

This Is Your City – Medium

Mayor Bill de Blasio's 2017 State of The City Address, as delivered at the Apollo Theater in Harlem

I want to welcome you all to the Apollo Theater.

It is a joy to be here with you. I want to thank everyone at the Apollo Theater for welcoming us and hosting us. Now, I want you to know I just rubbed the Tree of Hope, so I'm feeling very good about things tonight.

Here is what I love about the Apollo Theater—it's not just that it's famous, it's not just that it's quintessentially New York. It's a symbol to people all around the world of how great this city is. I love the Apollo Theater because if you get up here on the stage, whether you are wealthy or not, whether you are connected or not, whether you are famous or not, you had an opportunity on this stage. It was for everyone. And what is more New York than that?

I want to thank all of the leaders are here, all the elected officials—our Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; our Public Advocate Tish James; Comptroller Scott Stringer; our Borough Presidents; our District Attorneys; members of Congress; members of State Legislature; members of the City Council. Let's thank them all for all they do for New York City.

Well, I think I should now thank the love of my life and our First Lady. I want to thank her for all she has done for this city, but I particularly want to thank her for having made it her mission to break down the stigma that surrounds mental health. She believed that if we had a different conversation in this city, that if people in need could actually come forward and talk about their problems without fear of being shunned to the side, without feeling like there was something wrong with them, that we could actually help a lot more people, help a lot more families, we could avoid so many of the things that plague our society if we could just listen and respect people who have a problem. It's just part of human life.

So, she created Thrive NYC and it's changing things all over this city.

Now, if Chirlane were standing here again, she would want me to remind you that any New Yorker who needs help with mental health services, whatever the challenge is, or even someone who wants to reach out on behalf of a friend or loved one, all you have to do is call a real simple number, 1-888-NYC WELL.

So, you'll remember it we're going to all say it in unison please—1-888-NYC WELL.
We've already achieved something this evening.

Finally I want to say to my wonderful wife and my partner in all things—honey, I remembered that tomorrow is Valentine's day. Will you be my Valentine? She said yes, everyone—that's a relief.

Mayor Bill de Blasio and First Lady Chirlane McCray at the world-famous Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

We have some very special leaders here with us and they deserve our special praise. A man who came out of Harlem, went all the way to City Hall and helped make this a better and safer city. Mayor David Dinkins, thank you.

Another man born and raised in Harlem, his voice was heard all over the world, literally, not just because he was a great artist, a great musician, but because he was one of the preeminent voices of conscience for the last half century. I'm proud to say we could name a whole lot of things after him, but we started by naming a library not far from here—West 115th Street—named it after the legendary Harry Belafonte.

He is 90 years old and has no suggestion at all of slowing down. You came at the right time, Harry. We need you again now.

I want to thank someone you heard from. He's done an outstanding job as the chair of my Clergy Advisory Council and one of the great clergy leaders of the city. Pastor Mike Walrond, thank you.

And I want to thank a man who is all heart. And you heard it from this stage, he patrols the streets of this city, carries on a great legacy of his father, and brings with him in all he does the love that typified the work of his father. Let us thank Sergeant Conor McDonald. These two individuals, Pastor Mike Walrond and Sergeant Conor McDonald represent a lot of hope for the future of New York City. I want you to stand together so we can thank you and applaud you both.

Now I want to ask you all to stand in the most rousing standing ovation for

Detective Steven McDonald and all he did for this city, please.

Thank you.

New Yorkers listen to Mayor Bill de Blasio's 2017 State of the City address on February 13th, 2017. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

You know, we praise great leaders, but we also need to praise every-day New Yorkers. I know they're up in the balcony here. Some you saw in the video, they showed us extraordinary faith. They believed this place could give them opportunity. And they did all that was asked of them to realize that dream. That is part of what has made New York City such an extraordinary place—the openness, the possibility. The fact that anyone had a shot here is one of the most beautiful things about this place, more beautiful than any of our skyscrapers or museums. That beautiful reality is at risk. I want to talk to you about that today because we have so much we have to do.

People—so many people in this city are afraid that they cannot stay in the city they love. They're afraid they will not be able to afford the very place they have given so much to. And we have to talk about the city in new and different ways because all those wonderful people you saw in that video, they represent millions and millions of New Yorkers. And all those millions of New Yorkers need to know this is still their city. That's all of our jobs to make that true.

You know, last year we showed a similar video. There's a beautiful moment in it. Some of you may remember a very energetic woman from Brooklyn named Luz Santiago. She's got a fan club here. I watched the video like seven times and I teared up every time because she talked about the change in Brooklyn. She said the Brooklyn of today—the Brooklyn of the art galleries and the cafes—that's good. But she said a simple statement. She said, but this is my Brooklyn too.

In that video you saw the happy ending. Luz Santiago got affordable housing through the initiatives of this city and she will be in that affordable housing, something she can truly afford for decades to come. But I remember another story around the same time. I was at a homeless shelter on the Lower East Side. I met a woman who told me that just months earlier she had been evicted from her apartment. She had been renting the same apartment for almost 40 years. And when she told me the details, it was quite clear she had been wrongly evicted. I felt almost a physical pain for her, but also for our city. I felt if only we could have gotten there sooner, if only we had met her sooner we could have kept her in that place that was hers. In those two stories are two different realities and a choice we have to make—whether we're going to look away in the face of crisis or whether we're going to act in time so more and more New Yorkers can call this magical place their home.

Mayor Bill de Blasio delivers the 2017 State of the City address in Harlem, New York. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

This affordability crisis threatens who we are, threatens the very soul of this city. And people have told me so many times with such passion they feel their own city slipping away. We came here three years ago into this administration working with this City Council. So many people I've had the privilege to serve with, so many dedicated public servants. We came here with a very clear understanding, we have to heal some wounds of the past. We have to right some wrongs. We have to fight an inequality that had grown. New Yorkers are waiting to hear from us confirmation on what this can expect going forward. My message to all New Yorkers tonight is very simple and I hope clear. This is your city. It's your city. You made it what it is. It's our job to protect that.

I want to tell you up front this will not be a traditional State of the City address in the sense that I am not going to go through topic after topic. There's not going to be a lot of bells and whistles. I'm not going to try to tell you every fact, every statistic. It won't go on as long as it's been in the past. Are you okay with that?

The people have spoken.

There are some very serious topics that I'll tell you up front I'm going to speak to and my administration is going to speak to in just the next weeks, but not tonight.

We have a lot we have to say and a lot we have to do on homelessness. That will come in the coming days. We have to address head on the challenge of opioids gripping the city and this country. You will hear more about that very soon. Because we're so much a victim of our own success with tourism and business booming, we also have a greater congestion problem on our streets than we've seen in a long time. We're going to talk about that in the coming weeks as well.

But tonight—tonight is a speech about the lives of our people and what we're doing about it, about the fact that people are so fundamentally challenged by the affordability crisis that this city simply must do more and must do it quickly.

So many people love this city. But here is a blunt truth. They love it, but that doesn't mean it's easy to live here. Right? For a lot of seniors, this is not an easy place to live. For a lot of young people just starting out, it's not so easy. For folks struggling to make ends meet, this can be a punishing environment.

So we understand that the affordability crisis is a fundamental and a profound problem. It's deep, but it's not complex. The math is real simple. Housing costs kept rising and rising, but incomes didn't. From 1990 to 2014—almost a quarter century—the average rent in New York City increased 22 percent. That is adjusted for inflation. 22 percent real impact on people's lives. Over an even longer period, real wages only went up one percent in this city and around the country. That's what went wrong. That's why people are struggling. And we have to respond to that kind of profound crisis with even stronger solutions. I'm very proud to say we have the biggest affordable housing plan in the history of the city, but I also have to tell you we have to go even farther.

Everything we've been doing so far is necessary. I believe it's right. But it's not sufficient. And it's not just enough to, every chance we get, help someone stay in their apartment or stop an eviction or build a new affordable apartment—that's not enough. We have to now focus on the other half of the equation. We have to drive up incomes.

That means actually helping people to get the kind of jobs that allow you to afford to live in New York City—good-paying jobs.

And this new initiative, this new focus on creating more and more good paying jobs, this will be the new front line in the battle to keep New York City affordable. We've got to do all of these things at once. We've got to solve the housing problem every chance we get. We've got to solve the income problem every chance we get.

And let's think about what that means now. In the context—in these speeches, the typical thing to do is to have one line where you say the State of the City is X. I could have attempted to do that, but I thought it would obscure the meaning. So, I'm going to give you a few examples from some other areas that I think clarify how well we're doing, some things that matter very much, but how far we have to travel on the topic of affordability.

If you said to me talk about the State of the City in terms of public safety, I would say, I'm proud to say to you the State of the City is we are safer than we have ever been. And let us thank the men and women of the NYPD, and all of their community partners in the emergency management system, all the neighborhood patrols, precinct council members, everyone that works together with the NYPD to have achieved this extraordinary success.

The era of neighborhood policing has begun. The era of stop and frisk has ended.

And over these next three years—a new reality in this city—everywhere you go people want transparency, accountability. They want to feel there's fairness. We have a historic chance to achieve a kind of fairness that no other place has done before. We have all of the tools, all that we need to. Greatest police force in the world. People all over the city want to work with that police force to make it work, make it safer, make it fair. And by the end of 2019, we'll have it. Every patrol officer in New York City will be wearing a body camera.

Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill stands for the national anthem during Monday night's State of the City address at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

I hope you were as inspired as I was when we watched on the video Officer Keicho Phillips in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. To see the warmth he created in the community, to see the community come forward to their police officers, their protectors, that's what we're building in New York City. That's a clear answer about the state of our city.

If you said to me, let's talk about education, I would say, well, the state of our schools is stronger than many of us ever could have imagined. We announced on Friday, the highest graduation rate in the history of New York City. 72.6 percent of our students graduated last year.

And for all of you like me who saw the bad old days, we also saw the lowest drop out rate in the history of the city, 8.5 percent. The disparities are finally starting to close. There's more progress to be had. And now we have some of the tools we always dreamed of. We have pre-K for all our kids—70,000 kids—including one of the most famous pre-K graduates now, Gershwin.

We have advanced placement courses going in not just to our elite high schools or those that have been most privileged. Advanced placement courses will be in every single one of our high schools. You saw Javeria Amir from Morris Park in the Bronx. That's an example of what you're going to be seeing in high schools all over the city. Now, let's take this opportunity to thank the educators, the teachers, the

administrators, every one who works in our schools to make them great.

So, if I closed the speech there, that would be lovely. But I want to be real with you. We've come a long way on the topic I started with, affordability.

We're doing a lot of the right things. But if you said what's the State of the City in terms of affordability, I'd say our city and who we are is threatened by an affordability crisis. And I would also say something that's very human, and everyone in this room probably knows either from your own experience or from people you've met or people you've tried to help. If you can't make ends meet, then all the other issues in your life are over shadowed. It's hard to think about your health, hard to think about your education, it's hard to think about anything if you can't pay the rent.

I'm saying this to you because I have heard it from so many New Yorkers for so long. People come up to me on the street, on the subway, tell me their story. It's clear that this is a challenge. It's not just about folks who are struggling the most. Working class folks, working full time struggling to make ends meet. Folks who thought they were solidly middle class struggling to make ends meet. That's what we're up against. And I want to be very clear. This administration will not accept that status quo. This city is better than that. And we have to go farther.

So I say to any New Yorker who is struggling to pay the bills, to anyone fighting to stay in your own neighborhood, anyone who is just starting their retirement and they're not sure if they're going to have enough to keep going, I say again very simply this is your city, and we are here for you.

I have to tell you, this feeling I have about being both honest about the crisis and resolute about our ability to address it comes from a deeply held belief that the simple role of government is to respond to people's every day lives, to constantly show that we can be there for people, that we can do something to change their lives. I have to tell you that so much of what we've seen this last year, so much of what we're talking about in this city and this country honestly stems from the fact that for too long people felt their lives weren't seen, their pain wasn't responded to, their needs weren't met. They felt that here, they felt that all over the country. They felt that when they looked at Washington D.C. and a lot of people voted in 2016 based on a pain that was very economic, very real. Because they hadn't seen answers.

Now, the sad reality is, they're unfortunately seeing the exact opposite of what many of them thought they were voting for. Right? They're seeing an effort to take away their health insurance. That's not what they signed up for. They're seeing an effort to give tax cuts to the wealthy and big corporations. Plan to deregulate Wall Street and risk another economic crisis. That is not what people signed up for all over this country. And I want to be blunt. That includes a lot of people who voted for Donald Trump. That's not what they were voting for. They were voting for an answer. But what they're seeing now is not the answer they wanted.

Mayor Bill de Blasio delivers the State of the City address at the world-famous Apollo Theater on February 13, 2017. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

And this city, we will join with cities all over the country. We'll join with states all over the country in a common cause to protect people from the kinds of things that will actually make their pain even worse. We're not going to let the progress we have made slip away. We're not going to. There's a lot of people in the city right now who fear for what's happening, and they fear that Washington won't have their back, that Washington is against them. I want to say clearly to all of them, New York City will have your back.

We're going to do things a different way here in this city. We're not going to give tax breaks to those who are already doing well. We're going to ask them to pay a little more to help people who need a hand. We're not going to put money into investing in those who are already financially secure. We're going to invest in every day New Yorkers. We're not going to try and take health insurance away from people. In fact, we're going to do all we can to get more and more people signed up for health insurance in this city.

And it's a reminder that this city and all over the country—an ability to have a positive impact on the lives of their residents than Washington can have. The actions on the ground here, we make decisions for our own people. We protect their interests. We provide for their needs. We can't forget that, no matter how challenged we feel.

So, now, in this city we have to deal with the fact that too many people don't know how to make ends meet. We have to be very clear that we understand it, we feel it, and we will respond to it. That's because of the simple phrase I used before. The message to the people of the city is this is your city. It's not something that belongs to those who happen to be most advantaged. It belongs to the people who made it great. It belongs to the people who built it. It belongs to the people who gave it its character, its culture, its heart and its soul.

Now, we have experienced just like I talked about folks all over the country knew what it was like to not have their challenges addressed, their pain answered. We went through that great recession hit New York hard. There weren't enough answers. And when we came into office three years ago it was so clear the effects of the great recession were being felt deeply by millions of every day people. This city had to do things differently. When I took office we had 370,000 city workers who didn't have a contract. On top of all they had been through with the recession, they didn't even have a contract. They were waiting on money owed to them from years earlier. Weren't making as a city investments for so many things we needed to keep growing in our infrastructure. We weren't making investments in people, minority and women owned businesses weren't getting enough opportunity from the City of New York. There were lots of people who had borne the brunt of rising rents, evictions had gotten more and more common. There were people who went through the pain of Sandy and didn't see their lives being put back together. There were homeowners who saw constantly rising water bills, there were small business owners who saw constant ever increasing fines. And so much government could do that wasn't being done.

And I believed that we could create a different kind of government that would actually answer people's problems. I took inspiration, the greatest example ever — my greatest predecessor Fiorello LaGuardia showed us how this city could answer people's needs through the Great Depression. Lift them up, reach them — so, that became the vision of how do we do it in our time. Let me give you some facts.

Today, in New York City, those 370,000 city workers I referred to earlier, now 99.1 percent of them have a contract. They have security that they deserve and respect they deserve. This is a great opportunity to — just a few days ago, mother nature once again threw us a curve ball. It's a great opportunity to thank our sanitation workers. I'll never forget, I went to a garage one time right before a snow storm and one of the sanitation workers looked at me, looked like a scene from an action movie. A big smile on his face, and a kind of swagger. The snow was pounding away. It was going to be really bad. He said to me this is our time to shine.

You did shine, once again. We knew this city needed to be built up. We made a decision to invest a lot more. A lot more in our infrastructure, a lot more in the things people need. Families need more school seats, more affordable housing, more roads repaved. We made a \$90 billion commitment over 10 years to build this city up, to do the things that weren't getting done.

I told you so many of our minority owned women businesses didn't get an opportunity. You saw the powerful example of Celeste Ramirez in the Bronx. Celeste is not just, to use the classic phrase, a job creator. She is a neighborhood job creator. She has created jobs for people right here in the five boroughs. That is why this city now has a clear goal, 30 percent of all contracts to MWBEs.

I mentioned Sandy before. It's not a pretty story. It's a very tragic story followed by too many examples of government not getting it right. My administration, we made our missteps too. But we got there, and at least to be able to serve thousands of families. There's more to do. But I'm proud of this fact. We were committed to making sure that people from neighborhoods affected by Sandy had a chance to get the work in the recovery because they've been through a lot already. They deserve a chance to get back on their feet. I'm proud to say those recovery efforts, 4,212 New Yorkers got good paying union jobs.

We knew we had to go at what was one of the most central challenges, the rent getting higher and higher. For the last two years, combined two and-a-half million New Yorkers of rent freeze something we never saw before in New York City. You saw Sue Peters from the Upper West Side and you heard what it meant for her, a chance for a little stability as she starts her retirement, a chance to stay here in the place she loves. I have to be very clear with you that we believe this was the right and fair thing to do. But that decision is now under attack by the landlord lobby. The effect of their effort could be to take away that opportunity for seniors like Sue. We don't intend to let that happen. We intend to beat them in a court of law.

We saw by increasing over the last few years the help we gave to tenants and some of the areas suffering the most profound development pressures, we focused on some places where there was a real unfair and unscrupulous effort to illegally evict tenants. I met one of them. Maria Medina up in the Bronx had a very powerful story of having taken in her grandchild who suffered from disabilities, having gone to extra mile for her family, having done the kind of thing we would all wish we would experience from our own families and friends, did the right thing. And then she found herself facing an illegal eviction. I'm proud to say our public engagement unit stepped in, got her the lawyer she deserved, and Maria is home with her family tonight. And because of that effort alone we've seen a 24 percent decrease in evictions in New York City. I mentioned all the other folks who are suffering from costs going up, unfair burdens being placed on them. You saw in the video Karen Davis and Ritchie Roth from Staten Island. They talked about their home and family and the difference a little more would mean to them. They're the kind of people who inspired us to change the way we do something really fundamental, our water bills. Because for years and years the City of New York was making New Yorkers pay for things that weren't water through what we call a hidden tax. We changed that and now homeowners all over the city will experience a combined \$250 million dollars a year in savings.

To make that very simple, had we not done this, the water bill you have now would have been seven percent higher. That money is going back into people's pockets. We'd like to put more in people's pockets. In fact, I proposed last summer a \$183 credit for every homeowner in New York City. 664,000 households will get \$183 in their pocket automatically. But again, that's being blocked by the landlord lobby. And we're in court, and we intend to beat them and give that money back to people who deserve it.

I mentioned small businesses have gotten fines of the most arbitrary and capricious fines you ever saw. Since we came in a 40 percent decrease in fines against our small businesses. That means they can build their business and hire more workers, which means people can afford to live here. That is how we responded just to make up for the impact of the great recession had all those years when people didn't get the help they needed. But now we have to go farther. Going farther means doing even more to protect people from the rising cost of housing.

So, I announced just days ago something that will really right the wrongs of the past. We call it a mansion tax. It's very simple. When you sell a home worth \$2 million dollars or more, you pay a little bit more. That gives us \$336 million dollars, and we use that money to provide affordable housing for 25,000 senior citizens in New York City.

Members of AARP and Live On attend the 2017 State of the City at the world-famous Apollo Theater. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

We thank our good friends from AARP and Live On. I would urge anyone who agrees with them to tweet to #mansiontax and make your views known.

You're going to hear people—when you talk about the mansion tax—you will hear people say it cannot be done.

Thank you. Yes. Wait a minute—*si se puede*.

You will hear people say it cannot be done. They will say there's no way you can get it through Albany. I'd like you to go and talk to every state legislator and ask them if they think senior citizens deserve affordable housing and then I want you to ask them if you think someone selling a home for more than two million dollars can afford a little bit for senior citizens. And I want you to ask them if they're for it or against it. Why? Because we were told over the last two years there was no way a \$15 minimum wage could get through Albany. Right? But it did. We were told there was no way paid family leave could get through Albany, but it did. We were told there was no way preK could get through Albany, but it did.

So if we speak loudly, Albany will listen.

Now, the mansion tax helps us reach 25,000 more seniors on top of the affordable housing plan to reach 500,000 New Yorkers. But while we are making progress, we can't keep losing ground to illegal evictions. For decades the deck was stacked against tenants in housing court. What do you do? It's time to reshuffle the deck. That's why we're going to go farther in providing counsel to people who are fighting unscrupulous landlords. I want to salute our colleagues in the City Council who have led the charge and I want all of New York City to know what this is going to mean. If you're a hard working New Yorker, if you're someone struggling to make ends meet, if you're someone who needs legal help, you can't afford it, and you make anywhere up to \$50,000 a year for family of four, you will now be guaranteed a lawyer to go with you into housing court.

If you're facing illegal eviction, you get a lawyer. If you're facing illegal over charge of rent you get a lawyer. If you're facing illegal harassment you get a lawyer. And beyond that, any New Yorker that makes over \$50,000, that's fine—any New Yorker will have access to free legal support and advice to help them navigate housing court and get fairness.

So we are adding these pieces together. And we believe they will reach more and more people. And we know our affordable housing plan, 200,000 apartments reaching half a million people, we know it's actually ahead of schedule. 62,000 homes have already been built or financed or preserved in three years. But we also heard from voices all over communities in the city, we heard from city council, from so many people who care deeply that we have to reach more people with that plan who need a break. We need to reach more seniors. That plan will now have 5,000 more apartments for seniors who need them.

We need to reach our veterans who have served us. That plan will now have 500 more apartments for veterans. And all in all, 10,000 apartments will now—10,000 more within that plan will be devoted to New Yorkers who make up to \$40,000 a year.

These are examples of fighting harder. But even with all that, we know we can't control the cost of housing for everyone everywhere. Let me give you the numbers, and then I'm still going to tell you there's more to do. Let me give you these numbers. I mentioned two and-a-half million people getting a rent freeze. Beyond that, another 200,000 people will benefit from the new apartments we create in

our affordable housing plan. Beyond that, we're making unprecedented investments in our housing authority, in public housing for 400,000 New Yorkers, including a billion dollars to fix the roofs in NYCHA buildings all over the city. Those three points alone add up to affordable housing for well over three million New Yorkers. That is more than the population of Chicago. But we still have to do more because there's more people to reach. So let's talk about the other side of this equation. Let's talk about jobs and quality jobs because this is where we're going to put more and more of our emphasis.

It's so important. If it's going to be your city, we have to help you keep climbing the economic ladder. We have to help you get more and more opportunity. And we understand—New Yorkers are very clear—New Yorkers are very real world. We understand what not to do. We are not going to do trickle down economics. We're not going to pour a lot of money on those who are already doing well and hope somehow it will reach the rest of us. That has already been proven not to work. We're going to do something else. We're going to focus on the things we have to do first to secure people's basic, fair economic reality, and then go farther. Look, we all together—a lot of people in this room work to lift the floor for people who are struggling. We all together—so many partners in this room did again what was said to be impossible. We raised the minimum wage to \$15 first in city government, now, working together with people in Albany, it's the law of the State. And paid parental leave in New York City and paid family leave in the state. Things again said to be impossible. Remember the fight for paid sick leave?

This is the last three years, my friends. Together we've lifted that floor. That's good. That's necessary. But the next front line in the battle is good paying jobs. This means people can have a decent living, that they have a chance at middle class stability. These are jobs that we intend to be open to New Yorkers of every background, and jobs that will finally allow people to know this is their city, not just today, but for decades to come. So here is the goal we have set for ourselves. I'm going to talk to you about the things that we are going to do as a city government, the investments we're going to make, and the impact we expect it to have.

We hope the private sector does a lot of other things that will increase the number of good jobs in the city. But I want you to know what we're going to do.

Mayor Bill de Blasio delivered the 2017 State of the City address on February 13, 2017. Michael Appleton/Mayoral Photography Office

Our goal over the next 10 years is to create 100,000 more permanent good paying jobs in New York City. 100,000 jobs for New Yorkers. That alone will reach 250,000 people, meaning all the people work and their family, at least a quarter million New Yorkers will benefit. What's a good job, you might ask. A good job to me has to pay at least \$50,000 a year. We'd like to go farther. A good job gives a worker skills that they cannot just use then but for years, and in fact decades to come that allow them to keep going farther and farther. Again, these are jobs that we will make available whether people have preexisting skills or not. We're going to provide the training and the support.

What kind of industries? Look around New York City. Look at what's happening. Look at the film and TV industry. It's taking off more than ever before. Look at our technology sector. 300,000 jobs and growing. Look at life sciences where we have the opportunity to be one of the preeminent centers in the United States of America. Look at advanced manufacturing.

Entrepreneurs are flocking to locations in this city because they love the talent. They love the creativity. They love the markets that are available to them here. Every industry I just named, the average salaries range from 50,000 a year to \$75,000 a year. Isn't that what New Yorkers deserve?

I hope you are like me in the fact that when you watched April Andrews of Queensbridge who benefited from the tech talent pipeline, who got a chance to do something new with her life, when you heard her talk about how excited she was to create Internet access for the people in public housing, to see before her very eyes the good she was doing, and how she will be remembered for the immortal phrase from the video, I did that, I made Internet.

I was told not to say it was dope. She said it was dope. I thought it personally was pretty dope.

100,000 jobs that will take families forward, and 40,000 of them will be ready over the next four years. That's because a lot of the things that we need to do we've already sparked, we've already put in motion. The life sciences initiative, that will be 9,000 jobs with an average salary of \$75,000 a year, available to New Yorkers. And another 7,000 construction jobs at good wages. The Brooklyn Navy Yard—10,000 jobs will be created with an average salary of \$70,000 a year.

And tomorrow, I'm going to go to a very exciting new initiative in sunset park, our made in New York campus. This is going to be the new center of garment manufacturing, a new hub of our great fashion industry here in our city, in sunset park Brooklyn, and a new film and TV studio combined 1,500 permanent jobs will be created.

I have to tell you this gives me a special satisfaction because my grandparents came to this country from Italy. They started out in the Garment District, and not because they came with all the right skills or they knew all the right people. My grandmother Anna came from a small town. When she got to this country there was only one thing she knew how to do that she could actually find a job with. She started doing embroidery out of her home. Then she and her sister and mother decided they'd form their own business and they started to succeed and ended up having a store in the Garment District. My grandfather joined when he married my grandmother.

This was not—for them, and for so many people over the generations, this was not the fashion industry of glamor and run ways. This was hard work trying to make it against the odds. It took a lot of grit. It took using everything you had. There's another generation now that wants to travel that path. They need our help in a more competitive world than my grandmother and grandfather could ever have imagined. Today's generation needs that chance to get those skills and get them fast. That's what we're going to do. Because all of us know what it's like to have those parents and grandparents and great grandparents that found their way. Isn't it our job, our responsibility to honor our ancestors by giving the next generation the same opportunity?

So, we're going to keep building those 100,000 jobs.

We're going to go further. Because there's other things we do that will create even more jobs. One that excites me in particular is what's called the Green Jobs Corps. Everyone knows we're facing—not everyone knows we're facing climate change. There's one guy that may not know. Let me start again—most people know we are facing a profound threat from climate change. In this city we can do something about it. We have set a very ambitious goal of reducing our emissions in the city by 80 percent by the year 2050. This is the international gold standard and New York City is going to meet it and the number-one source of pollution is our buildings. They can be retrofitted. When you retrofit them you make them much more efficient. It's good for the earth, it saves money. There's a lot of jobs in retrofitting buildings, but there are not enough New Yorkers who have the skills to do the work. So, the City of New York will create the apparatus to train New Yorkers who want to be part of a field that is only going to grow and grow and create more and more opportunity while doing more and more good. The Green Jobs Corps. over the next three years will support the training of 3,000 workers who will go straight to work making this a cleaner and better city.

One more thing we're going to do that's going to help a lot of people. Because we're investing more and more in infrastructure, we're putting more and more into our capital budget to fix what's broken in the city, more and more people are going to get jobs. Our city investments and infrastructure right now are providing 24,000 good paying construction jobs every year, which is 9,000 more per year than just four years ago. These again are jobs the average wage \$75,000 a year.

Pearl Gable/Creative Communications, Office of the Mayor

So let me put this all together. We have a strategy—we have a game plan.

That does not mean we know everything that's up ahead. We do not know what the future of our economy will be. We sure don't know what's going to happen in Washington D.C. that's nervous laughter. But we know what we're going to do. We are going to be consistently focused on the creation of good paying jobs. We're going to use every tool we have, every resource we have. Because it's real clear if we don't do that we can't win the battle. We can't keep this city for everyone. We can't address the affordability crisis if we don't turn the city to a place where more and more good people get a good paying job.

Let me now wrap up for the evening. I wrap up by reminding you why we gather, why we have this tradition of the state of a city speech. It's a chance of course to take stock. I would say it's a chance to talk about who we are, where we're going, to think about it together. A message this year, I'm very proud—everyone in this room should be proud of how far we've come as a city. But we're keenly aware how much more we have to do. Commit ourselves to creating affordable housing on an unprecedented level. But we have farther to go. We're proud of the jobs we've created. But we have to create more. They have to be better. We need to know that people can make a decent living. They need to know they can stay here. That is our mission. People have to see and feel every single day that their government is working for them, is on their side, find a way to make their lives better. Not just lives where you somehow find a way to pay the bills at the end of the month, and just squeak by. That's not what we aspire to. We aspire to people living good lives. New Yorkers getting to actually benefit from all that's great in this city. Everyone having a piece of the pie—that's our mission.

I have to tell you, New Yorkers—I've had such a privilege to see this city in a way few get to. New Yorkers just do great things every single day. It's a city filled with greatness. Some you read about and see on TV. Some you'll never know—a lot of every day greatness, a lot of quiet heroes. Every day New Yorkers are doing great things, doing them on construction sites, in classrooms, in studios, science labs, things happen here. And would be the envy of every place in the world. So much

happening at once so much of the time you don't even know.

In a moment I'm going to welcome to the stage some people who have done really great things and deserve our appreciation, deserve our attention, deserve our emulation. Let me close with one more thought, because there's something else that's great about New Yorkers. New Yorkers get involved. New Yorkers do not shy from a fight. New Yorkers see a moment in history, a moment, a decision. And they meet it. Stand up for each other. Stand up for our country. We've seen this in the last few weeks. Yes, we're in a new era. But let's look clearly at what we've seen in just a few weeks' time. We have seen New Yorkers time and time again stand up against hatred and stand up against bias.

We've seen New Yorkers act as one, regardless of where people come from, regardless of the differences. You've seen that solidarity. The sense that we all have a common fight to wage. You've seen a profound sense that we will protect the progress we have made, regardless of what happens in Washington D.C., we are resolved.

I've talked to so many people in the last few weeks, and I get a real distinct feeling from them. We are not turning back. No one is going to make us turn back. I spoke at Cooper Union shortly after the election. What I was feeling then—I think it's even clearer to me now. The election brings out a lot of strong feelings. People have different views. For a lot of people there's a sense of fear, there is a sense of distress. I said then, you need to see the election not an end but a beginning. That may have sounded abstract. But now let me put it in the perspective of the last few weeks. When thousands of New Yorkers rush to the airport to protect our Constitution, that is not an end; that is a beginning.

When people gather by the thousands at town hall meetings here and all over the country to tell their members of Congress, you can't take my health insurance away, that is not an end. That is a beginning. And when 400,000 people marched for women and their rights, here in New York City, and almost three million more around our nation, that is not an end; that is a beginning, my friends.

And we as New Yorkers, we've become even more important in this moment of history. This place becomes more important because of who we are and what we stand for. We need to get it right, my friends. We need to stay a beacon of hope. We need to show people what a society that respects all looks like. And keep the dream of so many of our forbearers alive for all to see. We need to remember this country is ours. It belongs to all of us. And this is our city.

Thank you.