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Mayor de Blasio Signs Package of Life-Saving Traffic Safety Bills

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Video available at: <http://youtu.be/k90Rz3dnzqg>

Legislation will enhance safety efforts by the DOT, NYPD and TLC and further administration's goal of eliminating traffic fatalities

Bills signed at recently upgraded Queens intersection, where 8-year-old Noshat Nahian was struck and killed in December, one of dozens of projects making streets safer

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today visited the site of a newly redesigned intersection in Queens to sign a package of vital legislation that will make streets safer across the five boroughs.

Joined by Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, NYPD Chief of Transportation Thomas Chan, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, and members of the City Council, the Mayor signed 11 bills supporting the City's Vision Zero initiative by enhancing traffic data collection and enforcement efforts, codifying safety engineering commitments, and updating the city's legal code to enhance penalties for dangerous driving. The Mayor also praised legislative leaders in Albany for passing legislation last week that empowers the City to lower its default speed limit from 30 to 25 miles per hour, a measure that will help reduce chronic speeding

—a leading factor in fatal traffic crashes in New York City.

“We have promised the people of this city that we will use every tool we have to make streets safer. Today is another step on our path to fulfilling that promise, and sparing more families the pain of losing a son, a daughter, or a parent in a senseless tragedy. There is much more work ahead, both here in the five boroughs and up in Albany. But today, we thank the families, advocates, and City Council members who have taken up this cause and helped us better protect our fellow New Yorkers,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“These bills are going to go a long way toward keeping New Yorkers safe on the streets. This bill signing is the culmination of countless public forums, hearings chaired by Council Transportation Committee Chairman Ydanis Rodriguez, and public input in all five boroughs and is a process New Yorkers can be proud of. I would like to thank Mayor de Blasio for his leadership, along with Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Police Commissioner William J. Bratton, and other members of the administration for making street safety a priority,” said **City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**.

“We hope that this step today will go a long way toward bringing our city to Vision Zero,” said **Transportation Committee Chair Ydanis Rodriguez**. “However, we also understand that this is just a step, and we have much more work to do. Mayor de Blasio’s decision to make street safety his top transportation initiative early in his first term is commendable, and I thank his administration for all their work and outreach over the past few months. We must keep up these efforts to truly change our city’s culture when it comes to traffic violence.”

“The NYPD is committed to ensuring the safety of all New Yorkers at all times. Whether in their homes and places of business, or on the streets and highways of our city, we are committed to keeping people safe. We will continue to deploy our resources to best address those things that put the public at risk. This commitment applies to crime as well as traffic safety. The NYPD commends the City Council for their continued support of the Vision Zero initiatives,” said **Police Commissioner Bill Bratton**.

“In January, I stood with the Mayor and committed NYCDOT to help implement Vision Zero. Five months later, I am proud that DOT has already completed important safety projects on Northern Boulevard and throughout the city,” said **Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “We now stand ready to quickly implement the new life-saving City Council safety measures that the Mayor has signed into law today.”

“Holding a TLC license should be synonymous with safe, responsible behavior, and we have appropriately high expectations for our professional drivers, most of whom have safe driving records. Thanks to Mayor de Blasio’s leadership, and that of our partners in the Council, a Vision Zero further empowered by these new laws will help us take the few bad apples off the road, and hold them accountable for their reckless actions,” said **Taxi & Limousine Commission Chair Meera Joshi**.

The package of traffic safety bills signed by the Mayor today are:

- Intro 43A: Requires DOT to study left turns and produce a report every five years

- Intro 46A: Requires DOT to respond to address major traffic signal issues within 24 hours
- Intro 80A: Requires DOT to produce a report on work zone safety guidelines on bridges
- Intro 140A: Requires DOT to install seven Neighborhood Slow Zones in 2014 and 2015 and lower speeds to 15-20 mph near 50 schools annually
- Intro 167A: Prohibits stunt behaviors on motorcycles
- Intro 168A: Requires DOT to study arterial roadways and produce a report every five years
- Intro 171A (“Cooper’s Law”): Requires TLC to suspend a driver involved in a crash in which a person is critically injured or dies, and where the driver receives a summons for any related traffic violation
- Intro 174A: Requires TLC to review crashes where critical injury or death resulted
- Intro 238A: Establishes penalties for vehicles that fail to yield to pedestrians and bicyclists
- Intro 272A: Amends the TLC Critical Driver and Persistent Violator programs to add points to TLC and DMV licenses
- Intro 277A: Requires TLC to report quarterly crash data involving taxi and limousine commission licensed vehicles

Portions of the bill package were sponsored by Council Members Maria del Carmen Arroyo, Inez Barron, Fernando Cabrera, Margaret Chin, Andrew Cohen, Costa Constantinides, Elizabeth Crowley, Daniel Dromm, Rafael Espinal, Julissa Ferreras, Vincent Gentile, Vanessa L. Gibson, David G. Greenfield, Corey Johnson, Andy King, Ben Kallos, Peter Koo, Karen Koslowitz, Brad Lander, Rory Lancman, Stephen Levin, Mark Levine, Carlos Menchaca, Rosie Mendez, Annabel Palma, Antonio Reynoso, Donovan Richards, Ydanis Rodriguez, Deborah Rose, Helen Rosenthal, Ritchie Torres, Eric Ulrich, James Vacca, Paul Vallone, Jimmy Van Bramer, Mark Weprin, Jumaane D. Williams, and Ruben Wills.

“The passage of today’s bills will bring us closer to making Vision Zero a reality in every neighborhood in the City of New York,” said **Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer**. “I am proud to have worked closely with my colleagues in the City Council to produce a comprehensive package of legislation that effectively helps put an end to an epidemic of traffic fatalities and will reduce the amount of serious injuries our city has experienced for far too long. These laws will also will help reduce reckless driving and speeding through our local neighborhoods. Traffic safety is an issue our City takes seriously. Through this legislation, we will make our streets safer for all pedestrians, motorists and cyclists alike.”

“I am proud to see our City taking an important step today to improve traffic and pedestrian safety implementing the first comprehensive approach to make New York City streets safer. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his leadership in this initiative. I am honored to see the traffic control signals legislation I passed at the City Council being enacted today as part of the Vision Zero legislative package,” said **Council Member Fernando Cabrera**.

“Vision Zero means making our roadways safe not just for those who walk, ride and drive on them, but for those who work on them, as well. The Bridge Workzone Safety Act is a big step toward protecting those who already do the hazardous work of maintaining and repairing our bridges from the added danger of vehicular traffic,” said **Council Member Rory Lancman**.

“Today, the City has reaffirmed its commitment to safer streets, and I am proud that Cooper’s Law

is a part of the Vision Zero initiative. With Cooper's Law, the Taxi & Limousine Commission has the tool it needs to protect New Yorkers from reckless taxi drivers who kill or cause a critical injury by breaking traffic laws. These drivers have proven they no longer deserve the privilege of a TLC license, and the penalty they will now receive—losing their TLC license—falls in line with common sense," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

"With the stroke of the Mayor's pen today, we are making New York City a safer place to drive, bike and walk. All of these laws will help to significantly reduce the number of traffic collisions and put us well on our way to reaching our goal of zero fatalities. I am proud to have two pieces of legislation in this package, one which requires that crash data involving TLC vehicles be reported and available to the public, and the other which ensures that collisions involving a TLC-licensed driver that result in critical injury or death will always be investigated by the commission and never fall through the cracks. I look forward to continuing to work with Mayor Bill de Blasio, Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito to make our streets safer," said **Council Member James Vacca**.

Before the bill signing, the Mayor walked through a recently completed project at 61st Street where 8-year-old Noshat Nahian was struck and killed in December. The improvements include two new pedestrian islands to shorten crossing distances across Northern, more pedestrian-only crossing time and enhanced crosswalks and parking regulations to provide greater visibility. DOT is working with the community on a larger project that will bring similar improvements to the stretch of Northern between 62nd and 102nd streets later this year. Northern Boulevard will soon become one of the first 13 Arterial Slow Zones, with the speed limit lowered from 30 to 25 mph, paired with enhanced signage and greater enforcement efforts.

The NYPD and DOT are also co-hosting a continuing series of nine workshops across all five boroughs in partnership with the City Council to allow the public to learn more about the Vision Zero blueprint and contribute to the development of safety plans for each borough. Through that engagement process, agencies have documented 13,000 safety improvement suggestions and comments since last month.

For more information on all of the administration's traffic safety efforts, please visit www.nyc.gov/visionzero.

pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov

(212) 788-2958