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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Well, good morning, everybody. Today, I want to start with a word – and it's not a word that is necessarily one that's so common to life in our city – and the word is, moderation. Moderation sometimes may seem like a bit of a foreign word here in New York City, and I mean that in a way that's actually kind of positive. We, as New Yorkers, we tend to think about big dreams, have big plans and do things with a lot of energy. As New Yorkers, we put our all into everything, and you certainly have seen that in the way that all of you have fought back this virus. It's been outstanding and I'm very, very proud of the people this city. Just like we do everything in a big bold way in normal times people have fought back with all they've got in this time, and that's why we're pushing back this disease more every day.

Now, it would be natural for New Yorkers to want a big, fast, bold restart. It's natural for us to want to get back on our feet as quickly as possible. We are not a patient people, and that is in many ways part of what makes us great, but this is a time where we need to start appreciating what's good about the word moderation because for us to get to where we need to go, for us to get to that big strong restart and to get to the recovery which I know we can achieve, we have to do this the smart way. This is a case where a little moderation I think would be good for all of us. One step at a time and let's get it right. So, there's no on off switch here. This has to be done in stages, it has to be done gradually. That doesn't mean doing it any slower than it needs to be done. It means doing it just right. When it's the right time to open up a step, we do it. When we prove it's working, we take the next step, the next step, the next step. And there's a lot of questions we will answer as part of this process and we're going to come to decisions, share them with all of you, and together we're going to make them work.

So, for example, what kind of personal protective equipment will people need in each industry, in each part of our economy as they open up. We want to be very specific about what will protect both the folks who work in each industry, and their customers. We have to be very clear about how we're going to use temperature checks. I think this'll be an important part of the equation, but how are we going to use them? Where are we going to use them? Making sure we have enough thermometers. These are all things that we're planning on right now, and as we get the details ready to go, we're going to be announcing.

How do we make sure that cleaning is handled the right way? It's going to be different depending on what type of work we're talking about, but we want it to be clear and transparent. What kind of cleaning is going to be necessary to sustain the right environment going forward and keep everyone safe? And when someone tests positive, what happens next? Well, we all know, we've been talking about it for weeks now and you're about to see it come alive. The test and trace

initiative is all about identifying people and then tracing their contacts, making sure everyone who needs to be isolated is isolated. Everyone who needs to be quarantined is quarantined. We want to be clear how that works, right down to the point where someone shows up at work and at that moment finds out they've got a positive test. What do they do then if they find out the night before, what do they do? We're going to lay it out so people know exactly how to handle each scenario.

Now, we already know a lot from the science. Even though no one knows everything about this disease, we know a lot from the medical community. We know a lot about what has been working and not working in other places of the world. We're going to take the good models, and adapt them for what we do here. But we also know there's no place like New York City and we know that we as a city government, we can take all the best information, and come up with the right game plan, but we need to always run it by the people who actually do the work. The people in each business, the people in each sector of our life in this city and our economy, who understand the day to day life of their workplaces best, and can give us real world advice about what's going to work, what's not going to work, what questions they need answered. We want to help each business back on their feet as quickly as possible. To do that, we have to listen to them to make sure that we answer their questions and hear their view of what they need. So, we are bringing together what we call sector advisory councils from different parts of this city. Both in terms of different parts of our economy, but also people represent all of us, all the different neighborhoods, people of all backgrounds, people of different perspectives, to help us understand what is needed to get this restart right. And it's very, very important that we think about everything that makes up life in this city.

So, we're naming a group of different councils. We're going to start with a group of people that I'm appointing to each. If we think others need to be named, we will, if we think any other group has to be formed, we can do that obviously at any point. But I think this initial group gives us a good start at some of the things we have to work on right away. So, today we are going to roll out six councils and then there will be four more on the way after that. The first of these we'll meet tomorrow. All the others will be meeting in the next few days. By next week everyone will have had their initial meeting, and we'll be up and running. And their views, their questions, their input are going to be used immediately in our restart planning, and then continue on as we build ahead towards recovery. Each group will have between 20 and 40 members. Each group will be led by one or two deputy mayors and heads of different city agencies seeking their input. We'll roll out today the names of the first six councils, and then the additional four as quickly as possible, and I'm going to give you some examples of councils we're bringing together that are particularly crucial for the restart.

So, small business, this advisory council will be led by our Deputy Mayors, Vicki Been and Phil Thompson. Now, small business has really taken it on the chin here, and even though I am glad there's been a very robust federal aid program, we need to make that program work a lot better, and we're pushing hard on the federal government on that front. We need to make sure every single New York City small business that can take advantage of it does. We want to figure out every way we can help. We also have to think about the sheer mechanics of how this restart can work best for small business. What small business are going to need, a lot of small businesses are very worried about their comeback. A lot obviously have much less in the way of resources than

bigger businesses. Small business owners have poured their heart and soul into their small businesses. Nothing more personal than creating a small business, making it work, making it an asset to your community, your neighborhood, to this whole city. It's never easy, and on top of that, with all the struggles any small business goes through, and they're going through a lot of struggles before this crisis hit. I talked about a lot in my state of the city address back in February. Now on top of this, this pandemic, which has created even more uncertainty. So, we are going to listen. We're going to come up with plans that will help small businesses back on their feet. We need them. We need them because they're the heart and soul of our city. We need them because they're so much of what makes New York City great. We need them because that's actually where a huge percentage of employment is in this city. We need everything. We need our bodegas and corner stores. We need our bars and restaurants. We need our startups. You know, that are such an important part of our emerging tech economy. You name it, we need them all. So, this group will be eyes and ears, idea generators, innovators to help us figure out the next steps.

Obviously, the city has a huge number of larger businesses as well, and we depend on them deeply. The larger businesses will be crucial to jump-starting our economic recovery. We're going to be listening carefully for how we can help them to get up and running as quickly as possible. Certainly, from the employers I'm hearing from, that's their desire to hit the ground running. But also, there's a tremendous understanding we have to do it right, and we have to do it in a way that's safe, and we cannot allow that boomerang to happen that we've talked about. With larger businesses in many cases, thousands of employees, huge logistical considerations. Many have big workplaces that have to be thought of very smartly in terms of keeping everyone safe. This group again will be led by our Deputy Mayor Vicki Been, and bring together leaders of large businesses from around this city, and we welcome their input and we need it.

The next group focuses on labor, and workforce development. Look let's face it, who is hurting most in this crisis? Working people. Who is this city? Why is this city so great? Because of working people. Who makes this city great? Working people. And so many working people have been heroes during this crisis, keeping the city going, and they will be the heroes of the restart and the recovery as well. They need to be heard, and their rights need to be protected, and their needs need to be recognized, and their voices often left out when governments make their decisions, this time we have to get it right, and have working people and those who represent working people at the table from the beginning. I am a big believer in the power of our labor movement. They will be front and center. Their voices will be heard as we build this restart and recovery. This group will be led by First Deputy Mayor, Dean Fuleihan and Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson.

Now, something that makes New York City, New York City. Unquestionably all of those amazing organizations and institutions. All the incredibly talented people in our arts community, our cultural community, in the tourism sector. We're bringing together a group focused on those areas, arts, culture, tourism, because it is the essence of so much that makes New York City great in our hearts, in our souls, and what we are proud of. Obviously also one of the underpinnings of our economy, and one of the pieces that we've been missing deeply has to come back strong, has to come back smart, but this is also a sector where some of the biggest challenges exist, because synonymous with gathering a lot of people together in one place. Some of our arts and cultural

venues gather thousands and thousands of people in close quarters. How are we going to go about that in the future? When is the right time to do what? That's what we're going to work through with this group. Strike that balance – safety first, health of people first. Making us fight off this disease at all times is job-one, but we want to bring this sector back strong. We want to figure out the right stages to do that. Deputy Mayor Vicki Been will be leading this group, working with great leaders from these fields.

We have seen faith leaders of every background say safety and health of our people first and they've had to do really tough things, shutting down worship services, but making sure that always it was about people's safety, I commend them and thank them for that. The value has been on human beings and human lives and that's been so powerful and commendable. Now, the practical question now comes into play. How are we going to restart worship services and what's the right way to do it, when and with what conditions? This is something that like the other kinds of larger gatherings has to be approached very smartly, we're going to be listening to the voices of our faith leaders as we develop those plans. And again, everything is going to start to move in the coming days and weeks as we put these pieces together, we can project step-by-step their voices will matter immensely, this group will be led by Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson.

A new sector council that we're adding is in the area of construction and real estate. Big, big part of this City's economy, big part of what makes New York New York as well, and people want to get back to work and we want to get them back to work, but here are a set of challenges as well. Different kinds of work, some which might lend itself better to social distancing, some which might be better in terms of health, others present other types of work in this field presents more challenges, particularly indoor work. We got to figure out what kind of personal protective equipment is needed, what kind of distances needed, what kind of schedule needed to get this right, this group will be led by Deputy Mayor Laura Anglin and Deputy Mayor Vicki Been. So, those are some of the initial councils and we'll be putting out those names for more coming behind that. The good news is this is an example of listening to people who are the experts because they live the life, they do the work, they understand what everyone's going through. We want to hear from them, we want to hear their voices helping us understand what will work, also warning us about what may not work. Everyone has that New York energy, that desire to get going – we're never going to lack that, these folks are also going to help us figure out how to strike that balance and based on real experience and they will be pivotal in the effort to get New York City going again. I want to say in advance a thank you to everyone who's agreed to serve on our advisory councils, we're going to ask a lot of all of you and we are deeply, deeply appreciative for your willingness to serve New York City.

Now, that is what I've talked about is the things we have to do to get ready for the restart and the recovery, but right now as we're doing that work, we're fighting every day against this disease. We're fighting every day to make sure that the people of this City are kept whole and supported no matter what this horrible crisis throws at us, and that means both the health care crisis and the economic crisis talked about many times. Our priorities right now four things, people's health, safety, making sure everyone has food eat, making sure everyone has a roof over their head. Well, in that last category, we all know the challenge this City has faced for decades is homelessness and we also know that homelessness is a problem that has often defied conventional solutions. That's why we started to do some unconventional things over the last few

years, nothing more powerful than the HOME-STAT strategy and the more recent vision called the Journey Home, which are all about ending permanent homelessness through intensive engagement with homeless individuals who live on the streets. We've seen some things start to work, but what we've talked about in recent days was something that clearly had not worked for a long time, which was the reality that many homeless people, particularly in colder months of the year will go into the subways and then many cases spend all night going back and forth on a single subway line. What a horrible situation for everyone starting with that homeless individual, not safe, not right, not right for the people around them on the subway train either. In recent days, some really new and important thinking has emerged because of this crisis, because of the challenges it created because we had to think differently about how to keep mass transit running, how to keep it safe and clean, how to support our essential workers. The Governor and I and our teams and the course, everyone at the MTA, we worked together on this notion of closing the subways in the overnight hours for deep cleaning. And also, as a way to facilitate a different kind of engagement with the homeless to disrupt that pattern that existed for decades and was getting us nowhere. Well, I'll tell you something, last night was the first night that we got to see some evidence of what would happen if the subways were closed in those late-night hours. The deep cleaning was happening, and everyone had to leave the stations including homeless individuals. We only have an initial snapshot cause we're talking about something that just happened hours ago, but the initial snapshot is a powerful and positive one. Last night, 139 homeless individuals out of 252 who were engaged by our outreach workers and by the NYPD officers, specially trained in homeless outreach. 139 individuals agreed to accept support, accept services and come in off the streets, come in out of the subways, this number is extraordinary. First of all, more than half of the people encountered and engaged, agreed to leave the subways to leave the streets and come in and that's an amazing reality to begin with. But we have more importantly never ever seen so much success in a single night before, we've never seen this many people, this higher percentage of people who are living on the streets agree to something different and it's only one night. And we obviously need a lot more information, we need to see how things play out over a longer period of time. But this number is staggering because look consistently what federal surveys have shown is that this City, and I don't say it with anything but sorrow, but the facts have been consistently that the federal annual survey shows somewhere between 35,000 and 4,000 people living on the streets of our City streets and subways combined. If in one night 139 people took a step towards leaving that life and coming into a safe haven or a shelter and starting the process of getting to long-term housing and never going back on the streets, that's an extraordinary number for one night and very encouraging. We have to sustain it in many, many ways, we've got a lot of work to do, but I want to say to everyone involved, to the NYPD to everyone at Social Services and Homeless Services, to the MTA, to the Governor's team. We all work together on this vision and hopes it would create something new and the very first night we see a very hopeful sign. So, we've got to keep at it and hopefully this is beginning of something much bigger and really good for people all over the City and particularly for those who ended up on our streets and our subways who we want to get back to a better life.

Now a related point, I've said I want to always give credit where credit is due when our colleagues in the media point out a problem that we need to fix. I always appreciate getting that kind of heads up so we can do something about it. Juliet Papa from 1010 WINS has been particularly active, pointing out problems, and luckily, we're able to fix these problems. So, yesterday she talked about three encampments of homeless people, I want to make sure all New

Yorkers understand, whenever you say the word encampment, it means that there are homeless people who attempt to set up sort of a long-term living arrangement. This is something that used to be common all over the City, absolutely unacceptable, absolutely not right for the homeless people, for their health and safety, not right for the communities they lived in and everyone around, just not right for New York City and yet for decades it was a norm that these encampments existed and were not disrupted. In my administration, we made a decision that from our point of view, it was unacceptable to have it as single encampment anywhere in New York City and they had to be dismantled anytime they're identified. And we've been doing that now for years and it's really caused the encampments to become a rarity, but whenever we see a new one, we immediately take it down because again, it's not fair to anyone and it's not healthy and safe. Juliet identified three encampments yesterday morning, I want to thank the NYPD, I want to thank Homeless Services, I want to thank the Sanitation Department, they have worked together to dismantle those encampments. All the people who were living there have been offered help, which is always the goal, we don't want to see anyone living on the street, we want to always offer help. So, those three conditions have been addressed and anybody in the media, we welcome anytime you see something like that, we want to address it immediately. But all New Yorkers call 3-1-1, if you see anything like that, if you see any place where homeless folks are congregating, we need to know so we can get out there and address it and get people help and get them off the street.

Well, speaking of streets some good news today as we continue to build out the open street's initiative. This is an initiative city council put this idea out there, it's an idea that now is ready to go into higher gear. Want to thank the city council for their partnership, want to thank the NYPD and Department of Transportation, Department of Parks, all the city agencies that are working together to make this work. And thank God all those city agencies have more and more of their employees coming back who had been sick with COVID-19, the workforces strengthening all the time, so we can do these open streets now with the right kind of enforcement and make them work for everyone. So, over the last few days, including the weekend, we have opened over seven miles and now we're adding two more miles that will be open tomorrow, Thursday. And in this case, these are specific sites that are being managed by local business improvement districts. So, local organizations that do such important work for their communities and are taking responsibility for making sure that everything is set up and monitored and is safe and they'll work very closely of course with the NYPD and DOT. I want to thank the Flat Iron partnership, Garment District BID, that Lower East Side BID, the Downtown Brooklyn partnership, and the Third Avenue BID in the Bronx, all of them stepped forward and are going to ensure that these streets that you can see there on the slide will be open streets, again, starting tomorrow. Also want to announce that one open street that was part of the very original pilot program, this one is now coming back. It's a half mile long, 34th Avenue in Jackson Heights pilot location, now becoming a full-time location for the duration of this crisis. And again, this is the next phase, we're announcing more to come soon as we build this initiative out.

Another thing we are building out all over New York City is the initiative to distribute free face coverings to all New Yorkers who need them. This is getting a very enthusiastic response. People are really thankful to be getting these face coverings and the more they get, the more

they're using them, which is exactly what we want. I told you this week earlier that we would be distributing 7.5 million free face coverings and that is really going to make a huge impact. And so people who want to know where they can get them, again, we have a map that identifies locations all over the city. We've added a number of locations since the weekend. All you have to do is go to [nyc.gov/facecoverings](http://nyc.gov/facecoverings) and you can see any, you can see a number of places where you can get a face covering to help protect everyone, your family, your fellow New Yorkers to help drive back this disease.

Now I like to express my thanks every day. There are so many people doing so many good things in this city. This is the ultimate team effort, 8.6 million people pulling together to fight back this disease. Well today is one of those national days of thanks for a particular group that has been just unbelievably heroic and that is our nurses. Today is National Nurses Day. So, listen, unbelievable, just absolutely breathtaking what the nurses of New York City have done during this crisis. They're heroes in this city; they're heroes to this whole nation. So, I think it's a fair statement if there's any New Yorker out there or any American out there who didn't appreciate our nurses before, well they damn sure will appreciate them now. And that is just and fair that nurses are finally getting the recognition they deserve, but we sure want to do more. I've had the joy of going out to a number of our hospitals, places like Elmhurst Hospital, Kings County Hospital, a number of others, to applaud all the health care workers; take a special appreciation thanking our nurses for what they've done here. And everyone today when you see any health care worker, but particularly since it's their day, when you see a nurse say the word thank you and say it with passion because they deserve all the thanks in the world.

Okay. Now, I'll frame what we do each day. Of course, go over our daily indicators. I'll frame this by saying not every day goes the way we plan it. The big trend is good, but day-to-day we still see fluctuations that are sobering and it's a reminder, do not take our foot off the gas. Do not relax our rules until it's time. Get it right, fight back this disease. Avoid that boomerang because today we see some numbers that reminds us we still have some work to do. So, on the first one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, that number has gone up. Look, it's gone up markedly, although thank God against a much smaller base than it used to be. So, from 75 to 109, we got to see that go down obviously. Daily number of people in ICUs across our public hospitals for suspected COVID-19 - still too large a number overall. The increase is small from 596 to 599. We got to get that number down; that's another key piece of the puzzle. Very good number to go down is the third one, percentage of people testing positive for COVID-19 citywide – that is down from 22 percent to 15 percent. Obviously, a particularly universal measure – that is a good example. That's good news today. So, more fight ahead. We want to get all these numbers going down together. I am convinced we will, but we got some more work to do.

So this brings me back to that word I started with, moderation. Think of the virus again - give it human characteristics for a moment. This is a virus that seeks out our weaknesses. Talked to you a few days ago about some places, some big cities in Asia that started to open up a little too fast and unfortunately had to clamp back down, in fact add new restrictions. In some cases, it was only one part of the city where there was a problem, but it became a problem for everyone. This disease looks for our weaknesses and tries to exploit them. We can't let that happen. So again, I see all over the city, incredible discipline, incredible adherence to the rules. I want even more. I don't want to let this disease back in the door. So, let's keep fighting because I know we all want that restart. If you want that restart, let's get it right, right now. Let's, and we'll do it in moderation because that's how we make sure that every step we take holds. Then we take the next step. That's the game plan and we'll have a lot more to say on this in the coming days.

Okay, a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

Okay, with that, we are going to turn to colleagues in the media and as always, let me know the outlet of each journalist.

**Moderator:** And just a quick reminder that on the phone we have Deputy Mayor Been, Deputy Mayor Thompson, Dr. Barbot, Commissioner Banks, and Commissioner Trottenberg. And the first question goes to Gloria from New York One, Gloria.

**Question:** Thank you. Good morning. Mr. Mayor, I wanted to ask we heard from Pat Foy this morning who said he believes 2,000 people were removed from the subways. I'm wondering if you have any information on that and out of the folks that you were able to engage can you give us an idea of exactly where those people were sent? What is the resource that the city is using at this time and what are you doing to ensure that they don't go back on the subways when this crisis is over?

**Mayor:** Got it.



**Question:** My second question

**Mayor:** Gloria, wait a minute. Wait a minute, timeout. Again, we're going to keep – guys, I really need everyone to understand this. Gloria, that's a multipart question. We're going to stay there with that, respectfully. We got this rule where we're trying to give as many people an opportunity in the time we have. There's a lot going on that I need to get back to every day. So, what I meant, I originally said to each journalist, one question. We decided to give people another question. They're turning into three, four, or five-part questions. We can't do that. So, let's make it clear. I'm going to make sure we answer what you just asked - great multi-part question. We're going to answer that and I'm going to ask your colleagues who follow to please do really literally one or two questions. And if people can't do that, then we're going to have to change the format to make it even simpler because we just need to be fair to everyone. I want to get to as many people as possible. So, I'm going to start and then turn to Steve Banks.

Gloria, from what I can see, and I want to make sure we're speaking the right language here about what's going on. First of all, again, very thankful for the collaboration with the state and the MTA. I think something very important is happening. Steve will be able to tell you everything we're doing once people do agree to accept services, because this is something that's now been built over three years – the HOME-STAT initiative. It's really, you know, a pretty well-oiled machine now with great results. Several thousand people have come in off the streets and stayed in and not come back to the streets. So, Steve will talk to you about what we do with people to make sure that they receive those services and stay-in to the maximum extent possible. But to the number, I want to caution that again, the federal government's annual study that's been going on for a long, long time says the total number of homeless people in New York City, on the streets, on the subways, all five boroughs, is somewhere between 3,500 and 4,000. That number has been pretty steady in recent years. In the really cold months not like now, but the more the winter months, you do see a lot more people go into the subways. Steve will give you his view. He's literally one of the leading experts on homelessness, not only in New York City, in the United States of America, and he's been at it for about 30 years. When I hear that number, I respect Pat Foye a lot. I like him and respect him; we've worked closely together. I don't understand how that number could be accurate given what we know of homelessness in the city and this time of year. It's hard for me to imagine that many people who are actually street homeless. Now, that's [inaudible] different from people who might live in a shelter or people who maybe appear to be homeless, but may not be homeless, but that number surprises me is all I'll say. But Steve, you're the, you're the expert. Tell us what you think of that.

I know he's out there. Steve, can you hear me? Alright.

**Commissioner Steven Banks, Department of Social Services:** Can you hear me now?

**Mayor:** There you go.

**Commissioner Banks:** You hear me now? Okay. I mean, I can tell you what we saw last night out in the field and the platforms. You know, we were down at World Trade Center and other locations working with the staff. We encountered just north of 250 people and in about 60 percent of them accepted services and came inside. And, Gloria, we have shelters and safe havens and we're providing the same services to the people last night that have enabled us to bring, you know, 2,500 people off the street who remained off the street, and that's really the key metric. And, you know, look, some people may return, but we'll be back every night, offering that helping hand to bring them off the streets with the same success that we've had over a period of time, bringing lots of people off of remain off the streets – more than 2,500. But I also want to put the numbers in context, and Pat Foye and the MTA have very collaborative with us. We appreciate the collaboration with NYPD and our social services not-for-profit staff. But, you know, half the people that you see in the subways are transient, meaning we'll see them one or two nights and then not see them again. And last night was really a focus on the people that are long-term on the subways. And so, that's why I think the success of last night is just preliminary, it's only one night – about bringing in 139 people is really what we're focused on. The human beings that are in the subways and had been there for a long period of time, as opposed to the people that may be there one or two nights and we never see them again. And then, that's the perception that there's lots of people there for long periods of time. Actually, our focus is on the people that are really there a long period of time and those are the people that were able to bring in last night.

**Mayor:** Yeah. And, Steve, just, if you could take one more step in that answer, I think we all want to understand a little bit better. Again, hearing an estimate of several thousand, my question is, from your experience, is it conceivable that, that could all be street homeless folks or do you assume that some combination of people that is street homeless and other kinds of folks?

**Commissioner Banks:** I think, again, experience tells you that people end up on the streets for brief periods of time or are perceived to be on the streets for different periods of time for a whole range of economic reasons, but they're not the people that you see every day. And those are the people that you see every day that we're focused on in the City's plans. And so, someone who might be panhandling, for example, may well have a home. I think that people make a lot of assumptions when they see people and assume that they don't have a roof over their heads. What we're doing with our social services staff is actually determining, through our by-name list, which individual – individual by individual – needs our services and who we can bring inside. And, you know, sometimes this all gets lost in large numbers. At the end of the day it's about human beings. And on a case by case basis, that's who we were able to bring in last night and we'll keep doing that.

**Moderator:** Next is Marcia from CBS-2. Marcia?

**Question:** Good morning. Mr. Mayor, how are you doing?

**Mayor:** Good, Marcia, how are you?

**Question:** Good. My first question has to do with social distancing enforcement. As you're well aware, I'm sure, Jumaane Williams and Eric Adams say the NYPD enforcement of social distancing has shown racial disparities, that the enforcement has been subjective and selective. And, of course, they want you to release data. I wonder your take on it and if you've given any instructions to the NYPD in terms of guidelines for who gets approached and who gets a summons. And my second question has to do with the homeless again. Homeless advocates are saying that you're taking homeless people off the subway, but not providing them with safe alternatives. Your response to that?

**Mayor:** Thank you, Marcia. No, I just respectfully disagree profoundly with those advocates. I appreciate their work, but, again, you know, Steve Banks, leading our efforts to help the homeless, one of the premier advocates for the homeless, you know, for decades in the city, in this country, and what Steve has created with his team and with all the amazing nonprofit organizations that do the outreach is something absolutely unprecedented in the history of the city. And it is compassionate and decent and it's about helping homeless folks get to a Safe Haven or a shelter that works for them. We've been adding so many more spaces in places that homeless people – you know, where we find them, where they need to be so that we have places that work for them. We provide medical care, food, substance abuse support, you know, in terms of programs to get them off substances, mental health services. It's extraordinarily compassionate and we know it's effective because over 2,000 people have come in and not gone back to the streets. And I would think the advocates would want to applaud and support something that is ending street homelessness, something that's never been done in the city before. And we put a huge amount of resources into it and is clearly working. And this new opportunity because of the collaboration with the MTA I think is going to open the door wider for getting even more people off the streets.

On the question of the NYPD, I've been in touch with both Borough President Eric Adams and Public Advocate Jumaane Williams. We've had very constructive conversations. I understand the concern 100 percent. I want to see fair and equal policing everywhere. That's what we've been devoted to now for over six years, changing the nature of policing in New York City to make it focused on neighborhood policing and being respectful and responsive to every community and more deeply connected to every community. And I think it is working. I think the challenge we all have with this pandemic is we're learning new ways and new approaches. We'll have a lot more to say on how we're going to refine our approach, particularly with the warmer months, but the message NYPD is be consistent across all communities, you know, communicate with people as always under neighborhood policing, help people to understand this is about their own health and safety and their family. And the vast majority of people, Marcia, are accepting these rules and following these rules. It's actually been quite rare that the NYPD or any other agency encounter as much resistance. The vast majority of New Yorkers get it and they're living this

way. And sometimes they need to be reminded or sometimes they need to be offered a face covering, but they accept and they act accordingly. We definitely want to get the data out, so we will make sure the NYPD gets the data out. It's going to show you where there's been, for example, summonses. But remember, there hasn't been a need to do a lot of summonses in the last two months for social distancing – that's a good thing. But definitely that transparency will be provided.

**Moderator:** Matt from Newsday is up next. Matt?

**Question:** Hey, good morning, Mayor. Two questions. First, this morning on TV you said that localities, including New York, are “either acting on furloughs and layoffs or preparing for furloughs and layoffs.” How many people are you preparing to furlough or cut? And secondly, absent of crime, that two people who live together have a right to be in public without practicing social distancing – yes or no?

**Mayor:** So, Matt, on the social distancing issue, the way I've understood it from the beginning, and Dr. Barbot can comment on this too, that if people are already entirely exposed to each other all day long in their household, social distancing is a different concept than it is for folks who are not exposed to each other. If you're already in constant contact with someone, it does not require the same approach as if two people who do not live under the same household – same roof, I should say – come in contact. So, our focus and enforcement is to make sure, first and foremost, there's not large gatherings – not any kind of gathering; second, that social distance is recognized; third, that people have face coverings on – in that order.

On the question of furloughs and layoffs, what I said this morning is I've been talking to mayors all over the country – Republican and Democrat, both – some of them already announced layoffs. Some of them already announced furloughs. Some are planning to, every one of us has to start looking at that possibility if we don't have any money. We have a budget coming up in June. I'm not here to project anything while we're in the middle of fighting for the stimulus funding, because that's what would get us out of this mess, and that's what New York City deserves. That's what every city and state that's suffering deserves, is stimulus funding that makes us whole, that replaces all the loss revenue, that allows us to retain our full workforce, ensure that public services are being provided, basic services so we can get on with a restart and recovery. That's what I'm doing right now. I've been talking nonstop to the members of our Congressional delegation – spoke to Speaker Pelosi on Sunday. We need to get that stimulus done so that people don't have to experience furloughs and layoffs. If it doesn't happen and we're missing \$7.4 billion in revenue, then all options are on the table. But it's not time to talk about specifics yet.

**Moderator:** Erin from Politico is up next. Erin?

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor. On the question of the subway, the homeless people on the subway – so, if I understand correctly, these folks, if they accept your offer being sent to shelters, is there any consideration of offering them the hotel rooms? You know, if that might be safer than the [inaudible] shelters?

**Mayor:** Well, again, I'm going to turn to Commissioner Banks, but I want to note that over these last years – this is another thing that didn't get a lot of attention and it really should have, so I want to bring it to light now. For decades, there was a bad division of labor, I think, in this city where shelters that needed the positive influence of the NYPD didn't have it. And some years ago, we made the decision – and I really want to thank the NYPD for seeing how important this was – to have the NYPD go into shelters, supervise the security, train the staff, and have a regular presence in our shelter system. That's been tremendously helpful in terms of making shelters safer. On top of that, we really invested intensely in the Safe Havens, which are much smaller facilities. So, I think we have to keep in mind that the realities of our shelter system are different than what they were a few years ago, different also because we have so many more Safe Havens. And then you have to think about the individual and what they need. Steve can speak about it more eloquently than me, but, depending on each individual, they need certain services and supports. Some people could fit a hotel run fine, others may not and may need a different kind of supervision and support. So, we're tailoring it to each. We have hotel rooms available whenever we need them now, but the decision I think becomes very case by case. Steve, why don't you jump in?

**Commissioner Banks:** If I could just add to that. I think it's important to understand the range of tools we now have to try to meet people where they are and bring – help people come in from the streets. In terms of our overall shelter system, right now, about 7,000 of the single adults out of the 17,000 single adults are actually in commercial hotel rooms as part of some initiatives that proceeded COVID-19 and some that were put in place since COVID-19. And we're continuing to move people out of our single adult [inaudible] shelters into hotel rooms, that will continue. So, coming into our regular shelters, there are pathways to get into the commercial hotel rooms that we're bringing online literally every day. In terms of the tools that we have to bring people in from the streets in addition to our traditional shelters, with now the availability of commercial hotel rooms through that system, we also have the Safe Haven beds and the stabilization beds, some of which are in hotels now that have enabled us to bring the people in off the streets over the past several years. And people are accepting those beds every night, that we're bringing people in from the streets. And I think we announced a week ago that, even in the middle of the pandemic, we're opening up another 200 beds in the Safe Havens as, again, a pathway off the streets for human beings. So, there are a range of options that our shelter system now has, some of which we didn't have before. And that we're using those – all those tools to try to bring people in from the streets.

**Moderator:** Debralee from Manhattan Times-Bronx Free Press is up next. Debralee?

**Question:** Hey, good morning, everyone. Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** Yeah, Debralee. How are you doing?

**Question:** I'm well, thank you. I wanted to follow up, Mr. Mayor – and actually I'm not sure if Commissioner Shea is on, but I wanted to follow up on this conversation about the enforcement on social distancing, specifically about the fact that you've got both PBA President Pat Lynch and other thing that there's just not enough clarity around the guidance, that there isn't really a sense of what it is that police officers are supposed to be doing when they approach people who

they feel are in violation of social distancing guidelines. Moreover, others are saying that this is just another opportunity for subjective policing and are concerned that this is going to become, particularly as warmer weather approaches, that it's going to become just another opportunity for mistakes. Forgive me. That said, can you speak to the fact that others are calling for other agencies and other individuals to be involved in this other than police officers? That this is in fact not a policing conversation, but particularly, as it deepens, and you've got more people out in the streets, that this should become a citywide conversation across other agencies. And then finally, I wanted to ask Commissioner Barbot, with wellness visits being postponed by parents who are concerned about visiting doctors, what guidance is the City offering for parents who want to make sure that their children are vaccinated on time and are receiving the – receiving the visit that they need in light of the fact that there is now Kawasaki concerns and also that we are asking people not to travel and visit doctors unless they absolutely need to.

**Mayor:** So, I'm going to let Dr. Barbot answer that and I'll double back to the policing answer, but just to say, as we lead into Dr. Barbot, I've been very struck already, Debralee, by visits to a couple of our Health + Hospitals clinics, one in Morrisania in the South Bronx, the other in Coney Island, that the way they are reporting so much more use of telemedicine in this crisis and that it's actually getting everyone more used to using it, and lot of the patients, a lot of the people who go the clinic are getting more and more accustomed and more and more comfortable with that option. So, even as we're navigating the question of people limiting travel or not being willing to go out, I do think we're seeing more and more use of telemedicine in a helpful way and it's something we clearly want to deepen in our efforts as well. We'll more to say on that soon. But in terms of how to advise parents, Commissioner Barbot, jump in, and then I'll come back on the other question.

**Commissioner Oxiris Barbot, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:** Certainly, Mr. Mayor. And, Debralee, thank you for the question, because I think it's an incredibly important one. You know, when we hear new information that is potentially scary for parents, like something like Kawasaki's or Kawasaki's-like syndrome, it can make parents more hesitant or more concerned about what they should be doing for their children. And so, I want to just clarify that even though we are hearing about Kawasaki more and more, it still remains a relatively rare condition, and we want to draw attention to it because during this time it can be confused with other things and we don't want to lose time in terms of children getting access to treatment that can be definitive and avoid long-term consequences. In addition, we want to make sure that not only parents, but New Yorkers in general know that health care is open for business, meaning that we want New Yorkers to seek prepositions that they may have that they've had to put off seeking care for because maybe their doctors weren't open. And, as the Mayor said, it doesn't necessarily mean going to the office in person, but it could mean having telephonic access. It could be a whole host of ways in which medical practices are now objecting to social distancing and how they continue to see patients and ensure that they have ongoing care. And so, that also extends to children going to their pediatricians to get their necessary vaccinations. We want parents to continue taking children to their pediatricians ensuring that they have, you know, the proper face coverings when they go. We are working clinical practices to make sure that they are also open and available to provide patients with necessary vaccinations. I know that H + H is very much actively reaching out to patients to make sure that parents know that they should be bringing their children and to get their vaccinations as scheduled, because we don't want this

situation to then lead to children getting infections or conditions that are vaccine preventable. So, I think it's a really important question and that opportunity for us to get out the message that medicine is open for business and that practices are seeing patients for things other than COVID and that there are ways to conduct these visits that don't always need an in-person visit.

**Moderator:** Jeff Mays from the New York Times is up next, Jeff?

**Question:** Yes. Good morning, Mr. Mayor. You didn't really answer the first part of Debralee's question about –

**Mayor:** Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah. Let me – Jeff, hold up. I meant to and I got caught up in other things here. My apology and then we'll come back to your question. Yes, Debralee on the previous – so look again, we are dealing with something that is entirely new still to all of us. It's going to take time to get it as good as it should be, but I think the core realities are still strong, meaning we have for years now built up a philosophy of neighborhood policing. We have a whole new generation of police officers who have been trained in this. All the entire force has been trained in this philosophy in de-escalation. I think we've seen two months now of the NYPD engaging the people of this city in the context of the coronavirus. And I have to say, and I obviously every day am listening for what's working and what's not. We've seen a couple of really unfortunate and inappropriate instances, but only in my view, a very small number compared to the vast number of interactions between our officers and our communities that have gone the right way. And I want to keep things in perspective. Our officers are trying to understand how to be effective in this new reality, this pandemic. We need to do more to create clear, simple protocols and make sure that our supervisors are supporting them. We also have to remember that for weeks we had the NYPD missing a huge percentage of its officers because of the disease. We're now coming into a situation where the force coming back to its normal levels. We're getting more and more experienced with what works, what doesn't work in terms of trying to figure out the right kind of enforcement. Again, the hierarchy I present is were most concerned about stopping of larger gatherings.

That's where the most danger is and then enforcing social distancing on a more individual level and then the face coverings and most people, this is the bottom line and I've checked this many times over with community leaders and with the NYPD regularly. Most people when asked to create more distance from around the people around them, or are asked to put on a face covering, they're doing it. So, we're not having overall a compliance problem. We do need to give clear guidance. And to the other part of your point, Debralee, we definitely want to bring community leaders and community organizations much more deeply into this. Previously when the virus was on a constant upswing, that wasn't our focus, obviously. Now that we're getting some relief, it's something we can do more and more. And obviously with the warmer weather it makes sense to do it more and more. So, I have more to say on that in the coming days as well.

**Moderator:** Jeff?

**Mayor:** Jeff?

**Question:** Thanks. Just following up on that question just given the interactions we've seen between police and enforcement of the sort of individual social distancing, I mean, do you think that there's a benefit to that enforcement or does it outweigh the risk of these negative interactions you've seen police without masks and some of these encounters. And then secondly on the subway, what are your expectations about a return to 24-hour service? Do you have any sort of timeline and do you do you expect that 24-hour service will eventually return?

**Mayor:** Yes, Jeff, absolutely. There's a conversation the governor and I had as part of the decision to move to the overnight cleaning. He was clear. I was clear. We were totally unified, that we will return to 24-hour service. Obviously the state runs the MTA, but this was something to me was prerequisite to the city agreeing to this plan and agreeing to the, you know, putting the resources into it that we are, is we want to know that when the crisis was over, we would resume 24-hour service. I think the answer to your question is when the crisis is over and that will be determined by our indicators that will be determined by what happens with this disease. Look, my general hope is that we're going to see more and more normalcy through the next few months with particularly this very aggressive test and trace approach and that it'll get better with each month. And when we get to September, particularly with the beginning of school, I want the beginning of school to happen fully and safely. And that is one of those things I think will signal that New York City is back in a really strong way. I want to get us there again, that moderation approach to get us there. So, I'm not going to be surprised if the overnight cleaning goes on for months because health dynamics require it. But my hope is it's a matter of months. And then we get to a situation where we can go back to the 24-hour service.

On the question of police officers. I've had this conversation with Commissioner Shea. It's absolutely essential that officers wear masks. The idea is of course for their role that they play in our society, it is, everyone looks to them for guidance. Everyone looks to them as an example. We want people wearing masks when they're outside and coming in contact with people. Look the rules clear if you're outside and you're not coming in contact with anyone, that's a situation where you don't, are not required to wear a mask. But I think it's safe to say police officers are in contact with people very, very regularly. And so, the notion of wearing the mask regularly is the right thing to do. And again, I am watching really closely what are we seeing with interactions overall across now two months – the rules have evolved over two months, but the reality of dealing with the coronavirus and the police's role in the coronavirus crisis over two months, we've seen very few incidents. People say, oh, it's getting warmer. Be careful. Be worried about that.

I'll tell you, Jeff, I, from the very beginning of the administration, people have warned me about the warmer months and I think it's something we take seriously. I know I take it seriously, but I don't want to overrate it either because the world has changed a lot of ways before this pandemic. The reality of policing in this city has changed profoundly. The reality of the city has changed profoundly. The summers are not what they used to be in the city. I remember when summer was equated with just vast amounts of crime and violence and tension between communities and tension between communities and police. That has not been the case in recent years. In the city and the pandemic cuts both ways. It has changed a clearly has created a lot of frustration and challenges. It's also changed people's lifestyles profoundly and it's caused a lot more unity, I think, a lot more purposefulness about what can out for each other – a lot fewer people on the



street to be policed. So no, I don't think it's, you know, a simple equation that says, oh, we're inevitably going in one direction. I think we have to give clear guidance to our officers and make adjustments and we will do that. But I think the vast majority of interactions between our police and our community are positive and effective and, and I have faith that will continue to be the case.

**Moderator:** Kathleen, from Patch is up next, Kathleen?

**Question:** Thank you Mr. Mayor and everyone. I was just wondering if you had a response to the Comptroller's Office report yesterday estimating as many as 900,000 people lose their jobs this quarter. And since my second question was already asked, could I send it back to Gloria for hers?

**Mayor:** That's an inventive approach, but I'm not going to get into that today. I think if Gloria had sent you the question you wanted to ask it, that's great, but we're not going to bring her back on the line. So, if you have a second question, ask it now, Kathleen.

**Question:** Oh, that's okay. That's what I've got. If you could just focus on the report, I would greatly appreciate it.

**Mayor:** Great. So, Kathleen, look, it's a staggering number. I mean, think about this in human terms. You know, that's so many families that now are left in doubt for their future. That's so many people who are not going to have money for the basics in their lives. There's so much pain that comes with that. When you hear that number, it's just unbelievable. I appreciate that the Comptroller did this report. It is sobering. Look, we have been preparing for this reality now for the last two months. That's why, you know, just earlier this week I said, we are now ramping up our food program to be able to feed a million people a day. I mean, think about that. A million meals a day.

Unfortunately, we've entered a whole new reality and this certainly puts a point on the human suffering happening in this city, but it also puts a profound point on why we need federal aid and we need it quickly because the situation is getting worse all the time. And because people are suffering, because the ability of the city to reach people is getting strained where we're going to use everything we have, but it's getting strained every additional time someone loses their job, it's more and more need that gets created. So, I take that number very seriously. We're going to build everything we do on the assumption that it's that number and could even get worse. We're going to be there for every New Yorker. As I said, the focus will be health, safety, food and shelter. That's where we're going to keep our focus all time for whatever the number of unemployed people becomes. But if ever there was evidence why the federal government needs to step in now, I mean, we've literally not seen anything like it in our lifetimes. This many people becoming unemployed this quickly. So, we need a much bigger response to be able to really protect people going forward.

**Moderator:** Anna from the Daily News is up next. Anna?

**Question:** Hi Mr. Mayor. I like your haircut, looks nice.

**Mayor:** Thank you Anna.

**Question:** I just wanted to get an update. How many coronavirus tests are being conducted in New York City today on average? Last week when I checked in, it was about 14,000. We obviously need tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands a day. What are we at?

**Mayor:** We're in that same 13,000-14,000 range the last I checked a day or two ago. We will keep updating on a regular basis and we need a breakthrough, meaning we need the federal government to come in with a real sea change in terms of lab capacity because Anna, what we're seeing right now – so we're around, let's say we're around 13,000. The fact is we would like to be initially, you know, tens of thousands a day. I want to get to 30,000, 40,000, 50,000 a day as quickly as possible. We'd love to get higher than that. Now the antibody testing is coming into play now more and more and that's certainly helpful. So the numbers that you and I are talking about, the PCR test, the diagnostic test, which still I think are the single most valuable tool we have in a test and trace program, but even with the imperfections of antibody testing, we're going to use that information. It's going to contribute to what we do in terms of testing, tracing, isolating, quarantining, making decisions about how individuals can engage their workplace or not. It's another piece of evidence we're going to use. We obviously started without even having any testing and we had to base things on people's symptoms.

That's not the whole story, but that's another piece of evidence we can work with. But to get these tests numbers up really closer to where we want to be, we've got to get a lot more lab capacity. We now have the self-swab test approach, which is easier and faster, but we need that lab capacity whether we're doing self-swab or test kit, whatever it is, we need the lab capacity to really increase and that's what we're working on right now. So I am very hopeful in the coming days when we pull all these strands together, we're going to be able to put up real numbers that will allow us to do the test and trace we need to, that would really have a transcendent impact, but there's definitely more work to do on the lab front.

**Moderator:** Gersh from Streetsblog is up next. Gersh?

**Question:** Hello, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

**Mayor:** Good, Gersh. How are you?

**Question:** I'm doing great. I appreciate that. Listen, two quick questions. The new Open Streets that you just announced are just almost entirely all of them being overseen by business groups. As you know, the City's effort to get a hundred miles will involve community groups and residents to create the open space under guidelines asking for some pretty serious commitments in terms of staffing and monitoring the space. Today's announcement reveals a potential problem with that. Will the only communities that get this vitally important Open Streets program be those that have Business Improvement Districts or neighborhood associations that happen to have the luxury of not being completely preoccupied by matters of life and death for essential workers in those communities? And just the quick question is, I noticed you finally decided to include transportation is one of your recovery panels. I'd like to know about that.

**Mayor:** Sure. On the first point, Gersh – so, no, we're not, this is a beginning. We expect to be in every kind of community. In fact, you'll remember that when the idea first came up, the central concern was how do we do it safely? Will we have the right kind of enforcement; will we have the right kind of structures? As we have been working with this model, we're finding different ways to get it done that we believe are safe and come with structure. So I really want to emphasize my concern from the beginning was needing structure, needing enforcement, needing safety. I think as we're getting deeper and deeper into it, we're finding more and more ways of doing that. And that's great. We also said from the beginning, this had to be something that focused on where the need was greatest, where this kind of approach would benefit the most, and when we worked with the City Council on the recent package, one of the strands was focus on communities that have been hit by the disease hardest. Another of course focus on the areas around parks and in parks where the demand was growing with the warmer weather. So, these examples you see today are just the beginning. You're going to see these, kind of, open streets in all five boroughs more and more, and you're going to see different kinds of organizations that have the capacity to help make them work and give them real structure joining into it. We'll announce them as they come together.

In terms of the advisory panel, and you raised a couple of good points in some of your colleagues and the media did too, about what is going to mean for the future to come back differently in this city in terms of issues of transportation. When we put together the panels initially, we were thinking about the most immediate restart issues and obviously some of the issues around transportation are going to be dictated by larger realities that are different than what's happening, for example, with small business. A certain amount of our transportation system clearly has – a lot of our transportation system has continued unabated because it had to. So, it's a different reality. It's not the same kind of level of restart as, for example, what we're going through with small business, but we put the group together because even though it's less about the restart, it's very, very important to what happens in the months thereafter. And we want to start planning now and again, some of the questions – I want to thank you, Gersh, and I want to thank your colleagues that raised this point about is this an inflection point, is this a moment to rethink how we get away from too much dependence on cars? And the answer is yes. We need to see this as a transformational moment, even with all the pain, even with all the challenges, we are not going to bring New York City back the way it was. We're going to bring it back in some ways that are different and better. And because we're in a transformational moment, we can rethink some things and do them very differently.

So, what I want to see from this group, again, less about the immediate restart decisions we have to make in the coming weeks, more about how we think about the months and years ahead. I want ideas on how we maximize mass transit, minimize use of the automobile, think about this in terms of fighting global warming and pollution. Think about this in terms of fighting congestion. Think about in terms of equity for communities and really help us take a big jump forward by the end of this administration in terms of how we approach issues of transportation with an eye on the future.

**Moderator:** Last two, Julia from The Post. Julia.

**Question:** Hey, good morning, two separate questions for you, Mr. Mayor. One is a follow-up on the furloughs and layoffs, are you willing to sacrifice first responders, teachers and health care workers without first making spending cuts identified by Comptroller Stringer, programs that do not have proven results such as Thrive NYC and unnecessary DOE contracts? And then my second question is a follow-up to what you said on TV this morning about nursing homes. You said that some COVID patients should go back to the facilities because that's where they're known. But how does that make sense if you're also exposing other vulnerable elderly residents to the disease? Shouldn't there be alternative facilities where they can go and get good care to help prevent the spread of the virus?

**Mayor:** So, Julia, as I've talked to our health care leaders, there has been a recognition that this is a complex question, it's not a simple question of saying that the best thing for a senior is always the send them into a hospital setting. What I think I would say to take your question and broaden it further, is we need some real serious changes in the approach to nursing homes. Although the city doesn't have a direct role in nursing homes, and because I don't experience these issues because we don't regulate the nursing homes, what I'm seeing on a human level is unacceptable and obviously the city has trying in every way we can to help the nursing homes in the last two months to get them a lot of PPEs and provide whatever support we can. But I think this crisis has pointing out that we need a different and better approach to nursing homes going forward. A lot of them are for-profit enterprises. If that model is going to be continued, it's obviously going to need more rigorous standards going forward, but on the specific question of where should a senior be if God forbid they contract COVID, first of all, a doctor has to decide that the second of all, I do understand that you have to think about the totality of that senior's life and for many seniors in nursing homes to be away from that place could be problematic and a whole host of other ways. I think the question is can the nursing home support that individual while keeping everyone else safe? If they can, that's a viable option. If they can't, of course the seniors should not be there, but I think it's up to doctors and it's about each individual case.

On the second point, we're going to just disagree from the beginning, respectfully and I respect the Comptroller, don't agree with him on some things as well as to which initiatives are having which impact on people. Anything that's about health and safety as a priority, whether it's physical health, mental health. We're focused on health. We're focused on safety. We're focused on shelter, and we're focused on food right now. So, I'm going to look at the entire budget and for the duration of this crisis through that prism. I said earlier, I'm not going to start projecting what we have to do in terms of the budget. I'm saying that if we are missing \$7.5 billion now and then add the projections that the Comptroller just gave us on unemployment, which means horrible things for working people and families, but also means there'll be less and less revenue on top of that for the city. If our revenue picture continues to get worse and worse, not just for the next Fiscal Year, for the one after that too. If we're threatened with potential cuts from the State level because the State has run out of money, we're going to have to do very, very painful things and every option will be on the table.

The way to avert that, the right way to do it, the fair way to do it, is for the federal government to step in and bail out cities and states all over the country, in every part of the country that is hurting. Every place that's lost revenue, not any fault of their own, deserves to see that revenue replaced. The federal government can do it. I keep saying they found \$58 billion effortlessly for

the airline industry, why are they not helping America's cities and states get back on their feet? So that's what we're going to fight for. I'm going to remain hopeful in that fight because I think there's a groundswell of support including from Republican governors and mayors. That's the way to solve this problem. I'm not going to theorize. I'm going to say let's go solve the problem in Washington, otherwise any and all options will be on the table.

**Moderator:** Last question goes to Dave from ABC-7. Dave.

**Question:** Hey Mayor, I just wanted to ask you two quick things, so if I could please. I didn't quite understand what you, and if Steve Banks wants to clarify or you, the difference between Pat Foye's number of the number of homeless people on the subway this morning and what your tally is? The differences, and I think Steve used the word transient, if they were just on the subway catching a ride, hanging out, they are not counted in your tally but they are in Pat's, and what you're saying is upon interviewing them that you determined that they are long-term basically living on the subway. And my really quick question to you Mayor is I just wanted to get your thoughts on the president announcing yesterday that the white house coronavirus task force is going to be going away sometime around Memorial Day? It seems kind of early.

**Mayor:** Yeah, Dave truer words ain't never been spoken. It sure as hell does seem kind of early. I don't understand it. And Memorial Day is right around the corner. I do not understand what he's thinking. Dave, I checked this morning and my understanding is that there are several states where the numbers are increasing markedly, big states. This is – we are not out of the woods by any stretch of imagination. So, thank God things are getting better in New York City, but we still have a long way to go. That fear of the boomerang is something everyone should be having on their minds until you are sure this disease has been fought back down to the point where we call low level transmission, where there's so few cases you can trace every single one in all their contacts, until that point, no one should breathe easy and this isn't a place where the number of cases are going down.

If you're in – if you've got parts of the country a number of cases are going up, that's a profound danger to the people in those places and even more to the rest of the country that it's going to start to spread elsewhere. So, this is far from over. I do not understand what he's thinking. He should not close down that taskforce. He should treat this as the national emergency it is. President needs to understand the coronavirus is not going away right away, no matter how much you wish it was. He needs to understand that the thing he could do to actually fight the coronavirus would be to get us all testing and he still hasn't done it, and needs to understand if he wants a restart and a recovery, he needs to help the cities and states. And as of last night, he is more interested in helping rich people get a break on their capital gains tax than he is in providing relief to New York City and other cities and states around the country. So, I think he is losing touch with the reality and that is very, very dangerous.

On the number of homeless, it's a good – I'm glad you asked the clarification, Dave. I'm going to say it and then Steve can join in again as one of the leading experts anywhere. We know again from annual studies that the number of permanently homeless people, which I think when people are talking about homeless, they're thinking about the street homeless, the person who's on the corner for months or years on end, the personal lives in the subway, and that's a thank God, many

fewer people than I think people imagine. But still way too many, and we have to end that phenomenon once and for all, versus a lot of people you see panhandling, they're actually not homeless. They have a home there, they live in a shelter, not homeless in the sense of street homeless, have no place that they go to at night. So, I think there's some confusion sometimes on which is which. We have a very specific strategy for folks who are permanently street homeless versus someone is out on the street part of the day, but has somewhere to go at night. And that number 2,000 just doesn't sound possible in terms of talking about permanently homeless people. So, Steve, again, I'm trying to as a layman explain it. You can do it better than me, but could you finish out that answer?

**Commissioner Banks:** Yeah, I would just add to that, that the people that we engaged last night were the people that we found in the subway. You know, Pat's a great partner. We work with him all throughout the year, and I think that one of the key realities here is that this work isn't just work we did last night. So, we know the people that are there on a long-term basis and we've been working to bring them off and we've had success on a human being by human being basis, and that's what last night showed as well. But that much larger number is often referenced for, you know, one night the coldest – usually a cold night in January. Sometimes it's warmer and more people in the streets rather than subways or vice versa. But the numbers that we engaged last night with the numbers that we saw last night, as opposed to as the Mayor said, that transient that – that people that, that have somewhere to go that may be seen much or twice and then not again, as opposed to the person you see all the time, and that's the person we're really working very hard to bring in and last night we had success, much more to do in order to really change lives.

**Mayor:** Yeah, and Dave, I mean look, it's way too early to tell. Obviously, we'll be at this for months cause again, I assume this period of having the subways closed at night for the cleaning will go on, you know, for months. But I mean if it's anything like what we saw last night in terms of the ability to reach people and actually change their lives and potentially get them off the streets for good, this could have a really transcendent long-term effect on this city. If you're talking about the worst part of homelessness is the folks who are permanently street homeless, living in the streets, living in the subways or some combination, but that, you know, at 8.6 million people that 3,000 or 4,000 people at any given point in time or living on our streets, it is one of the most painful things in the city. It's one of the things that bothers us the most morally in so many ways. We believe we can break that, change that once and for all, break that cycle and actually get these people to homes, not living on the street, living in a home. And we've seen real progress in that direction. But last night showed us something we've never been able to see before in history because we've never had a single night where all of the stations were closed for cleaning before. And if those numbers are at all an indicator where we're going, this could be the beginning of something very positive in terms of helping the homeless and improving life in this city overall. So I'm very, very encouraged by what I see.

Let me close it down now and just say to everyone that, and as we come back to that word moderation, I think it's a positive word in this case because it means you're going to get it right. It's a positive word because it means when we make the move to begin reopening, we're going to feel real confident about it. Then we make the next move, we're going to feel confident about that and so on and so on. We're bringing in the voices a lot of folks who bring tremendous

expertise to help us make these decisions the right way, but what's going to guide us is the facts, the science and the sureness that when we do something, we really know it's backed up by some rigorous analysis and then when we do it, we watch to see how it's working and confirm it's working and then take the next step. If we can do that right and avoid that boomerang, the two points go together obviously, imagine how good it will feel to get to the point where we're really restarting and we don't have to be looking over our shoulder all the time, wondering if we left a door open for this disease. I want people to have confidence. I want people to feel the comfort that when we make these moves that are right moves and the folks we're bringing together to advise us who are going to help us a lot, and the next few days we'll lay it out more and more of the thinking coming out of these groups so people can literally start to visualize what the restart looks like and how we're going to make it safe and secure for everyone.

Thank you very much, everybody.

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