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# Mayor de Blasio Signs Legislation to Protect Workers in Commercial Waste Industry

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**NEW YORK**—Today, Mayor de Blasio held hearings for and signed three pieces of legislation to protect workers in the commercial hauling industry: Intro. 1329-A gives BIC the authority to register unions operating in the trade waste industry; Intro. 1368-A requires trade waste companies to provide workers' rights information to certain employees; and Intro. 1373-A requires BIC to refer labor and wage violations to appropriate state or federal authorities.

"This package of bills will allow the City to better protect workers and the public from irresponsible companies who put profit before people. Along with our commercial waste zones proposal, this legislation takes another step toward increasing the safety of the waste management industry and protecting workers from abuse," said **Mayor de Blasio**.

**Int. 1329-A** sponsored by Council Member Reynoso gives BIC the authority to register unions who represent employees who are directly involved in the collection, removal, transportation or disposal of trade waste. Names of all union officers and agents will be disclosed to the City, which will help ensure the trade waste industry remains free from organized crime and other corruption.

**Int. 1368-A** sponsored by Council Member Moya requires trade waste companies to provide workers' rights information to employees in the trade waste industry. Under this law, BIC will require all companies post and share information about workers' rights, including the maximum number of hours employees are allowed to work in a 24-hour period, the minimum wage they must be paid, safety training requirements, safety equipment required, and information about how to file a complaint, including the list of agencies a worker can approach to file such complaint. All this information will also be posted on BIC's website.

**Int. 1373-A** sponsored by Council Member Reynoso requires BIC to refer labor and wage violations to appropriate state or federal authorities. The bill takes effect immediately after it becomes law. This bill codifies BIC's current practice of referring cases of wage theft or other labor violations to appropriate state or federal authorities. In the past, BIC has worked with agencies such as the U.S. Department of Labor, the United States Attorney's Offices, the FBI, and the Office of the Attorney General of the State of New York to investigate these claims and to take appropriate action.

"Worker abuses are unacceptable and this Administration is cracking down on bad actors in the trade waste industry. We have been working closely with the City Council on this legislation to give BIC more oversight of trade waste unions and protect workers," said **Business Integrity Commission Commissioner Daniel Brownell**.

"Out of all of the poor labor practices within the private carting industry, one of the most egregious is the prevalence of sham unions," said **Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Chair of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**. "Sham unions function as arms of a company's ownership,

denying workers the right to organize and advocate autonomously on behalf of their own interests. Furthermore, a number of these sham unions have officers with ties to organized crime. My legislation will authorize the Business Integrity Commission (BIC) to oversee and investigate union officers associated with the private carting industry. This will close a gap in BIC's authority and better enable them to pursue organized crime and root out sham unions from the private carting industry. Thank you to Speaker Corey Johnson, my Council Colleagues, the Business Integrity Commission and the advocates and reporters who have fought alongside me to transform this industry."

"Worker's rights are a fundamental privilege promised to every man and woman who clocks in for work. But for the private sanitation workers charged with picking up the majority of this city's commercial waste, it's not just their business that can be dirty -- many of their employers are as well. The private carting industry is littered with companies that consider workers rights open for dispute, some going so far as to dispatch sham unions into their ranks like Trojan horses, to do their bidding and provide them cover. This bill will take the necessary step requiring the city and their employers educate workers about their rights, empowering them to inhibit greedy employers and these sham unions. I thank my colleagues for supporting our attempts to rein in these unscrupulous employers and to the mayor for signing these measures into law today," said **Council Member Francisco Moya**.

Collecting and transporting trade waste, particularly in New York City, is a dangerous and strenuous job. The collection trucks are huge and must share the road with many other motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians. As a result, this Administration has made safety in the industry and on the City's streets a priority. BIC continues to promote the universal trade waste safety manual that was created 2018 along with partner agencies and members of the trade waste industry.

BIC has prioritized traffic safety for the trade waste industry, conducting a number of joint enforcement operations with the NYPD targeting unlawful operation of trade waste trucks. Since last summer, the NYPD and BIC have conducted approximately 15 joint operations, in which BIC issued more than 80 administrative violations to the companies, for issues such as undisclosed drivers, commingling recyclables with garbage and license plates not properly affixed to the trucks. 19 unsafe trade-waste trucks were put out of service on the spot and towed.

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