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# Mayor de Blasio Announces First-In-Nation Task Force To Examine Automated Decision Systems Used By The City

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**NEW YORK—** Today, Mayor de Blasio announced the creation of the Automated Decision Systems Task Force which will explore how New York City uses algorithms. The task force, the first of its kind in the U.S., will work to develop a process for reviewing “automated decision systems,” commonly known as algorithms, through the lens of equity, fairness and accountability.

“As data and technology become more central to the work of city government, the algorithms we use to aid decision making must be aligned with our goals and values,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “The establishment of the Automated Decision Systems Task Force is an important first step towards greater transparency and equity in our use of technology.”

“Fairness and equity are at the heart of human rights, and we are pleased to be partnering with leaders in and out of government to make sure City government itself aligns with these core values,” said **Chair and Commissioner of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, Carmelyn P. Malalis**. “The NYC Commission on Human Rights is proud to be part of New York City’s groundbreaking effort to ensure equity and transparency in the City’s use of algorithmic tools and we look forward to working with members of the task force and NYC diverse communities on this effort.”

The Task Force, the product of a law passed by City Council in December 2017, aims to produce a report in December 2019 recommending procedures for reviewing and assessing City algorithmic tools to ensure equity and opportunity.

“We are excited to be the first city in the country bringing our best technology and policy minds together to understand how algorithms affect the daily lives of our constituents. Whether the city has made a decision about school placements, criminal justice, or the provision of social services, this unprecedented legislation gets us one step closer to making algorithms accountable, transparent, and free of potential bias. I thank my former colleague, James Vacca, for spearheading this effort while he was in the Council, and the Mayor for his support,” said **Speaker Corey Johnson**.

The task force will be co-chaired by Emily W. Newman, Acting Director of the Mayor’s Office of Operations, and Brittny Saunders, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic

Initiatives at the Commission on Human Rights. It will be composed of City agency commissioners or their designees, as well as representatives from a variety of fields, including individuals from academic and legal communities, experts in data and technology, and leaders of nonprofits and think tanks. Representatives from the Department of Social Services, the New York City Police Department, the Department of Transportation, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, the Administration for Children's Services, and the Department of Education are will also be named to the task force.

"I'm honored to co-chair the ADS Task Force, as its work will no doubt contribute to making New York City the fairest big City in the country," said **Emily W. Newman, Acting Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations**. "With equity and fairness as our guiding principles, I look forward to working alongside leaders and experts from multiple fields as we examine how the city uses algorithms to guide its decision making."

"As emerging technologies evolve, it is imperative that they are developed and used with equity in mind," said **Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Initiatives at the Commission on Human Rights, Brittny Saunders**. "I am honored to co-chair this important task force and look forward to working alongside leaders and experts to increase transparency around these critical tools."

"Cities must operate through the lens of understanding the many facets that make up their diverse mosaics," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric L Adams**. "This algorithmic data task force, which has an incredibly broad cross-section of members, is a welcome step in ensuring that the City's day-to-day functions and resource allocations meet New Yorkers' needs while addressing generational disparities. Equity should be at the forefront of all service delivery in every function of our municipal government."

"Open data promotes open government. Today, our city makes another big step towards a more transparent government for all New Yorkers," said **Council Member Peter Koo, Chair of the Committee on Technology**. "The findings of the Automated Decision Systems Task Force will allow us to better understand what data is used, and how it is used, and will help us create a more equal system for all of our residents. I thank Mayor De Blasio and the NYC Commission on Human Rights for making our government more open, fair, and accountable, and I look forward to working with the new task force to ensure these values remains a priority for all city agencies."

#### **Task Force Co-Chairs:**

Emily W. Newman, Acting Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations

Brittny Saunders, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Initiatives at the NYC Commission on Human Rights

#### **Task Force members include:**

Solon Barocas, Assistant Professor, Cornell University

Shelby Chestnut, National Organizing and Policy Strategist, Transgender Law Center

Khalil Cumberbatch, Associate Vice President for Policy, The Fortune Society

Judith H. Germano, Esq., Founder, GermanoLaw LLC; Senior Fellow on Cybersecurity, NYU Center on Law & Security

Afaf Nasher, Esq., Executive Director, Council on American-Islamic Relations – New York

Jennifer Rodgers, Esq., Executive Director, Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity at Columbia Law School

Julie Samuels, Esq., Executive Director, Tech:NYC

Vincent Southerland, Esq., Executive Director, Center on Race, Equality, and the Law at NYU Law School

Julia Stoyanovich, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, Drexel University; Data, Responsibly

Meredith Whittaker, Co-Founder, AI Now Institute; Distinguished Research Scientist, NYU

Maya D. Wiley, Esq., Senior Vice President for Social Justice, The New School; Co-Director, Digital Equity Laboratory at The New School

Jeannette M. Wing, Avaneessians Director of the Data Science Institute and Professor of Computer Science at Columbia University

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