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STATEMENT OF BUILDINGS COMMISSIONER ROBERT LIMANDRI ON PASSAGE OF REVISED NYC CONSTRUCTION CODES

*Bill Passed by City Council Will Modernize New York City's Building, Plumbing, Mechanical,
Fuel Gas and Administrative Code*

*Implements Safety Recommendations Included in the Final World Trade Center Investigation
Report*

Statement of Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri:

“With the Mayor’s leadership and the support of the City Council, legislation has been adopted to improve our Building Code and enhance public safety in New York City. Yesterday’s passage of Introduction 1056A by the Council revises the NYC Construction Codes and brings them in line with the highest international standards for the design and construction of buildings. The new Codes incorporate recommendations from the final report on the collapse of the World Trade Center to improve life safety and evacuation systems in super high-rise buildings. These are important additions to our Codes that will make newly constructed high-rise buildings in New York City safer for occupants and emergency responders. The new Codes include amendments that have been specifically tailored to meet the unique needs of New York City’s high density urban environment, including flood proofing requirements for buildings in coastal areas and provisions to bring older buildings up to code when they are substantially renovated. Revising our Construction Codes on an ongoing basis enables the City and construction professionals to take advantage of new technology, materials and products. I want to thank the more than 350 volunteers and experts from the construction industry, real estate, labor, government agencies and academia who donated more than 48,000 hours of their time to this tremendous effort. This great accomplishment would not have been possible without the commitment and hard work of our many volunteers and Department staff.”

The revised Codes implement safety requirements for newly constructed high-rise buildings as recommended in the final report on the collapse of the World Trade Center Towers by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), including:

- **Additional Fire Stairs:** Requires an additional stair or occupant evacuation elevators in buildings over 420 feet in height to increase exit capacity and provide alternative escape routes in an emergency.
- **Safer Fire Service Elevator:** Requires buildings over 120 feet in height to have well-equipped fire service access elevator capable of transporting fire department and emergency personnel safely to perform fire safety functions and rescue operations.
- **Enhanced Egress Requirements:** Requires exit stairs to be located further apart in buildings over 75 feet in height to ensure one stair does not compromise the integrity of other stairs.

- **Expanded Sprinkler System Requirements:** Requires buildings over 300 feet in height to have at least two sprinkler risers serving the sprinkler system to ensure proper coverage and functionality of the sprinkler system.
- **Enhanced Fire Endurance:** Increases the strength for spray-on fireproofing in buildings more than 75 feet in height and more for super high-rise buildings over 420 feet in height.
- **Increased Fire Resistance:** Increases the fire rating of the materials used in the structural elements in buildings over 420 feet in height.

Additional highlights of the revised Codes include:

- **New Requirements for Flood Resistant Construction:** Introduces requirements for buildings in coastal A-zones and permits the dry-proofing of buildings. Increases elevation requirements for the lowest floor to 2 feet above the base flood elevation for 1- and 2-family homes.
- **Ensuring Major Enlargements Adhere to Revised Construction Codes:** Clarifies requirements for buildings constructed under older codes. Adds new provision to require alterations that increase size of an existing building by more than 110% to utilize the current construction codes rather than the 1968 or 1938 codes. This will enhance public safety by requiring buildings undergoing major reconstruction to meet the most stringent construction and design standards.
- **Encouraging Restoration of Landmarks:** Allows the projections into the public right-of-way for buildings subject to Landmarks Commission jurisdiction without requiring approval of the Department of Transportation, provided the Landmarks Preservation Commission approves. This encourages the restoration of landmarked buildings by streamlining administrative processes.

This bill is effective for applications for construction permits submitted to the Department on or after October 1, 2014.

About the NYC Construction Codes

The New York City Construction Codes consist of four technical volumes – the New York City Building Code, Plumbing Code, Mechanical Code, and the Fuel Gas Code, – and one administrative volume – the Administrative Code (Title 28), which contains permitting, licensing, fees and other provisions that apply to the four technical volumes.

The first major overhaul of New York City’s Building Code since 1968 was signed in to law by Mayor Bloomberg in July 2007 and took effect on July 1, 2008. Local Law 33 mandates a revision cycle for the NYC Construction Codes. To this end, the Department has organized a series of committees to review the technical and administrative provisions of the Codes. This latest revision brings the Codes up to date with the 2009 International Code Council Codes (I-Codes).

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