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## **Council Members, Advocates and Business Leaders Call on Mayor To Make Sustainability & Resiliency High Priorities in Next 100 Days**

*Announce Action Plan to help green the city and prepare for a changing climate*

NEW YORK – A broad coalition of City Council members, business leaders and advocates from transportation, environmental and health organizations today called on Mayor Bill de Blasio to make sustainability and climate resiliency high priorities for the next 100 days of his administration and beyond.

With hurricane season less than two months away, the coalition announced an Action Plan with three clear milestones for the next 100 days to help address some of New York City’s most pressing environmental and resiliency challenges. In addition, the New York League of Conservation Voters released its New York City Policy Agenda, with a broad set of policy recommendations that will help continue the momentum for a sustainable city throughout the mayor’s first term.

“Over the next 100 days and beyond, Mayor de Blasio has the unique opportunity to redefine and reinvigorate the sustainability movement in New York City,” said **New York League of Conservation Voters President Marcia Bystryn**. “We gather today to encourage our mayor to maintain New York City’s position as a sustainability leader, while working to make sure that more New Yorkers can enjoy the benefits of living in greener, more vibrant and resilient communities. We look forward to working with Mayor de Blasio and his team to build a more just and sustainable city.”

The coalition’s three-point action plan seeks to put a healthy environment and climate resiliency at the center of Mayor de Blasio’s vision to transform our city for the better:

**Milestone 1: May 1, 2014. Build affordably and sustainably.** On May 1st, the de Blasio administration will announce its strategy to add and preserve 200,000 affordable housing units over the next 10 years. Every effort should be made to make that housing environmentally sustainable and climate resilient. Beyond simply building green through materials and energy-efficiency measures, this new plan must think comprehensively by prioritizing transit-oriented development, integrating parks and more.

**Milestone 2: June 1, 2014. Show us your resiliency plan.** Under the de Blasio administration, there has been a renewed focus on helping New Yorkers recover from the impacts of Superstorm Sandy. But 18 months after the storm, there is still much work to be done to prepare the city for future extreme weather events. June 1st will mark the beginning of next hurricane season and we urge Mayor de Blasio to issue a comprehensive and concrete plan that will make sure New York is prepared for the next big storm and a changing climate.

**Milestone 3: June 30, 2014. Invest in the future by ensuring infrastructure investments through the capital program.** New York City spent an average of \$9.5 billion on infrastructure in each of the last five years. We call on the city to integrate sustainability and resiliency planning into the capital program, and to maintain capital investments to ensure roads, bridges, schools, parks and environmental facilities are in a good state of repair.

“It is critical we ensure New York City is more sustainable and resilient than ever before,” said **Environmental Protection Chairman Donovan Richards**. “As a representative of the Rockaways, I witnessed how

unprepared our city was during Hurricane Sandy, and I relish the opportunity to work with this administration to ensure we never find ourselves in that position again. I applaud the New York League of Conservation Voters for their commitment to a greater, greener city and I look forward to our continued partnership moving forward.”

**Council Member Mark Treyger, 47<sup>th</sup> District and Chair, Committee on Recovery & Resiliency**, said: “The devastating impact of Superstorm Sandy and the incredible hurdles residents still face have made it clear that taking immediate steps to protect our city must be a top priority. As Chairman of the New York City Council’s Committee on Recovery and Resiliency, I am committed to working with Mayor de Blasio and the New York League of Conservation Voters to make the necessary investments in our infrastructure and better protect the city against the increasing impact of climate change. The next 100 days will be critical towards making real progress to ensure that New York City addresses the challenges of the 21st century.”

“As a Council Member representing a district that was ravaged by Hurricane Sandy, I am proud to stand with the New York League of Conservation Voters and advocate for a budget that reflects a genuine sustainability agenda, and an affordable housing program that prioritizes resiliency,” said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca, 38<sup>th</sup> District and Chair, Committee on Immigration**. “We must invest in our City’s infrastructure—from building elevation to storm water management—to ensure that we are prepared for the next major weather event.”

“The recent explosion in East Harlem has made clear that prioritizing sustainable infrastructures must be at the forefront of any conversation surrounding investments in the City’s future. I commend the de Blasio administration for the funds they have dedicated to infrastructure improvements and the preservation of affordable housing, but call upon them to further integrate an agenda of sustainability into their overall budgetary plans,” said **Council Member Mark Levine, 7<sup>th</sup> District and Chair, Committee on Parks and Recreation**. “Further, the Parks Committee looks forward to engaging the de Blasio administration in leveraging capital to repair our parks and beaches still struggling in the aftermath of Sandy.”

“I am supportive of the Mayor and his efforts to not only create and preserve affordable housing units, but to integrate comprehensive plans that will improve the quality of life for all City residents in the process. In my district, where green and open space is so scarce and as Chair of the Sanitation Committee, I value measures that promote a solution to our housing problem and is equally environmentally responsible,” said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso, of the 34<sup>th</sup> District**.

“A more equitable city includes a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods and our economy healthier and more resilient. From the Bronx to the Rockaways, we need to continue far-sighted policies and make critical investments to improve the quality of life in our communities. As chair of the Public Housing Committee, I look forward to working with the Mayor to make sure that the next generation of housing can serve as a model for forward-thinking sustainability and resiliency policies,” said **Council Member Ritchie Torres, Chair of the Committee on Public Housing**.

“More than one year after the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, the recovery and rebuilding process for many residents and small businesses in Lower Manhattan is far from over. As we look toward storm-hardening our city, we must allocate the resources needed to ensure that both new and existing infrastructure and housing is resilient, sustainable, and ready to weather any storm. I thank the New York City League of Conservation Voters for continually raising New York’s environmental consciousness,” said **Council Member Margaret S. Chin, (District 1 - Lower Manhattan)**.

**Councilmember Eric Ulrich (R-Rockaway)** said “If we have learned anything from Hurricane Sandy, it is that New York City must be better prepared for an extreme weather event. The time is now to lead the way on these measures and commit to making resiliency and sustainability a priority. We have a responsibility to every New Yorker to make sure that the City does everything in its power to prepare for the next storm. I am proud to

stand with my colleagues and the New York League of Conservation Voters as we work towards the goal of a more resilient and sustainable city.”

“WE ACT believes the mayor has an opportunity to implement a two-pronged climate resiliency plan that is focused not simply on design guidelines but also prioritizes the strengthening of human resilience and social capital in vulnerable affected communities,” said **Peggy Shepard, Executive Director, WE ACT For Environmental Justice.**

**Building Congress President Richard T. Anderson said:** “For New York City to remain competitive, we must continue to invest in the roads, bridges, schools, mass transit and other infrastructure that underpins our economy. We must also keep in mind that what worked reasonably well in the past is simply not good enough today. Superstorm Sandy exposed troublesome vulnerabilities in the City’s major energy, transportation and infrastructure systems. These issues can only be addressed by incorporating far greater standards for redundancy and resiliency in our capital programs.”

“Combating air pollution and its detrimental effects requires that we have a strong sustainability plan in place,” said **Jeff Seyler, President & CEO of the American Lung Association of the Northeast.** “It’s imperative that the de Blasio administration continue moving forward to ensure New Yorkers are breathing healthy air. Once again this will put New York ahead of the rest when it comes to protecting public health.”

“A resilient city supports walking, biking, and transit infrastructure and sustainable development clustered around rail and bus stations. New York City’s budget must include capital investments above and beyond what has been typically allocated for these mobility options. It is up to Mayor de Blasio and the New York City Council to ensure that it does. Resiliency cannot be achieved by shortchanging these investments,” said **Veronica Vanterpool, Executive Director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign.**

“With over 200,000 units of new affordable housing planned over the next 10 years, Mayor Bill de Blasio has made it clear that affordable housing for low income residents is an integral component of his promise to tackle economic inequality in the city. The Mayor can further enhance this commitment by taking steps to ensure that these buildings incorporate best practices in sustainability and resiliency,” said **Rory Christian, New York Director of Clean Energy, Environmental Defense Fund.**

“Advancing a housing and education agenda must be accompanied by the infrastructure investments that will sustain and enhance a livable, growing city,” said **Denise Richardson, Managing Director of the General Contractors Association of New York.** “Our city cannot provide opportunities if it is plagued by crumbling streets, decaying water and utility infrastructure and neglected parks. We call on the Mayor to focus his administration on making the infrastructure investments that will sustain New York for future generations.”

“There are many ways in which advancing sustainability, resiliency and infrastructure programs can also address the Mayor’s goals of equity and justice for all New Yorkers. What better time than the next 100 days will there be for the DeBlasio Administration to begin building a more sustainable, resilient and equitable city?” said **Eric A. Goldstein, NYC Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.**

“In the next 100 days, Mayor de Blasio has a concrete opportunity to underscore his commitment to improving transit service across New York City by doubling his capital commitment to the MTA. The Straphangers Campaign urges him to go one step further and ensure that increased capital funds go to expanding Bus Rapid Transit projects,” said **NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign Coordinator Cate Contino.**

“The election is over but mother nature always has the last vote. The de Blasio administration is tasked with the critical job of making our coastal city resilient in the age of sea level rise and at the same time allow connection to our magnificent harbor and waterways. We look forward to helping in any way we can,” said **Roland Lewis, President & CEO of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance.**

“Architecture plays a significant role in the everyday life of all New Yorkers. Superstorm Sandy revealed major vulnerabilities in the city’s transportation and infrastructure, housing, critical and commercial buildings, and waterfront. The American Institute of Architects New York Chapter calls on the de Blasio administration to implement these next steps to build back better and smarter to withstand the next extreme weather event,” said **Emma Pattiz, Policy Coordinator of American Institute of Architects New York.**

“Safer and more reliable transportation should be at the heart of the City’s sustainability agenda,” said **Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives.** “By transforming our most dangerous corridors with "Complete Street" redesigns that include infrastructure for pedestrians, bicycles and buses, and by stepping up enforcement to deter the most deadly traffic violations, we can make our city safer, more resilient and more sustainable.”

“Natural Resources Protective Association supports the clarion call of NYLCV and endorsing organizations across the city to request Mayor de Blasio enact real sustainably and mass transit initiatives for our city. Climate Change and its effects are real, damaging, and harrowing. The quicker we have real sustainability, the better we will be prepared as a city for extreme weather events,” said **James Scarcella, President of Natural Resources Protective Association.**

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