

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 15, 2020, 10:00 AM
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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good morning, everybody. Here's what you see all over New York City – New Yorkers determined, determined to bring this city back from the coronavirus crisis, determined to get our city started again, determined to keep our streets safe. Wherever I go, I meet New Yorkers who are standing up taking back their streets, making clear to everyone that their neighborhood is their neighborhood, it will be a safe place for everyone. Last evening in East Harlem, a really amazing demonstration of neighborhood strength and solidarity. I want to thank everyone who was part of the march yesterday evening. It was a very moving event. A special thank you to Omar Jackson of SAVE, and all the members of the Cure Violence movement and the Crisis Management System, all the organizations who helped put on the march going all through East Harlem, sending a message that the community would take back its streets and stop the violence. I want to thank Reverend Robert Rice – you see him there – led us in prayer, passionate prayer, for peace. I want to thank the elected officials who played a leadership role yesterday, State Senator Brian Benjamin and Council Member Diana Ayala. It is powerful when you see people in the streets of their own neighborhood saying enough of the violence, this is our neighborhood. And you're going to see this more and more all over New York City. That's what we're going to talk about today because for seven years, we have made this city safer and safer by working with communities, by recognizing the leadership of community leaders, organizations, clergy, elected officials, seeing what people can do to build peace in their own community and building a different and better relationship between communities and the NYPD.

Now this weekend in Brooklyn, we'll be taking action to stop the violence. And starting on Friday, the Central Brooklyn Violence Prevention Plan goes into effect. This plan has a two-fold core to it. One, increased targeted NYPD mobilization. Two, community mobilization, community members, community leaders, community organizations out in the streets, making their presence felt, reaching young people in new ways. We have seen this in recent days the power of this approach. We saw in just the last few days after tragedy residents, leaders of Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, Save Our Streets, the extraordinary Cure Violence organization, SOS Bed-Stuy out there leading people, showing them there was a better way. Council Member Robert Cornegy, who you'll hear from in a moment, providing leadership. We saw it in Harlem on Saturday night, the Cure Violence movement out in force, Occupying the Corners. This is the way forward.

So, again, two pieces to this equation. One piece, yes, we need to have more officers in the right places. So, you'll see additional deployments in Brooklyn this weekend in Bed-Stuy, Crown Heights, key areas where that additional deployment will help, carefully coordinated with the community. You're also going to see a community effort that's going to make a huge impact called Occupy the Hotspots. And that's a specific effort on Friday and Saturday in seven

locations in Central Brooklyn to go where the problems have been. And with that human presence, that community presence, stop the violence, led by the Cure Violence movement, the Crisis Management System that has done so much to diffuse violence and stop it before it starts. You're going to see a lot of clergy out there this weekend. You're going to see a lot of resources provided for young people. You're going to see efforts to reach young people in new ways with a host of things they need, because a lot of this is providing our young people hope and opportunity after months of dislocation and trauma that they've gone through with the coronavirus. You're going to see mobile trauma units out to provide that mental health support to people who need it in communities that have been hit so hard. All of these pieces start immediately over the next few days. Then next week, the Bed-Stuy Anti-Gun Violence Task Force gets going, bringing together a host of community organizations and leaders with the NYPD to develop a long term strategy.

So, I have a real honor of presenting to you two people who have been leaders in this effort. They've worked for years and years to keep the community safe and are leading this new effort under the new reality we face to once again take back our streets. First of all, someone who – I've appreciated his leadership many times. I appreciate what he's done in terms of safety and providing opportunity to his community, also the amazing work he did with creating, on the spot, the first Black Lives Matter mural in the city in Bed-Stuy – my pleasure to introduce Council Member Robert Cornegy.

Council Member Robert Cornegy: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And thank you for convening this conversation about safety. What we believe is that while the All Out program will deploy – and which we appreciate – resources into our community that are criminal, police-involved, we think that we should have an All Out program as a community. So, we intend to, where those hotspots are located, to provide long term sustainable services like Jobs Plus, like affordable housing. All of the things that we have as a great city, as resources and tools to people who are underserved, we plan on deploying those simultaneously. While NYPD is doing their job, we intend to, as a community, do what we believe to be our job, which is to provide opportunity, sustainable movement for our communities. We've gone through stop-and-frisk, which – the dismantling of stop-and-frisk. We were told that that would make a lawless city and it did not. We actually, as the Mayor mentioned, had become the safest city, and we refuse to go back. So, we intend to take the efforts that we used in the past, deploy them in conjunction with the All Out programs, so where these hotspots are located, make sure that services are all out for those communities.

On the north side of Bed-Stuy, we have a Jobs Plus program that works with the housing developments that are on that side – Marcy, Tompkins, Sumner, Roosevelt – and have made a difference. And we want to extend that difference to the entire Bedford Stuyvesant. So, where there is an uptick in crime, we're going to have an uptick in services and really flood those areas with the necessary services because what we understand is that while there are deprived individuals who are pulling the trigger, society is responsible for the bullets that were loaded into that gun. And what we want to do is make sure that we can begin to dismantle these guns by providing services in its stead. So, I want to thank the Mayor. I want to thank the Violence Interrupters who've been on the ground and who are responsible for decreasing the retaliatory violence that can be seen.

The family of Davell Gardner Jr. – I want to extend my condolences. I want to say thank you to the Taj Gibson Foundation who's offered to assume the responsibility for paying for the funeral

of the one-year-old, who was lost in our district. That's what community looks like. So, everybody's stepping up, but we want to make sure it's sustainable. We want to work with the administration and the Mayor's Office. This task force, I believe, is an excellent opportunity for us to address the problems and get the resources where they need to be so that we can reduce gun violence and recidivism and all of the things that are plaguing us. This uptick right now, we can handle this as a community, as a city if we come together.

Mayor: Thank you very, very much, Council Member. Council Member, I appreciate what you're saying, because you can hear in your voice and the way you describe the reality – sometimes I think New Yorkers have to understand more and more the sense of ownership that people feel in their own neighborhoods, their own community, and the sense that it is the ability of each community to change the course of the trajectory, to create peace. And a powerful thing the Council Member said, 'where there has been an uptick in crime, we will provide an uptick in services.' We're not giving up ever. We're going to meet the challenge and we will never go back. We'll never allow the city to go back. And so, thank you for your resolve and the resolve of so many other community leaders.

And now I want to turn to someone who I think is an unsung hero. One of the people who has really helped to build the Cure Violence movement and the Crisis Management System all over the city. And again, this is a movement that New Yorkers need to understand better because it is about people creating solutions in their own communities. Folks who do this hard work, who have been laboring for years without renowned and without resources, we're trying to do something about that now to give the support deserved. But Ife Charles has been there, helping to build up SOS Bed-Stuy, but also other Cure Violence movements around the city. My pleasure to introduce Ife Charles.

Ife Charles: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you, Council Member Robert Cornegy. I am here as a community resident, but also an advocate for the work that we do in communities. And as the Mayor and Robert Cornegy – Council Member Robert Cornegy has said so eloquently, this is about collectively utilizing the strengths that we have as New Yorkers. We are resilient and we are tough and this is a time for us to step up. And so, yes, we have the Crisis Management Systems across the city in all of the boroughs, but this is a call for every New Yorker to participate. And so, over the past couple of days, we've had meetings and we've had marches, what we've done in our communities to bring awareness to put the guns down and for our communities to become safe once again. You know, someone said about taking back, we never lost it, right. So, that is my attitude. We have never lost our communities and it is our responsibilities, as residents, to participate.

So, this weekend we're going to have these marches and we're going to be out there. There'll be one that will be happening in Bed-Stuy where this young child was taken. There will be one tomorrow at 5:30 pm at 423 Gates Avenue. So, that's a call for us to be out there. The Mayor has also said that we have Cure Violence across the city and each one of these Cure Violence sites are dedicated to being out in the community this weekend like we've been. There is no reason for us to continue to have this violence. And so, as we continue moving, not only offering services to the community around mental health, around trauma, looking at job opportunities, our goal this weekend is to be out there on Friday and Saturday to saturate the community with the Violence Interrupters and the outreach workers and all of the members of the Cure Violence team. And that is for us to collectively – I keep using that word collectively because this problem can be

erased. It is not something that is sustainable. It is not the way that we, as New Yorkers, should live. We should not continue to live in fear. And I think we have the solution. This is an opportunity for us to look at the models that are working. It's an opportunity for us to utilize the people who've had lived and learned experiences and are willing to go back out there and have conversations with individuals.

Council Member Robert Cornegy just said, it's a few people, right. We're a large state – 8.9 million, if I'm correct – that we have all of these people in this city, most that are doing the right thing. For us at Cure Violence, for doing this model across the city, we have great people doing the work and it is up to us as a community to be able to spread that, to change the mindsets of individuals, to continue to saturate communities around this violence. And so, it is my hope that we all collectively join in this taking back, as we say, the streets, which were never lost, right. We will occupy our communities and that is happening this weekend. And Cure Violence will be out there. We'll be out there mobilizing continuously. We'll be out there 24 hours, seven days a week. And folks say to us, well, I don't see you, and I always say, us being absent on the street does not mean that we're not present someplace else. And sometimes that presence is us talking these individuals down for them to put this gun down. So, I encourage us all as New Yorkers to participate and be out here and be a part of this movement because you too are a credible messenger.

Mayor: Thank you so much. Ife, powerful, powerful comments. And, Ife, thank you for the work you've done for years, and I've admired it for a long time. And, again, to everyone, recognize community leaders who come forward. It's never easy to stop a problem in any part of our community, in any part of our city, but these are community leaders who decided the problem must stop, who believe it can and will stop, put their selves on the line, their bodies on the line to change the reality. And I want you to recognize, it's not just the times that an act of violence was averted because of that intervention, it's also the message it sends to everyone else that people can stand up and take back their community. So, really, really appreciate the efforts of both of these leaders and so many other leaders in Brooklyn who are doing this great work.

Now, look, all of this is happening against a painful backdrop. And sometimes when we're talking about what's happening in our city, sometimes we forget, even though we all live through it, just the sheer magnitude of what we have gone through – the greatest dislocation in the life of our city, in generations, possibly the greatest dislocation ever because of crisis layered on top of crisis. But what's so striking to me is the way that New Yorkers just don't give up. It's just not part of who we are to know how to give up. And everyone keeps fighting back and we're going to go over the health care indicators in a moment, but I am astounded at how well New Yorkers have done fighting back this challenge in so many ways.

Now, part of what we all have to do together is keep building this city back. We have to have that faith. Some of it is very material, what it takes to come back and restart the city, some of it is about faith and belief and commitment. So, what we owe to the people of the city here at City Hall and the City government is to keep moving forward every way we can, every way that's safe, and keep building momentum for this city to come back fully. And I have absolute faith that we will. So, here is a very different subject, but one that's very, very important to the future of the city. The way we decide what this city will be in this future, the way we plan our future, the way we decide what we will build and won't build, how we're going to build affordable housing, how we're going to create jobs, it all comes back to how we plan the future of our city.

And we talk about our City Planning Department, our City Planning Commission, think about it as what it will mean for the future, not only look of the city, but where there will be opportunity, where there'll be that next affordable apartment, where there'll be that next job.

That work has to begin again. So, since the coronavirus hit in March, the City Planning process has been suspended. The part of the process that most everyday New Yorkers haven't necessarily heard the details of, but absolutely crucial to all of our lives, what's known as ULURP, the Uniform Land Use Review Process, that needs to start again. So, the City Planning Commission will start remote meetings in August. Those will be open to the public and then they will start a deeper process in September to restart ULURP projects, and review will start with community boards at the local level once again. So, it's time to re-engage the City Planning process and move this city forward. And anyone who wants to learn more about the upcoming meetings can go to nyc.gov/engage and learn how you can participate remotely.

Okay, as we turn to our indicators, one point before that, because of course the indicators depend on what we know is so important in fighting back COVID, that's testing, testing, testing. We, in the beginning of the week, talked about what was clearly a national challenge, the delay in getting test results. In the last few days, we have seen some improvements. This is preliminary data. This is not the final word, but what we are seeing now in the last few days is the test result time is starting to increase rapidly in New York City. So, that's good news. We had a real trough there for a while. Again, the national lab capacity, it was being stretched. Right now, based on the latest information, the average – this is not everyone – but the average for test results is down to three days for those results. We're pushing the labs to step up. They're doing a great job of meeting the demand. And the fastest testing option is through our Health + Hospitals hospitals and clinics, our public hospitals and clinics. And if you want to get a test visit nyc.gov/covidtest.

Now, let's do the indicators. And again, good news today. Indicator one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, threshold of 200 – today, 66 patients. Number two, daily number of people in Health + Hospitals ICUs, threshold 375 – today 303. And number three, percentage of the people testing positive citywide for COVID-19, threshold of 15 percent – once again, two percent today. So, that shows the hard work of all New Yorkers. Keep it up. Quickly, a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's turn to our colleagues in the media. Please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: Hi, all. Just a reminder that we have with us today Council Member Cornegy, Director of Anti-Violence Programs and Capacity Building at the Center for Court Innovation Ife Charles, Director of the New York City Department of City Planning and Chair of the City Planning Commission Marisa Lago, Deputy Commissioner of Mental Hygiene Dr. Hillary Kunins, and Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. With that, I will start with Juliet from 1010 WINS.

Question: Yes. Good morning, all. How are you?

Mayor: Good. How you doing, Juliet?

Question: I'm okay. So, Mr. Mayor, the question is for you, this first question, we had Chief of Department Monahan on 1010 WINS yesterday. He was explaining that the Department is working on a strategy to get guns off the street and to replace what the anti-crime unit used to do. What is that strategy?

Mayor: Julia, thank you for the question. Commissioner Shea and I will talk more about this in detail over the next few days, but this is the concept the Commissioner came up with. And I emphasize, this is something he was not just thinking about in the last few weeks, but thinking about over months and years – the need to do this work in a different fashion. So, it's taking the same officers and their abilities and applying them in a way that really pinpoints the focus on where the crime is, where the small number of individuals – and I keep coming back to this – I remember when Bill Bratton told me this for the first time, it was like a light bulb going off for me, that in a city of 8.6 million people, it's a few thousand people who are really responsible for the worst violence. So, pinpointing them more effectively with a variety of tools, creating more effective prosecutions, working with DA's, particularly around gun violence, more effective gang takedowns, and less of a friction with communities, because some of the efforts of the anti-crime unit, unfortunately, mirrored some of the reality we saw with stop and frisk, where people were confronted who were not the folks who were doing the crime. And even though, again, that unit did some very good and important work, there's a better way. I also emphasize, Juliette, believe the number is about 800 officers out of a force of 36,000, and all of our officers are involved in anti-crime work in different ways. So, we'll have more to say on that, going forward, but I think we can do this in a better way and keep this city safe while doing the most fundamental thing, which is what you heard about here, building a different and better relationship between police and community.

Go ahead, Juliet.

Question: Yes. Okay. So, that's actually a great segue to my next question. And maybe I can address this to Council Member Cornegy in [inaudible]. How do you reach these gang members with guns and how do you convince them to put the guns down? Because that appears to be the predominant violence, these drive-bys, these shootings on the street – you know, are you just preaching to the converted already? How do you get through to the people with the guns in their hands?

Council Member Cornegy: So, first of all, I think we have to take the approach that violence, overall, is a public health issue. And while we see these flashes of gun violence, really, domestic violence is up tremendously and the NYPD would corroborate that. So, I think the services being provided that haven't been provided before consistently are a sustainable way to begin to reduce the amount of violence in general, but certainly gun violence. Opening up the parks again, which is right on the horizon, obviously, opening up our youth centers, which is on the horizon – the pandemic, it cannot be underestimated how important the pandemic has been just to people's psyche, and their mentality, and their ability to get out. There's no excuses for violence, especially gun violence, but there are contributing factors that will be studied in the future about the mental health of people. So, I think continuing to coordinate services and our communities, like Ife mentioned, making sure that we're consistent and have sustainable messages around employment, around affordable housing, around under-education and good quality school systems. If we continue to do that, we will, in conjunction with the NYPD, and reducing crime,

but making that sustainable. So, it's a coordinated effort that I look forward to engaging in over the next few days.

Mayor: Thank you, Council member. And I want to turn to Ife on particularly one of the things Juliet said – and I really appreciate the question, because, again, you know, is it preaching to the converted? Well, I've seen it's anything but preaching to the converted – that you're dealing with folks who are unfortunately caught up in that life of violence and trying to pull them away from it. I've talked to some of the people who have come away from that life because of Cure Violence. But if you could talk about – just take us there, take us to the grassroots level, what it means to intervene with someone and help them to a different path. And what the challenges are with that is that?

Charles: You know, part of this work – I think people have this notion that this immediately, right? It does not. It's a layer. And I call it a layer of strategizing around helping someone who is in that mindset, and it does not happen overnight. And so, identifying where or what those beefs are, what those common conflicts are, and then start to work with parties in those conflicts. And some of this stuff may be historical, Mayor. Some of it may be attitudes post this COVID that we've talked about, right? The pandemic. We're talking about a group of individuals, not many, who are struggling, and, for them, respond into conflict. The only thing for their attitudes to deal with this is to pick up a weapon. Our goal always is to have folks have conversations about what is driving this feeling. And then, in that process, work with them, because you just can't work with the individual, you have to work with their network. And so, when we talk about strategizing, you can't go out there and just say to someone put the gun down, right? Because people believe that's what you automatically do. No, there's got to be layers of conversations. You have to understand where the source of the argument is coming from. And once you understand where that source is, you realize there are other parties. Now, our credible messengers, there are some – and I always say to folks, we have 36,000 police officers and we have about 300 cure violence workers, right? If you think about the ratio of Cure Violence workers to police officer and the capacity [inaudible] area of where we're covering, at times we have to go in and spend time with the individuals for them to trust. You may have relationships with these individuals, but at that particular time, what they're experiencing, we may not be able to understand. And it will take an opportunity for us to be there with them long-term, and then that trust is built, and then we have other avenues to give to them. Take my gun and do what is the question that many ask, right? And so, for us take my gun and here is another opportunity for you. Here is some mental health work – services. Here is the opportunity for some job training. Here's the opportunity for some long-term job employment. These are the things that we're trying to get for our young people and the individuals that are in these particular gangs or in these particular sets that we're working with

Mayor: I'll just pull out one more point of this and tell me if you have this at the top of your mind or else we'll come back. I think Juliet's question is really important and really earnest to try and help New Yorkers understand, is there a specific example that sort of you've cherished of someone who was in the middle of that life of violence, who you witnessed the process of how they were convinced on a better path? Do you have an example in your mind?

Charles: We have staff – I can speak of one of our staff, and I hope she's okay with it. I'm going to use her first name, Faith. And this is how long sometimes – we are in a situation right now where we need to happen expeditiously. And we have think about how we do it, because then

people will revert back. Faith is a 30 something year old young woman, but Faith was that person out in the streets years ago. When I was young, I was in my mid-twenties or thirties – I'm giving my age right now – but part of that was that I had to work with Faith, along with other credible individuals that were out there every single day, Mayor, running in my car to get off the street corners. It took years. And even in that time, I remember when she turned and she had her first child and she said to me, I'm not ready yet, because you can force someone to something, and then they revert back quickly. And 10 years down the line now, Faith is now an employee, right? She's actually working with us, but it took years of us having conversations and her doing trial and error. You didn't want to be in school. What is the alternative to that, right? What else can we do? Now, you have a young woman who has said, I don't want this life anymore. This is not what I want to do, but it did not happen overnight. And if we're thinking that this is going to happen overnight, because we wanted to, it is in our hearts, we no longer want shootings, we'll tell everybody put the guns down, but there's got to be some alternatives to that. And that work happens every single day. You don't get a break from it. Changing the mindset of someone, you cannot get a break of it. When I think about the work that we do, I think about, you know, narcotics anonymous – you have a sponsor and you're able to reach out to that sponsor, and it's the responsibility of the sponsor to work with you continuously, even when you fall, because automatically when someone falls, we want to say they're out, and that is not the attitude we have with this work, because people are going to fall numerous amounts of times. If I was to ask anyone in this room, have you made mistakes? You have, but you've also had people around you to support you. And that's what we're saying. We're not saying to give people free stuff constantly. We're saying, here is a model, here is a pattern, and we mimic and model the behavior, Mayor, right? We've all been there. We mimic and model behaviors and allow them to be exposed. A lot of our young people have not been exposed to other ways of life. And so, our role in this work is exposing people to an opportunity other than what they know.

Mayor: Beautifully said. Thank you so much, Ife.

Moderator: Next we have Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

Question: Hey, Mayor de Blasio. I have just a question and it's inconsequential after what we just heard, but I'm curious, I know there've been quite a few number of your own staff who were leaving and I'm curious – I know there's a citywide hiring freeze, but is there a hiring freeze for the Mayor's Office, or are they exempt? I know that some of them have been replaced and I was curious how that works.

Mayor: Katie, we are in the middle here of putting into effect some cuts to our budget as a result of the budget that was passed at the end of June. And there's a hiring freeze citywide. There's obviously an exemption for things that are related to addressing the COVID crisis and the most basic functioning of government. So, it really depends on the position. But, you know, we are reducing the number of positions we have overall, but some roles just have to be filled as part of the basic functioning of this place.

Question: You can go ahead. I don't have a second question. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you.

Moderator: Next we have Michael from the Daily News.

Question: Good morning, guys. How are you doing?

Mayor: I'm good. How are you?

Question: I'm good. So, a quick question on the uptick in COVID cases among young people, 20 to 29. Is there any more information on this? Erin asked about this yesterday, and I'm wondering, has the tracing corps found any connection to the protests, any connection to, you know, some of these elicited parties I think there were reported on today? Any clues as to, kind of, what's driving this at this point?

Mayor: I'll turn to Dr. Varma. And again, I think we – and we're seeing this, Michael, around the country. I do think the crisis has hit younger people in a really challenging way, and they've been just yearning to get out and they're used to, you know, a very outward, focused life. And I do think you're seeing around the country, like when the bars and restaurants reopened, you know, first and foremost, it was younger folks going out. I don't know if we can parse exactly parties, protests, whatever, but I do think it's part of the reality of what young people are responding to after a long period of time where they had very, very limited options. But Jay Varma, tell us again if we have any more detail, either from our own research locally or nationally on that.

Senior Advisor Varma: No, nothing more for me to add. I mean, I do think that we're going to continue to learn more as we do these investigations and understand what the connections are. And, for now, that the real, or the highest priority, is to keep strengthening our messaging to people from every background, particularly those who are between 20 and 29, about the importance of wearing face coverings, keeping social distance, avoiding large gatherings. And also, of course, trying to get tested as frequently as possible, especially if you feel like you've had an exposure.

Mayor: And I want to just do one addition to this point for Jay to answer. Dr. Varma, you obviously have studied different outbreaks all around the world. Is there also potentially a problem of younger people feeling somewhat impervious?

Can you hear me? Okay, there you go.

Senior Advisor Varma: Can you hear me now?

Mayor: There you go.

Senior Advisor: Okay. Yeah, absolutely. I think that, you know, this is actually something that we anticipated would happen, you know, very early on. Before I got to New York, I was actually in Africa working on a continent-wide strategy, and we knew very early on that the disease has much more severity in people who are older, but that the sacrifice would need to be made by everybody in society. So, by definition, we knew it was going to be more challenging for younger people, because they need to sacrifice a lot even though their individual risk of getting severe diseases low. And so, we see that situation, I think, everywhere in the world where there is a certain amount of what we call epidemic fatigue where you're being expected to change your behavior in every aspect of your life. And so, it's one of those challenges that we're just going to

continuously have to face in terms of messaging and outreach and being very responsive to the needs of people in all age groups, because this is a sacrifice that we're all going to have to make.

Mayor: Well said. Michael?

Question: Yeah, one more. When are you planning to sign the anti-chokehold bill? Do you have a date set on that yet?

Mayor: Yeah. It's a package of bills, Michael. I'll be signing all of them later on today.

Moderator: Next we have Julia from the Post.

Question: Thanks. Good morning, Mr. Mayor. How are you doing?

Mayor: Pretty good. When the coronavirus crisis was the biggest issue in the city, you had health officials join you in your daily briefings. Now, that this terrible violence is the news of the day, there are rarely, if ever, NYPD brass involved on these panels. I'm wondering how you can talk about curbing violence without any input from officials in the Police Department? You just mentioned that Shea wanted these extra deployments, but he's not here to discuss it.

Mayor: Julia, we do different things different days. What has been so important to do in the last few weeks is to emphasize the role that community leaders are playing, which honestly doesn't get the attention it deserves. So, there's a purposeful effort on my part to show the people in New York City there are so many community leaders, so many organizations out there doing this work, and this is going to be central to how we approach it. NYPD, as I said, Commissioner Shea and I will have a lot more to say on the new strategies, going forward. We'll address them. But everything that I talk about is based on my conversations with the Commissioner and his team all the time. But this is about trying to show the people in the city the community piece of the equation, which honestly gets left out of the public dialogue way too often.

Question: But, you know, you talked about how much, for instance, you respect Chief Monahan's experience, for kneeling with the protesters, and then, you know, he's blamed the uptick and shootings on this disbanding of the anti-crime unit, the defund police movement, that cops are hesitant to make arrests, all of which you disagree with, but don't you think it's important for the public to hear from him who is an expert on law enforcement?

Mayor: The public has heard from him and I have great respect for him. He and I have worked really closely together for years, and, I'll remind you, he became Chief of Department during my administration, so that's a statement of the respect I have for him. I don't agree with him on everything he said, but I respect his right to say it, to express his honest concerns. But he and I have talked about this many times, we're moving forward with the strategies that make sense for this whole city, for all communities in this city. You can listen to someone and respect their experience, but also disagree. I believe the truth here, I've said it before and I'll say it again, is we're dealing with a perfect storm that is more than any one factor. It's more than any recent decision. It is much more about the total impact of the coronavirus, the dislocation it's caused in people's lives, and I really ask everyone to have the intellectual honesty to acknowledge that when people don't have jobs, over a million people lost their jobs in the course of weeks, no school, no activities, and the court system's not functioning. The criminal justice system is not

functioning. Come on. That is the foundation of what we're going through here, and anyone with eyes to see can understand that.

Moderator: Next we have Jillian from WBAI.

Question: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: How are you doing today?

Question: I'm well, thank you. I have my first question is for both you and Council Member Cornegy, one of the best ways to affect change is through employment and small businesses are the largest employer in New York City, but there's a huge crisis in their closings that predates the virus. Commercial tenants have no rights, especially regarding leases and the only real legislation that could help, one of the most vetted bills in Council history, is the Small Business Jobs Survival Act, which the Mayor used to support when he was in the Council. Why is this bill still languishing?

Mayor: Hey, Jillian, just clarifying because different bills have different names over time. I assume you're talking about commercial rent control, right?

Question: No, it's commercial rent arbitration.

Mayor: I'm sorry. Commercial rent arbitration. Okay. So as you remember in the State of the City, I said, we need to once and for all, try to address the legal problem that's existed with commercial rent control because I did support that idea originally and then came to feel after talking to a lot of legal experts who were very sympathetic to small business, that it just wasn't legally tenable under our current laws, and we were trying to figure out a new approach. I need to get up to date on the rent arbitration issue. So I'm – I promise you, I will give you a clear answer on that, but in the meantime, what we're trying to do is help small businesses to get access to everything that's out there. It's not enough, but there still are grants that we've created loans, the federal programs, different philanthropic programs. We're trying to help them with legal services, and this is something that predates COVID – that if a small business is having a conflict with a landlord, we can get them free legal services to protect them through small business services, obviously doing everything we can to stop them from experiencing the fines, and then we're helping specific businesses to get up and running in every way we can obviously, especially what we've done recently, the restaurants, but many others as well, but on the rent arbitration issue, I will come back to on that.

Council Member Cornegy: We introduced several bills in my first term, one was the commercial tenant harassment bill, which like the Mayor mentioned does provide a recourse for commercial tenants, the first in the country. If they're harassed by their, by their landlords and forced to move and it provided also money for legal expenses, and then we also created the Chamber on the Go, which actually takes the city services right to the commercial corridors throughout the city and provides access to capital and technical assistance, and in regards to the bill that you mentioned, I believe that is being reintroduced by another one of my colleagues.

Mayor: Go ahead Jillian.

Question: Okay, well, I'm going to follow up because nothing that you guys have talked about really addresses the lease issue. Capital is great. Legal services are great, but they don't talk leases and small businesses need to plan and they need to be able to plan for more than a year or two ahead. So that's – this bill is the only one that lets them do that, and so if you need to take a look again, but it's been introduced since the eighties. So, you know, I mean we're past the point of crisis now.

Mayor: Yeah. I would also say Jillian and I appreciate the point, and again, I will get you an answer on that, but I want to come back to the underlying reality. We have small businesses going through immense stress right now. I'm very, very worried about the small businesses that may not be able to make it through, and I think that's disproportionately happening in communities of color. At the same time, I have a lot of faith and respect that a lot of small business owners are going to find ways to fight back. There's a lot of resiliency in entrepreneurship. What is the unknown right now, Jillian, is what is the market going to be like as we are coming back? I mean, this recovery is going to take years. I think it's safe to say that the commercial rental dynamics are going to be very different and what I am hoping for, and this is not to say, you know, hope replaces legislation, but I want to make this point. I'm hoping that landlords out there understand that if they're disrespectful to their tenants, if they try and remove their tenants or not give them an opportunity to pay over time or whatever accommodation can be made, I don't think it's likely you're going to get new tenants right away. So, it's just a common sense point. Everyone's going through this crisis together. It's going to take a while to rebound. The best thing is for landlords to show a lot of understanding and respect for the small businesses, help them get through because it's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to do for the city. But also, I think it's a smart thing to do because if you, if you do not work with a small business, you kick them out. I don't know who's going to replace them right away. So, I hope landlords are thinking both compassionately and pragmatically in that case.

Moderator: Next, we have Henry from Bloomberg.

Question: Hello Mr. Mayor, how are you doing today?

Mayor: Good, Henry? How are you doing?

Question: I'm okay. I'd like to ask you a question about the city revenue since the last, since you produced the budget. Do you have any new indicators about how the revenue is doing compared to projections?

Mayor: Where we left it? And I believe it was May 25th or 26th, \$9 billion loss between fiscal '20 and fiscal '21. Henry. I'm very worried that we'll get worse. We tried to do a conservative estimate, but I'm worried that it's going to get worse. I'm also very worried about potential state cuts to our budget. So I do not have an update for you in the coming weeks as we see what happens particularly with the stimulus, you know, we'll be speaking more and more about where things are going, but I think, you know, the \$9 billion to begin with is just a staggering figure and a very sobering one. Go ahead.

Question: Okay. I there have been so many cases in which police have acted with excessive force. I mean the story in the Times today is just one example. But there are a lot of examples in that story, and I'm just wondering whether you're taking another look at the police training that

you were so proud of and thought was going so well that maybe it wasn't as effective as you thought, and maybe it has to be rethought.

Mayor: I appreciate the question. No, go ahead. I'm sorry.

Question: Question is are you reconsidering that in light of all of the incidents that show police using a lot of force against people, excessive force?

Mayor: So Henry unquestionably, we're going to constantly reevaluate. We have to, that's the nature of the training. I really want to emphasize this, and First Deputy Commissioner Ben Tucker leads that effort and the team around him. It is meant to be constantly evolving. Remember it started as de-escalation training and grew from there to the point that now every officer has retrained throughout the year on a host of matters, including implicit bias, and that's something that was brought in over the last couple of years, and then there'll be more and more additions as we go along. So yeah, we have to rethink it all the time based on what we're seeing. I keep coming back to the fact that overwhelmingly, and I think the facts show it, officers have learned from that training, how to deescalate vast majority of officers do honor that training. There have been some really troubling incidents, and for those incidents, there has to be consequences and there will be, and we'll constantly update the training, but I want to come back also to the most powerful use of force question, which is gun discharges, and again, I don't know why good news is not reported. This is one of the things I will go to my grave asking, but I've said it out loud many times, and I've never seen a big blurring headline about it. 2018, I believe it was the right year, adversarial gun discharges by NYPD officers, 36,000 members of the force, 365 days in a year, 8.6 million New Yorkers that were 17, 17 adversarial gun discharges, and that means in situations where someone points a gun at an officer, someone points a gun at another person and an officer uses their weapon to stop it. That's an astoundingly low figure for the biggest city in America. That came from the work that First Deputy Commissioner Tucker and his team did in that training to teach tremendous restraint. So we got – definitely got work to do. I'm not using that fact to belittle the challenge Henry, but I do want to put things, you know, first things first – that is an astounding level of progress and that means something is working. Now. We just got to figure out how to do even more and better.

Moderator: Last two for today. Next we have Suzannah from Crain's.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I wanted to ask about Phase Four reopening. New York City's currently the only region in the state that's not entered the Phase and come Monday, we're approaching that two-week point that separated phases previously. So I wanted to know when we can expect to enter Phase Four, what are the metrics do we have to meet to do that?

Mayor: Suzannah, Phase Four is being deliberated right now between the city and the state. I want to give you an update tomorrow or worst-case Friday of where we are. This one is a little more complicated for several reasons. First of all, of course, some of Phase Four is already spoken for in that, for example, with the sports teams that are starting up without audiences, that's already been decided by the state. Other pieces of Phase Four have been spoken for the other way. For example, a number of colleges and universities have already announced that they're not going to do in person classes or activities. So, this one's a little different from the other ones in that a number of pieces have already been determined, but at the same time, there's still a substantial amount of activity that needs to be adjudicated, and I know the state is looking

at this the same way we are. We're looking at this national reality of the uptick and looking at very soberly. How many states are going through a horrible uptick right now? And we all agreed on, you know, the concept and phase three of holding back the indoor dining. So we got, decide how we feel about the different pieces of Phase Four, and if we really are ready for Monday or, you know, a different approach or different timelines, so we'll have an update for you in the next 24 to 48 hours. Go ahead.

Question: And when we do enter Phase Four, it seems like it might be a bit more of a piecemeal process. Are there certain industries that you expect to be left out and will those be brought back and sort of a Phase Five?

Mayor: Well, that's exactly the question we're deliberating. You know, these phases I think are thoughtful, but they're not, you know, they weren't handed down on stone tablets, you know, on a mountain top. I mean, they're based on what we're experiencing and we make adjustments as we go along. So, it's perfectly conceivable and the going back to Phase Three, again, the indoor dining, you know, that's on hold until a point that we feel it's acceptable. We have not put a timeline to that. So, we may say for Phase Four, some things are going to float while we figure out what makes sense. But it's going to be specific to each of the pieces. Again, you already see some real decisions having been made about Phase Four practically, either by the state or by the organizations themselves. So, I'm not going to be shocked that we have a kind of split situation. I'm not going to be shocked if we have a defined timeline for delay, or we say, hey, this piece is just going to have to wait until we get further information. But again, we'll come back with something more solid in the next day or two.

Moderator: Last one for today. Next we have Fred from WNYC.

Question: Good morning, Mayor. How are you?

Mayor: How are you doing?

Question: Good, thank you. A quick question about school-based health centers. Of course, they remain closed in New York City like the schools themselves. However, outside the city hundreds of them are open, and I talked to some of your folks yesterday. They said they're working to get them open with all deliberate speed as quickly as possible. I wonder if you could elaborate on what is keeping them from opening up. Obviously, they don't necessarily need to. There are hundreds of them they're sponsored by NYU and Montefiore, and federally qualified health centers. You would need to open all of them clearly, but, but many physicians and many public health leaders are eager to get at least some of them open to catch up on vaccinations, serve other primary care needs in underserved communities.

Mayor: Thank you for the question, Fred and I always liked to be open when I don't have the exact details on something. So I don't know what the current thinking is and how it correlates with the effort to get school open, you know, which is now about eight weeks away. So let me see if Dr. Varma or Deputy Commissioner Kunins has an update on that. Either one of you?

Moderator: Dr. Varma?

Mayor: Dr. Varma, if you're talking, we can't hear you or Dr. Kunins, if you're talking, we can't hear you?

Moderator: Oh, I think Dr. Kunins is jumping in.

Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner of Mental Hygiene Hillary Kunins, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Mr. Mayor – no, no update. We will have to get back to –

Mayor: Okay, Jay, is that the same for you? I'll take that as a yes. Okay, Fred, we owe you an answer back on that later on today.

Moderator: Fred, you have a follow-up?

Question: No, I look forward to hearing from you and your office elaborate on and getting a little past just we're doing it as quickly as possible, but really elaborating on what some of the specific impediments are [inaudible].

Mayor: Yeah, and thank you for the question, and obviously we've wanted to get as many community-based health options strengthened as we go forward, so I appreciate the question. We'll get you an update.

Everybody, let me just finish up today, right where I started. It was inspiring last night. It was inspiring to be in East Harlem with people who cared so deeply about the community and were coming out to say that they were going to make sure their own community was safe, and you could hear it in the voice of Council Member Robert Cornegy. You could hear it in the voice of Ife Charles and her very eloquent explanation of all the efforts being made. Folks feel ownership in their own communities and are going to make sure their communities are safe. This is the piece of the puzzle that in some ways is most foundational and you're going to see this summer more and more communities come out to create the reality they need for themselves and their young people, and we will be with them every step along the way. That is what New Yorkers do. Thank you, everybody.

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