



# THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

CITY HALL  
NEW YORK, NY 10007  
(212) 788-7116

**\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\***

August 8, 2006

## **COUNCIL SPEAKER ANNOUNCES 3-POINT PLAN TO IMPROVE NIGHTCLUB SAFETY** *Strategy Addresses Recent Tragedies and Quality of Life Issues in Overburdened Neighborhoods*

**City Hall** – In response to recent tragedies in and around New York City nightclubs and bars, and to ongoing problems created in residential neighborhoods by clubs and club patrons, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn today announced a 3-point plan to address safety and security concerns throughout the City. The plan calls for local enforcement of State Liquor Authority regulations; a packet of legislative proposals that will strengthen club security; and a Nightlife Safety Summit in September to bring key players together to collaboratively address improving nightclub safety.

“New York City has the most exciting nightlife in the world; it should also be the safest,” said Speaker Quinn. “It is time to rope in the problems in New York nightlife -- for the safety of our residents, the safety of nightclub neighbors, and for the safety of nightclub-goers. These proposals will ensure that clubs and State and local enforcement agencies are doing their jobs to keep clubs safe, and that neighborhoods like those on the West Side don’t become the Wild West.”

Speaker Quinn was joined by Council Members Peter Vallone, Jr., Leroy Comrie, Alan Gerson, Dan Garodnick, Melissa Mark Viverito, Inez Dickens, James Vacca, Maria Baez, Helen Foster, Maria del Carmen Arroyo, Annabel Palma, Larry Seabrook, John Liu, David Weprin, Eric Gioia, David Yassky, Charles Barron, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, State Senator Tom Duane, Assembly Member Deborah Glick, and Assembly Member Richard Gottfried in making today’s announcement.

### **Enforcement: A Local Enforcement Unit of the State Liquor Authority**

The Speaker called for an overhaul of State Liquor Authority Operations in New York City by proposing a local enforcement unit that will have the power to more expeditiously revoke or suspend liquor licenses, levy fines for violations, and work collaboratively with local law enforcement. The special unit would help the City effectively police its bars and clubs by itself taking action to revoke or suspend liquor licenses. The Speaker proposed financing this unit through a surcharge on all liquor licenses issued in New York City.

### **Legislation: Legislation Package of Bills to Strengthen Club Security**

The Council will initiate several legislative measures in September to address nightclub safety. These include:

- Requiring ID verification scanners at club entrances. The scanners, able to detect fake ID’s, would be an effective step in preventing underage patrons from gaining entry to nightclubs;

- Installing security cameras at club entrances and exits to reduce crime in and around clubs, as well as to address quality of life concerns;
- Strengthening training for cabaret employees. Improved education and awareness on club safety and the responsibilities of club employees to maintaining a safe environment in the club and on the streets;
- Requiring clubs with serious or repeat violations such as unlicensed security guards and/or underage drinking to hire independent monitors at their own expense. Monitors, who would have to be on an approved NYPD list, would work with the Police Department to improve club safety.

### **Collaboration: A Nightlife Safety Summit**

In addition, Speaker Quinn proposed a Nightlife Safety Summit to bring together all the key players in ensuring club safety to discuss and implement solutions to our club safety issues. The Speaker will ask each participant to commit to undertaking new and effective initiatives to improve the safety of our nightlife. The Summit, which will take place in September, will call upon club owners, law enforcement, local communities, and elected officials to come to the table with a plan to address chronic problems such as underage drinking, security in and around clubs, and incidents of violence inside and outside of the clubs. The New York Police Department, Office of the Criminal Justice Coordinator and the Nightlife Association have already agreed to participate.

Other Summit invitees include the State Liquor Authority, club owners, the MTA, NY and NJ Transit, the Department of Transportation, and Community Boards and elected officials in affected areas of the City.

“The safest big city in the world should have safest nightlife in the world and this plan will help ensure that” stated Council Member Vallone.

“It has become appallingly clear that we can no longer rely on the judgment of night club personnel to appropriately screen patrons,” said Council Member Comrie. “Therefore, the Council and Consumer Affairs Committee will work collaboratively to examine proven security devices and measures such as the installation of ID scanners as a means to protect and safeguard the well being of our communities.”

“A fun and vibrant nightlife is part of what makes New York City so great. But we can and must take common sense steps to ensure that our neighborhoods also remain safe and livable,” said Council Member Gerson.

Today’s announcement follows earlier City Council legislation that aims to improve club safety. The Bouncer Bill creates new enforcement tools for the City and allows the City to shut down clubs, bars and other establishments that hire security personnel but fail to ensure that each bouncer is properly licensed. The bill is scheduled to be voted on at the Council’s next Stated Meeting on August 16.

###