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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO CALLS FOR SPEED-CAMERA EXPANSION IN ALBANY AND ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR SAFER REDESIGN OF NINTH STREET IN PARK SLOPE**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** I want to thank Lenore Berner for her leadership in this movement to save the lives of our children. I've known Lenore a long time, she's a wonderful principle. I want to thank you and everyone at M.S. 51 for all you did for my daughter Chiara and my son Dante. So I've seen firsthand your work as an educator. But I also want to thank you for speaking up as a voice of the community. You live in the community too and you know how much danger our children have been in. And no school has borne the brunt more than M.S. 51 and to hear you say the names of each child and think about what this school community has felt and what they have lost and the pain they have gone through, it makes very, very clear why we need to act.

And everybody that we lost, all those good young people we lost that Lenore talked about that was all before what happened right here at this corner. And it's very clear that the death has to end – these unnecessary deaths, these children we are losing who should be living out their whole lives. It has to end and it can end and that's what we are here to talk about today. I want to thank all of my colleagues, you'll hear from a number of them in a moment but I want to give a special thank you to one of the real architects of Vision Zero and I want to remind everyone when Vision Zero began a lot of people did not think it was a natural fit for the NYPD but they did not recognize how much the leadership of the NYPD believed in this initiative and how much our officers would take it on as an important mission, as part of their work.

A lot of the credit goes to the Chief of Transportation for the NYPD Tom Chan, thank you Chief.

[Applause]

So for all of us here, this corner, this intersection and what happened here, it's personal for us. It's not something we just read about in the papers or saw on TV, this is our neighborhood. And that horrible day in March, a morning kind of like this, two mothers walked their strollers across the intersection as they had done so many times before safely, as so many parents in this community had done before thousands of times safely, as Chirlane and I had done before with our children, safely and everyone thought it was going to be just another day. But we all know now it ended up being a tragic day. Those two good families lost children that morning because

of a dangerous driver who should not have been driving anyway. And among the many things we need Albany to do is to change the laws so that no one could be driving in that situation again.

The Blumenstein family lost Abigail and later Sophia Rosemary. The Lew family lost Joshua. I like everyone to join me in observing a moment of silence for these families and for the children we lost.

So, anytime you hear the words, Vision Zero, I don't want you to think about them as just a phrase. I want you to think about this intersection and these children because the whole idea is to save children, save seniors, save New Yorkers.

And we believe that means working every day, doing new things all the time to protect New Yorkers. It doesn't end. I want people to be clear about that. Vision Zero is meant to grow every single year and it will and that is why today we're announcing some major changes here on 9th Street.

These are the types of things we have been doing all over the city. Here we will be including safer crossings, expanded pedestrian space, and dedicated bike lanes. And you'll hear more in a moment from Commissioner Trottenberg on the plan.

We will do everything in our power to protect New Yorkers from dangerous drivers. It's time that leaders in Albany did the same thing. It's time that Albany did all in its power to protect New Yorkers from dangerous drivers. And there is more to be done and it must be done quickly.

We know – we know the actions we have taken are working. We can't afford to be set back and that's why the stakes in Albany are so high. Lenore made a point that is as good a proof as you're ever going to have in the world – where speed cameras are put in school zones, speeding has gone down already 63 percent – 63 percent. This is a brand new thing and yet it's already changing behavior and protecting our children.

But all that hangs in the balance right now because if Albany does not act in the next few weeks, there will no longer be speed cameras in school zones protecting our children. The legislation that allows for these speed cameras expires in June. If Albany doesn't act, hundreds of thousands of children will be in danger.

In fact, what Albany should do is go farther and give us the authority to put in even more cameras, an even broader area, because why wouldn't we want to protect more people? It's as simple as that.

We can't wait any longer. We need the power to protect New Yorkers. Albany must act.

A few quick words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that I want to turn to our Transportation Commissioner – and I mentioned the great work of Chief Chan, obviously another one of the great architects of Vision Zero – and I want to give credit to the Commissioner and her whole team. It's been a labor of love for all of them.

Our Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg –

[Applause]

**Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Department of Transportation:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and I want to start by thanking you for your steadfast leadership on Vision Zero. You have I think helped all of us in this administration do what we know is such important lifesaving work and as you mentioned as we were grieving over the tragedy that happened right at this intersection. The DOT, our engineers, our planners, our designers went to work immediately to take the next step in a comprehensive redesign of this street.

You know as you also mentioned we've also continued to think about what speed cameras could do all around the city if Albany would give an expanded authorization. So, DOT's team and you can see here from the poster. We took a look at Ninth Street and we saw that there had been – even though the agency had done some redesign work in 2007 and 2009. Tragically there had been some fatalities and serious crashes since there. And we decided we need to go back and built upon our work. And you can see here as the Mayor mentioned we're going to be adding in protective bike lanes in a stretch that's about a mile long from Prospect Park West to Third Avenue, putting in pedestrian refuge islands, doing everything we can to calm to traffic and ensure that cars are taking turns at a slow and safe speed.

We hope these redesigns will keep streets functioning for all users, for pedestrians, for cyclists, and for vehicles. And we'll be talking about the design tonight at a town hall hosted by Councilmember Lander and then brining final designs to the community board this month. And we hope we'll be able to install all the changes this summer.

And just to talk a little bit about obviously the importance of this design and thank my team. But also highlight once again the incredible work of NYPD as our enforcement partners. We know they are key party of all the work we do. And just the speed cameras since the Mayor mentioned them. It has been pretty straight forward. I think a lot of you heard me say this. Over the last four years, roadway fatalities have gone up nationally around 15 percent. Here in New York City under the Mayor's leadership and Vision Zero, they've gone down around 28 percent. There is no question that speed cameras have played a key role in slowing down vehicles and saving lives. So, I know Chief Chan and I, and others and advocates from families for safe streets, and transportation alternatives will be back up in Albany again making sure that we speak to our legislators there and get that important legislation passed.

Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

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