIGN PAYS OFF BIG FOR NEW YORKERS**

*50 percent more of City's eligible New Yorkers filed for free through network of tax prep sites, nearly \$250 million in projected tax credits and tax-preparer-fee savings will go into pockets of hardworking families*

*New Yorkers who haven't filed their taxes yet should visit [nyc.gov/taxprep](http://nyc.gov/taxprep) to get more information and find sites that are still open*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Julie Menin today announced that the City will help approximately 145,000 New Yorkers with low incomes file their taxes for free and claim important tax credits including the Earned Income Tax Credit and the NYC Child Care Tax Credit – ultimately translating to nearly \$250 million in refunds and savings for New Yorkers this season. This represents a 50 percent increase from 96,000 filers last year – more filers than any year since the campaign began 13 years ago.

In order to increase access to and awareness of the tax prep services, the de Blasio Administration invested more than \$3 million – a nearly 20-fold increase over prior years – in an unprecedented tax credit campaign that included \$2.3 million for the expansion and increase of tax prep services from 140 sites last year to 200 sites across the boroughs in 2015. The advertising and outreach component of the tax credit campaign included transit ads, community and ethnic newspaper ads, radio ads, a television PSA, a direct postcard mailing to targeted households, a digital media campaign and ads, a texting campaign, community events, and robust on-the-ground outreach efforts in targeted neighborhoods. The comprehensive outreach and advertising activities included a five-borough trilingual phone-a-thon, and robocalls to 270,000 low-income households. DCA created an interactive online map of all tax sites, which allowed people to search for the most convenient free tax filing site based on a number of criteria, such as language of service, location, and hours of operation.

“Tax refunds are often the largest lump sum of money low-income New Yorkers will receive in the year, and they’re a critical tool in reducing inequality,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “I’m thrilled to see that our expanded effort means millions of dollars back in New Yorkers’ pockets.”

“Under Mayor de Blasio’s leadership, this tax season is going to lift up tens of thousands of hardworking New Yorkers with low incomes, putting an average of \$2,500 in their pockets from tax credits and saving them an average of \$250 on tax preparer fees,” **DCA Commissioner Julie Menin** said. “Our 20-fold increase in funding for free tax preparation services helped to spread the word about how the Earned Income Tax Credit will change lives and directly address economic inequality in our city.”

The Department of Consumer Affairs kicked off its tax credit campaign in January by encouraging New Yorkers who made \$60,000 or less last year to file for free with the City’s tax preparation services, which included nearly 200 in-person sites or drop-off sites and online preparation at [NYC.gov/taxprep](http://NYC.gov/taxprep). The City provides this tax preparation through a network of partners including Food Bank For New York City, The Financial Clinic, Ariva, and [others](#).

The EITC is considered one of the largest poverty reduction programs in the U.S. and is a federal, state and New York City tax credit for qualifying families, non-custodial parents (NYS EITC only), and single individuals who work full time or part time or are self-employed. For working families in New York City, EITC claims average \$2,500 and can be worth as much as \$8,293 in the 2015 tax season. Families with low incomes who are employed or underemployed and have child care costs for children up to age four could also be eligible for up to \$1,733 with the NYC CCTC. Combined, these credits can total almost \$10,000.

Citi contributed \$250,000 to this year's campaign to help expand increased access to tax preparation. For more information on all our tax campaign partners, tax sites available past April 15 and the City's Tax Credit Campaign, visit [NYC.gov/taxprep](http://NYC.gov/taxprep) or call 311.

"Food Bank For New York City is proud to partner with the de Blasio Administration to ensure more low- and moderate-income New Yorkers than ever have access to free, quality tax preparation services," said **Margarette Purvis, President and CEO of Food Bank For New York City**. "Our partnership with DCA allowed us to expand this year to 120 full-service and drop-off sites citywide, reaching thousands of hardworking New Yorkers where they live and work."

"I am so proud to have worked with Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Menin, and the great public servants at DCA to help tens of thousands get the tax filing assistance they need. From phone-banking at FDNY-MetroTech on DCA's Day of Action to offering free services in Bed-Stuy, my team and I have worked across the borough to spread the word about the Earned Income Tax Credit and to save money for taxpayers. I look forward to working with this winning team again next tax season to save Brooklynites and New Yorkers even more of their hard-earned dollars," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams**.

"I'm glad that the Department of Consumer Affairs' campaign to spread the word about the Earned Income Tax Credit to help working New Yorkers has been a huge success, and I am proud to have helped it succeed by making calls on DCA's Day of Action earlier this year," said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**.

"This year, the City's tax refund campaign has been a huge success; 50 percent more low-income families took advantage of the free tax preparation services provided by the Department of Consumer Affairs. Doing your taxes can be a big expense for a low-income family and any little bit that they can save is a huge help. This year, thousands of families received an average return of \$2,500 – money that can be used to help with everyday expenses such as rent, utilities, and childcare. We would like thank DCA Commissioner Julie Menin and her team for their efforts to help low-income families," said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.**

"The numbers speak for themselves. The Earned Income Tax Credit campaign led by Commissioner Menin was a huge success that not only helped to put money back in consumers' pockets, but also ensured that residents with lower incomes received high-quality tax preparation services for free. I congratulate Commissioner Menin and her team at DCA on this important, forward-thinking campaign," said **Council Member Rafael L. Espinal, Jr., Chair of the Consumer Affairs Committee**.

"Congratulations to Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Menin on the success of the City's free tax prep sites and their campaign to make New Yorkers aware of the Earned Income Tax Credit. I am happy to have helped spread the word and encourage City residents to take advantage of these valuable types of assistance, and I look forward to the programs continuing to grow and succeed in the future," said **U.S. Representative Grace Meng**.

"Tens of thousands of New Yorkers have saved millions of dollars in tax prep fees and have been able to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit, one of the most effective anti-poverty tools the federal government has. Putting money back in New York working families' pockets is a priority for all of us and we must work together to ensure there is sufficient outreach in our communities, so taxpayers know about the EITC and tax preparation services available to them," said **U.S. Representative Nydia Velázquez**.

"It's important that families get back every dollar they deserve in tax refunds and the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs has helped thousands of New Yorkers do just that by offering free tax preparation services

around the City, including in Washington Heights. This is a huge increase in the amount of households helped from last year and a testament to the growing success of the City’s annual tax credit campaign, which I am happy to have participated in,” said **State Senator Adriano Espaillat**.

“I applaud the Mayor and the Department of Consumer Affairs for their successful efforts to expand access to free tax preparation services. This program ensures eligible New Yorkers get the Earned Income Tax Credit benefits to which they are entitled without paying unnecessary fees. By providing these credits to these hard-working families, the program also brings millions of dollars into New York City’s economy,” said **State Senator Liz Krueger**.

“The Earned Income Tax Credit is one of the most powerful tools we have for putting money back in the pockets of hard-working New Yorkers with lower incomes. Too often, taxpayers fail to request it and that money is left on the table. I applaud Mayor de Blasio and Commissioner Menin for making this a priority and enabling hundreds of thousands to file their taxes safely and without cost and to seek the EITC and NYC Child Care tax credit. This puts more money in the economy – a win-win-win for New Yorkers,” said **Assembly Member Jo Anne Simon**.

“I commend Mayor Bill de Blasio and Department of Consumer Affairs Commissioner Julie Menin for their efforts to ease the concerns and worries of so many families during this tax season. Not only did they help by providing free tax filing, but they also increased awareness for tax credits that can put more money into the pockets of Bronx families. Having personally helped to spread the word this tax season with Commissioner Menin, I know these important tax credits, like the Earned Income Tax Credit and the NYC Child Care Tax Credit, have the potential to assist our community. By providing more money to Bronx families and residents, we have been able to help those that are in need,” said **Assembly Member Latoya Joyner**.

“DCA’s unprecedented investment in publicizing the Earned Income Tax Credit has led to an unprecedented level of success. By helping hard-working New Yorkers hold onto millions that would have otherwise gone to taxes and preparation fees, DCA’s Office of Financial Empowerment has earned its name. I congratulate Commissioner Menin and her entire team on this victory for New York City and its residents,” said **Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Chair of the Committee on Small Business**.

“We at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies know how critical refunds received through the Earned Income Tax Credit are to the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers we serve every year. Putting money back into the pockets of our City’s residents – who constantly face increasing costs of basics such as food, housing, and transportation – is critical to the stability of our neighborhoods. I am proud to have worked with Commissioner Menin and the Department of Consumer Affairs to raise awareness about EITC and about DCA’s 200 free tax preparation sites among congregations across the City and look forward to partnering with them to make their campaign an even bigger success next year,” said **Jennifer Jones-Austin, CEO, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies**.

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