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**** **PRESS RELEASE** ****

Mayor Fulop joins Jersey City's Police and Fire Departments to Sound the Alarm on the Serious Safety Risks Posed by Unregulated Airbnbs

JERSEY CITY - Union representatives from **Jersey City's Police and Fire Departments** are joining **Mayor Steven Fulop** and **City Council members** as well as the **Hotel Trade Council** and **community members** to address the lack of accountability and safety regulations in Airbnb properties. As Airbnb spends millions to spread false information to preserve their multibillion dollar company, city and public safety officials are sounding the alarm on security concerns that not only put Airbnb users at risk, but also compromises unknowing neighborhood residents as well as first responders.

“The municipal short-term rental ordinance is a common sense approach toward addressing safety and quality of life issues for our residents – both of which are paramount to our mission in law enforcement,” **said Robert Kearns, President, Jersey City Police Superior Officers Association.** “Without regulations, Airbnb rentals can create an attractive nuisance for criminals who attempt to secret their crimes. Our officers also often respond to excessive noise complaints from late night parties hosted by short-term renters with no responsibility to the local neighborhood.”

A recent study by John Hopkins University researching Airbnb venues across the country revealed that these properties oftentimes significantly lack minimum safety amenities. These dangers have been encountered firsthand by Jersey City Fire Department union officials who are raising their concerns for the safety of the Fire Fighters responding to these conditions.

“We have significant concerns specifically for Airbnb use in multiple dwellings,” **said Joseph Krajnik, President, Uniformed Fire Fighters Association of Jersey City, I.A.F.F. Local 1066, AFL-CIO, CLC.** “In a fire, every second counts, and having knowledgeable neighbors who know how many occupants live in a residence, and if someone is trapped or in need of rescuing greatly helps with our mission in saving lives.”

“All too often we encounter dangerous situations when responding to these calls where the residences are altered or subdivided, splitting a single unit to create multiple units, thus creating a maze-like

structure and changing occupancy levels unknown to responding Fire Fighters,” said **Peter Nowak, President, Jersey City Fire Officers Association, IAFF Local 1064.**

Unlike the hotel industry, these properties are not required by Airbnb to have basic safety precautions such as smoke and carbon monoxide detectors for their users. For these reasons and more, the city is pushing for commonsense regulations to help maintain the safety and security of residents throughout Jersey City.

“My job as Mayor is to protect the residents of Jersey City. That’s why we need to shed light on this public safety issue, and inform every voter in Jersey City why they should vote YES in November.” said **Mayor Fulop.** “This administration is fighting to fix the quality of life issues our residents have had to endure over the years as Airbnb abuses their initial agreement with the city. We’re fighting to maintain affordable housing for those who need it most. We’re fighting to rid residential buildings of party hotels. We’re fighting for the most important fundamental right every person and family should be entitled to, especially in their own home: their safety.”

Voters will be asked whether or not they want to see commonsense regulations for short-term rentals on the November ballot. The City Council approved implementing an ordinance to establish viable apartments for short-term rentals at the market rate, eliminate party hotels that have been created in residential buildings, and focus on owner-occupancy to increase accountability from landlords. Ward B Councilwoman Mira Prinz-Arey and Ward E Councilman James Solomon co-sponsored the ordinance.

“Without fundamental guidelines that everyone else has to follow, including hotels and residents, Airbnb is creating an extremely unsafe environment for our residents as well as the thousands upon thousands of people who come to Jersey City every day to work or visit,” said **Councilman Solomon.** “Corporations, with no stake in the game or interest in Jersey City’s residents, should not be the ones writing our policies. We want to work together to implement sensible regulations.”

“All too often residents come to me with concerns for the safety of their families as strangers move in and out of units within their building,” said **Councilwoman Prinz-Arey.** “The nightmare recounts from residents would make anyone want to help. That’s why we worked with community members, business owners, local realtors, and even Airbnb users to craft this ordinance which is fair, creates accountability, and allows people to rent in a responsible way while at the same time protecting affordable housing and quality of life for residents.”

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