



For Release September 16, 2009:

New York City Firefighters Endorse Bill Thompson for Mayor

Mayoral Candidate Bill Thompson has been endorsed by Uniformed Firefighters Association (UFA) of Greater New York. The UFA represents 20,000 active and retired New York City Firefighters and Fire Marshals and is the largest firefighters union local in the world.

Steve Cassidy, President of the UFA was joined by fellow UFA Executive Board Members and more than 50 New York City Firefighters as they announced their support for Thompson.

“Bill Thompson is a leader who has demonstrated that he understands and can relate to the struggles of the working class families of New York. Bill Thompson recognizes that the basic life saving services provided by New York City Firefighters can not be delivered if we are closing firehouses and reducing fire company staffing levels.”

In 2003, Mike Bloomberg closed 6 firehouses in neighborhoods throughout New York City and in January 2009 he closed one additional company, plus closed four fire companies at night, which were restored by the City Council.

Mike Bloomberg has proposed 16 additional permanent fire company closures after the Election in January 2010, leaving communities without adequate fire and emergency medical protection. When the City Council asked him which community fire companies were targeted, he told them and all New Yorkers that it was none of their business. If Mike Bloomberg is reelected which community firehouses will be on the chopping block?

“The Bloomberg Administration has brought us a bloated, mismanaged Fire Department leadership that the Mayor has not held accountable to the public it serves,” added Mr. Cassidy. “The lack of accountability at the top of the FDNY is extensive and has scarred The Department. Our most recent tragedy, the Deutsche Bank fatal fire led to the deaths of two of New York’s Bravest, still remains unresolved for Firefighters.”

Thompson stated, “I am honored to stand here today and accept an endorsement from the greatest firefighters in the world. I can’t think of a better group of people to launch our general election campaign with than New York’s Bravest. I look forward to campaigning with them through this election and standing with them as the next Mayor of New York City.”

Bill Thompson fought the mayor on the 2003 firehouse closings and again objected strongly to the mayor's recent attempt to shutter more. As Mayor, Thompson will ensure that public safety is always the first priority. He is committed to keeping firehouses open and the fire department fully funded. Unlike Mayor Bloomberg, Thompson will not treat first responders as a simple budgetary line item, but instead as the vital, life saving first responders that they are.

Firefighters, like most New Yorkers, have endured 8 years of a Bloomberg economy that focuses on tax breaks and benefits for the wealthy to the detriment of working families throughout New York. Mike Bloomberg is poised to spend \$200 million trying to convince New Yorkers that they need 4 more years of higher taxes, overcrowded schools, fewer firehouses and record unemployment. Bill Thompson understands that across the City, the middle class is losing ground and our working families are finding it hard to get by. They cannot afford another four years of Mike Bloomberg's misplaced priorities and bad decisions.

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