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IN STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS, SPEAKER QUINN DELIVERS OUTLINE FOR JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

City Hall – In her annual State of the City address, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn spoke to the ongoing economic challenges faced by New York City. Recognizing the priority of economic growth and stimulation, Speaker Quinn presented a plan that will result in a strengthened economy and increased jobs, both in the near and long-term future.

Speaker Quinn stated, “Whether we’re creating a better tax environment, investing in growth industries or supporting our small business community, it’s all about creating good jobs for working New Yorkers.” She continued, “If we have faith in the power of New Yorkers, if we give them the tools they need, then we can help them build a stronger New York City, now and for decades to come.”

ENCOURAGING GROWING INDUSTRIES

New York City High Tech Connect, a new initiative announced by the Speaker, will connect high tech entrepreneurs with the resources they need to turn an innovative idea into a profitable business. The initiative will provide support on everything from writing a business plan to locating workspace to finding and securing funding. A similar model in San Diego has helped create over 1,000 companies and 27,000 new jobs over the past 25 years.

A second new program, Municipal Entrepreneur Testing Service (M.E.T.S.), will help new clean tech companies get their start in New York City. The program will allow tech startup companies to test products like solar panels and energy efficient light bulbs in the thousands of city-owned buildings. This real-world testing is a necessary step before marketing a final product. M.E.T.S. will allow these companies to get to market quicker so that they can start creating jobs for the New Yorkers who manufacture, sell and install the new technologies.

Speaker Quinn also announced a commitment from some of the largest firms in the city to invest in the rapidly growing renewable energy sector. The Renewable Energy Investment Initiative will find opportunities to create jobs in this \$42.6 billion dollar industry.

STRENGTHENING EXISTING BUSINESSES

Speaker Quinn announced a number of practical steps to support small business owners throughout the five boroughs. Specifically, the proposals will:

Protect against excessive and burdensome regulation – Ongoing training for inspectors and a small business owner’s bill of rights will provide specific information to small business owners about their rights, detail the rules inspectors have to follow and inform a business owner how to take action if he or she feels unfairly treated.

Assist in securing financial support – The City Council and the New York Bankers Association (NYBA) will partner together in implementing Second Look, a New York Business Development Corporation program that gives a second chance to small businesses that have been turned down for loans. They will also convene a summit with the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce where participants from banking and small business will work to develop and propose ways to get credit flowing to small businesses.

Provide training in business skills – A new executive management program will help the city’s minority and women owned businesses learn critical skills. By training and educating these businesses owners, the program will enable them to grow and hire new employees. In other cities, 3 out of 4 participants in a similar program increased sales and hired new employees.

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE TAX STRUCTURE

Continuing the Council’s efforts to end double taxation on business owners, Speaker Quinn proposed a tax credit that will exempt small retailers from the City’s corporate tax, and vowed to fight in Albany until this tax credit becomes a reality. Approximately 19,000 small retailers would be eligible for this credit, and they would save up to \$3,400 a year.

SUPPORTING THE CITY’S WORKFORCE.

Speaker Quinn proposed concrete steps aimed at improving the city’s GED testing system, which is currently fragmented and inadequate in assisting New Yorkers lacking a high school diploma. The Speaker’s reforms address New Yorkers who are unemployed and face the greatest obstacles in finding a job. The three-tiered plan will help New Yorkers take the first crucial step towards employment.

- The Council, together with the Department of Education and the Department of Small Business Services, will create a citywide pilot at Workforce 1 Centers that will connect individuals without a high school diploma to GED testing and test preparation courses.
- In order to ensure that those who take the GED are adequately prepared, individuals who sign up to take the GED will first take an Official Practice Test to assess their preparedness.
- The Council will work closely with the Literacy Assistance Center, DOE and SBS to better coordinate the GED system, with a goal of streamlining access to services so that individuals can build skills, obtain a GED if needed and receive assistance in their job search.

The full text of Speaker Quinn’s 2010 State of the City Address can be viewed at:
http://council.nyc.gov/html/soc/2010_speech.pdf .

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