

MR. BLOOMBERG: Hi. I'm Mike Bloomberg. Thanks for taking the time to watch the City's new Video Voter Guide.

I came to New York 40 years ago with loans to pay off, but also with dreams for the future. With a lot of hard work, and plenty of luck, the small business I started succeeded beyond my wildest dreams.

Four years ago, I ran for Mayor because I wanted to make this a City of opportunity for all New Yorkers, just like it was for me. But in the weeks and months after 9/11, our future looked pretty bleak. We faced a recession, a fiscal crisis, and new security threats; tough challenges, but we met them head-on. We came together and brought New York City back.

Are all our problems solved? No, of course not. But let's not forget how far we've come and how united we remain.

By now, you know the principles that guide me: independence, honesty, hard work. I owe the special interests nothing. I answer to you, the people of New York, and only to you.

I believe elected officials should be held accountable for the performance of government, including

the school system. For decades, politicians turned their backs on the tough challenge of reforming the schools and our children paid the price. When I came into office, we succeeded in abolishing the wasteful Board of Education and directed those resources into the classroom. We've increased school funding by \$2 1/2 billion. We've raised standards, ended social promotion, reduced class size, improved safety and discipline and created new programs for struggling students.

As a result of all of our efforts, students have made record increases in their test scores. Graduation rates, after remaining stagnant for 20 years, are now increasing, and we're closing the intolerable achievement gap that has existed among races and ethnicities.

Fixing our public school system won't happen overnight, but after decades of failure, we're now making real progress.

We're also winning the war on crime. Over the last four years, we've cut crime nearly 20% in all five boroughs. When I took office, no one thought that was possible.

We've also focused on the threat of terrorism, assigning 1,000 officers to protect the city and deploying

detectives in cities around the world to gather intelligence. Today, New York is the safest big city in America and I'm determined to keep making us even safer.

I've worked hard to build a more compassionate and livable city, too. During the fiscal crisis, we didn't cut core social services, we protected them. We didn't cut hospitals, we invested in them: \$1.3 billion to modernize and expand our health care facilities. And today, one million more New Yorkers have health insurance than four years ago.

We're also investing \$3 billion to build new affordable housing for more than 200,000 New Yorkers, the biggest affordable housing plan in 20 years.

Finally, let's talk about jobs. When I took office, our economy was hemorrhaging jobs. But we created a five-borough economic development strategy that is creating new jobs in all communities and helping small businesses grow. We've re-zoned old manufacturing areas to create new housing, parks, and business districts, stimulating private investment and creating new economic opportunities.

In Lower Manhattan, \$10 billion is being spent on new construction projects that are creating a vibrant,

24-7 community, with new schools and parks. And, we've helped more minority and women-owned businesses apply for government contracts by eliminating red tape and streamlining the application process.

Today, as a result of all our efforts, over 50,000 more New Yorkers have jobs than a year ago, and the unemployment rate hasn't been this low since 1988.

I'm asking for your support on November 8th to keep our City moving in the right direction. Together, we can secure New York's future as the greatest city in the world, and the safest big city in America.

Thank you.