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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS AND SIGNS
INTROS 216-B, 493-A, 356-A, AND 361-A**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good afternoon, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here with Yarisia Rodriguez and the rest of you. [Laughs]. We have a number of pieces of legislation we're talking about today. We're going to start with Intros 356-A and 493-A – and these strengthen our commitment to increasing voter registration for all our people and civic participation. This strengthens our agency-based voter registration law.

We obviously have a problem in our democracy – we see it increasingly – lack of participation. This is true in elections. This has been true – this is also true in lots of other areas of public life and of civic life. We've got to do more to encourage people to participate in every way. One of the most fundamental requirements is that all our citizens register to vote. So, city agencies have to continue to do more to register people to vote in the everyday work those agencies do with the people of this city.

Intro 356-A requires the Mayor's Office of Operations to report to the City Council on agency-based voter registration efforts twice yearly. It's sponsored by Councilmember Jumaane Williams. And Intro 493-A adds additional agencies to the agency-based voter registration law, and strengthens those requirements. So these two pieces of legislation together do a lot to move us forward – and that second piece is sponsored by Ben Kallos, the – Councilmember Ben Kallos, who's also chair of the Governmental Operations Committee.

These bills encourage people to participate – it's as simple as that – encourage people to take ownership of their own democracy.

I'd like to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito for her support and, of course, want to thank our director of operations, Mindy Tarlow, who is my height opposite –

[Laughter]

– but one of the indispensable members of this administration, who makes so much work for us every day. Mindy, thank you for your leadership. I want to thank my counsel, Maya Wiley, who was also instrumental.

[...]

[Commotion]

[Mayor de Blasio signs legislation]

Mayor: Okay, here we go. Everybody reassemble. We're going to keep going here. Intro 216-B – it's our next piece of legislation – increases the number of accessible pedestrian signals required to be installed annually. It is sponsored by Council Member Mark Levine, at the request of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. This will triple the number of accessible signals installed at intersections from 25 a year to at least 75 a year. Now, DOT has already installed 99 accessible signals at high-risk intersections. This will obviously greatly intensify the speed with which we install these. DOT is working closely with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, and advocates from blind and low-vision communities, to help us figure out the best choices in how we do this, but we are obviously thrilled that we'll be able to do this very substantial expansion. And this also supports our efforts to expand upon the work of Vision Zero. It's another step in the direction of a safer city.

I'd like to thank Commissioner Polly Trottenberg with DOT; Victor Calise, the commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities; Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito. And you're going to hear now from some of the folks who were instrumental in this effort, beginning with Commissioner Calise –

[Applause]

– who has brought his fan club with him, as always. [Laughs]

[...]

[Commotion]

[Mayor de Blasio signs legislation]

Mayor: Okay, here we go. Last, but not least – the last man standing – I got a million of them –

[Laughter]

– he who laughs last. Okay. Intro 361-A requires the Department of Homeless Services to grant victims of domestic violence exiting HRA shelter – exiting the HRA shelter system eligibility for temporary shelters, sponsored by Councilmember Corey Johnson. I would also like to thank Steve Levin, Chair of the General Welfare Committee. This is an issue that I worked on as well when I was chair of the General Welfare Committee some years ago. We all know domestic violence is a serious crisis and one that's getting acknowledged more than ever, and more and more work is being done to address the crisis. In the last year, 3,877 families entered a domestic violence shelter. That is a sobering figure – and certainly makes clear what we have to do to

address this issue. State law ensures that victims can remain in an HRA-operated domestic violence shelter for up to 180 days. For families needing more help, transition from the HRA system to the Department of Homeless Services system has not always been smooth. Intro 361-A ensures that people who need more time will get it. I would like to thank Steve Banks, the commissioner of HRA; Gilbert Taylor, the commissioner of Homeless Services; Speaker Mark-Viverito; and, again, Steve Levin for all their help.

[...]

[Commotion]

[Mayor de Blasio signs legislation]

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