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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everyone. We started this week on a really tough note. We all saw a family in grief at the loss of young Justin Wallace. He would have been 11 years old yesterday. When I was with his family in their living room what they said to me is “we can't have him back, that's what we wish for the most. But the other thing we wish for is justice. We wish, and we pray that the person who did this is brought to justice.” I want the Wallace family and all New Yorkers to know, due to the extraordinary work of the NYPD, the suspected killer has been found, has been arrested, and will face justice. It will not bring Justin back, and it's so painful to think he should be preparing for a long and wonderful life ahead. Every parent can feel that. But when someone does something wrong, at least we need to know and feel that there will be real consequences, and in very, very short order, the NYPD found the person who pulled the trigger, the cowardly individual who just fired into a home and caused such horrible damage, such pain to a family. So, the message is clear – if you use a gun in New York City, you will be arrested. If you harm someone, if you kill someone, you will be brought to justice, there will be consequences, more than ever before, and I think it's so important to understand this, the NYPD more than any time in its history has proven its ability to find anyone who commits a violent act, and there's many, many people in this city working together to make sure that those who do these acts are found. There's a lot of people in communities all over this city, helping the NYPD, there's more video than ever before. If you do something like this, you will be found and you will pay the price for what you've done.

Okay, now, as we look ahead we're going to focus constantly on keeping the people of this city safe. We're going into a summer that's going to be in many ways, a wonderful summer. A summer of rebirth and redemption for the city. There's going to be amazing events and wonderful things to enjoy in this city, but there's also challenges that come with that. Each summer we look forward to the right kind of fireworks. We'll talk about that in the days ahead, the kind of fireworks that everyone can enjoy safely and legally, but we also know there's a real problem with the wrong kind of fireworks. Illegal fireworks are noisy, they disrupt the peace of neighborhoods, but they can also be dangerous, and we have to understand how important it is to ensure that illegal fireworks are confiscated, and so they can't do harm to people in communities. We saw last year, a three-year-old boy was sitting in his apartment in the Bronx, and someone set off an illegal firework right outside the window and it exploded. The little boy [inaudible] rushed to the hospital with cuts and burns. This is serious stuff, and so our job is to pull together the work of many agencies to stop the fireworks from coming into New York City to begin with. This is a joint effort with the Sheriff's Office, the NYPD and numerous other agencies of the city, the state, and the federal government, including the ATF who we talked about yesterday – the work that they do in partnership with New York City. So, we're going after the people who bring

these fireworks into New York City to begin with. We're getting right at the source, and this is what is going to help us to have a safer summer.

Here to tell you about it, someone who I have such respect for what he has done throughout the COVID crisis, and to all the men and women who work in the Sheriff's Office, my profound thanks. Among the many heroes of the battle against COVID, our colleagues in the Sheriff's Office really distinguished themselves, and their leader is here with us. Sheriff Joe Fucito –

New York City Sheriff Joseph Fucito: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and good morning, everyone. So, we can talk a little bit about the Fireworks Task Force. It consists of 32 officers, 10 from the NYPD's Intelligence Bureau, 12 Fire Department fire marshals, and 10 deputy sheriffs from the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. But we're also leveraging the greater bandwidth from other agencies. The State Police Forces of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania. We have the Port Authority Police, we have Yonkers PD, and we have ATF.

At a meeting yesterday with NYPD Deputy Police Commissioner John Miller. We all came together to talk about what resources we had and how we were going to try to tackle this problem and be proactive to prevent what we saw last year, which was obviously a disturbing rise in the use of fireworks. So, what the Task Force is looking to do is develop information on who the major suppliers are. We're going to look to interdict these illegal fireworks as they come into the New York City. So, if we can get them before they get into the city, that's a good thing for the people. We want to target the locations where they're stored before sale, where they create a hazard of fire and explosion. So, it's not all about arresting people. It's about stopping something really horrific from happening. You don't want to keep fireworks in a garage, have a fire, and cause a major disruption to the community – as well as calm people. And we also want to target the sellers who peddle the illegal fireworks that result in multiple serious injuries to adults into often the children here in New York City. So, using all of these types of resources and using technology, we're going to try to tackle it this year to prevent the use illegal fireworks, but you should enjoy a legal fireworks display. As the Mayor said, this is a beautiful summer. You should enjoy yourself and look forward to a legal fireworks display. That's it.

Mayor: Thank you so much, Sheriff. Really appreciate the update and the good work of your team.

Now, I want you to hear from another leader who has really focused on quality of life issues and ensuring that the community works closely with law enforcement to address issues like fireworks, and this I'm going to remind everyone so much of what the Sheriff's Office, NYPD, FDNY, all the other agencies are able to do is because community members cooperate, provide information, support those efforts. Someone has been in the lead fostering that kind of cooperation and teamwork, a councilmember from the Bronx. I want to thank him for joining us, Councilmember Fernando Cabrera.

[...]

Mayor: Thank you so much, Councilmember, thank you for working so closely with our administration to address this issue in so many other quality of life issues and, and it really – we

need that cooperation and you've really been great in helping us every step of the way. Thank you very, very much.

Now, everyone, of course, to bring this city back strong, to make sure we have the summer we need to have, and then the recovery we need to have. It's about safety. It's also about health as always. It's about fighting back COVID. Today, just another reminder that people are coming in getting vaccinated. We announced yesterday really striking numbers from last week for youth vaccination, we continue to see New Yorkers come forward. Folks who get the first dose consistently coming for the second dose and every single day, more and more people showing up for that first dose.

So, today we're at almost 8.6 million vaccinations from day one. It keeps climbing every day. The formal number – 8,593,779 doses. What it proves once again is everyday New Yorkers are making the choice to come forward and get vaccinated, and there's still many, many hundreds of thousands of people who it's not about hesitancy. It's about just getting to that moment where things click and they see the right place and the right time and the right incentive or the convenience. This is why we're going to keep going deeper and deeper into communities, to spread the vaccination effort this month and all summer long, and to continue to make New York City safe.

All right, now let's talk about Recovery For All of Us, because again, what we need is a strong, full recovery in New York City, but it needs to reach all New Yorkers, and that means building back better, differently, addressing the disparities of the past, creating more opportunity for more New Yorkers. Look, last September, I set a goal for this city. That we should be the public health capital of the world. Why? Because we were the epicenter of COVID here in this country and we fought back and overcame it with incredible participation of the people, with our Test and Trace Corps., with community-based solutions. Also, with incredible contributions from our universities, our entrepreneurs, our hospital systems. The talent in New York City, the ingenuity, creating our own machines if we needed to, the medical supplies, medical equipment, ventilators, PPE, whatever it took – things that had not been produced in New York City ever were suddenly produced on limited notice. People came together, said, we've got to do this for the good of New Yorkers, and they did. That ingenuity, that drive, that's what New York City is all about.

So, the reason we should be the public health capital the world, and can, and will be the public health capital world is we have the talent. We have the ingenuity. We have the perspective of having gone through this crisis. We understand the need to bring communities into solutions. And we have the ability to build a whole new element of the New York City economy. For a long time, people stereotyped New York City – many, many decades, oh, it's just about Wall Street, or, before that, it was manufacturing. Well, in recent decades, we've proven we can have the biggest, most diverse economy we've ever had. In fact, right before the pandemic, we had the most jobs in our history. Now, we have to go farther, beyond all of our traditional industries, beyond the tech community that has grown so successful in New York City. We need to build up life sciences. This is the future. This is what is going to make New York City great, going forward, because the future, as we just seen with this global crisis, will be so much about finding solutions to the health challenges that plague humanity. And that is what the folks who work in life sciences do – they create the cures; they create the solutions. But it takes a lot of brain

power, it takes tremendous capacity, it takes entrepreneurship, it takes investment. We can combine all these things here in New York City like never before.

So, this is our future. If we want good paying jobs, if we want jobs that can reach every borough and provide new opportunity for New Yorkers, including those who've been left out, then we have to invest in life sciences. You know, there has been competition in this country for which part of the country would be able to be the center of this industry. And it parallels some of what we used to see with the technology sector. Once upon a time, if you said tech in America, you meant Silicon Valley. Well, we showed over the last decade or two more and more that meant New York City. Now, New York City is one of the global tech capitals. We're going to take that same history and double down on it with life sciences. If you say life sciences today, some people think about Boston, and Cambridge, and Route 128, maybe Seattle, maybe San Francisco. Soon, they're going to be thinking about New York City, because when you think about those other places, we have the talent base, we have the hospitals, we have the universities, we have the ability to do the research that could blow away the capacity of any other part of the country. So, for so long, New York City was counted out of the life sciences game. Now, New York City is going to surge and become a strong player and ultimately a dominant player in this space, because we have all the pieces all waiting to come together. We made a decision five years ago in 2016 to focus on life sciences. We put a half-billion-dollar investment to build up life sciences in New York City. Five years ago, you didn't hear a lot of people saying New York City and life sciences in the same sentence. Now, more and more companies are, more and more researchers are, more and more academic institutions are. We need to pull it together and prove how far we can go.

In COVID, in crisis, we showed with the Pandemic Response Institute what was possible – the lab that did so much to help us through and now is creating the solutions of the future. But this progress, this momentum won't happen on its own. So, today, I'm announcing another investment of a half-billion dollars in the development of the life sciences industry in New York City. It will bring our total investment to \$1 billion to ensure that we cement our place in the global economy as the public health capital of the world. It can be done and it must be done for the future of New York City.

We know that with this investment we will be helping to create the space and the opportunity for some of the great innovations of the future that will save hundreds of thousands of lives, maybe millions of lives. Those inventions, those creations can be done right here. No one doubts the talent's here. We need to bring it together so that we become the premier location. And you're going to hear in a moment from one of the leaders of this effort for the city, but I want to make it very, very clear – our message to everyone in the life sciences industry is, we need you here in New York City. We want you here in New York City. If you have a challenge or a need, come to us and we're going to help you solve it. A long time ago, people used to say, oh, I'd love to be here, there's not enough space. More and more, as you're about to hear, we're creating more and more lab space, more and more space to make these great innovations happen. If you want to be in New York City, we're going to make it work for you, because there's no stopping New York. There's no stopping our effort to become the public health capital of the world.

With that, I want to turn to a leader in this effort. She heads our City's efforts at Economic Development and has been showing that we can come out of this pandemic strong – the President of the Economic Development Corporation of New York City, Rachel Loeb.

President & CEO Rachel Loeb, Economic Development Corporation: Thank you. Thank you so much, Mayor de Blasio. And I am so excited to be here today to talk about life science in New York City and your ongoing commitment to this growing and lifesaving industry and what it'll do for our city. As you said, life sciences is coming of age. 10 years ago, you could count the number of life sciences companies based in New York City on one hand. Today, there are hundreds. And now, we're going further. But we want to make sure that the science that starts here, stays here. So, whether you're at the beginning of your career, exploring a new research idea, taking that research to market, fundraising, expanding your company or planning the next phase of its growth, we want you to do it here in New York City. So, what have we accomplished in a few short years since we announced LifeSci NYC in 2016? We've unlocked 2 million square feet of new, innovative life science space with millions more on its way. We funded research labs at our major academic institutions. We've seen the growth of six incubators that have spawned hundreds of new companies. We've invested in paid internship programs to connect New Yorkers of all backgrounds to life science jobs. And those investments paid off when we needed it most. Our testing strategy was how we brought COVID under control until we had the vaccine. So, we built our own labs and we built our own test kits, all the while, continuing the momentum of translating science into medicines.

As we look to the future, life science is going to play an integral role in the city's recovery for all, creating healthier communities and a stronger economy. So, thanks to the Mayor, we're doubling down that \$500 million and creating a billion-dollar investment in this industry. Specifically, we're going to create a lot of space and invest in equipment to do research. We're going to invest in companies and we're going to invest in people. We're going to make sure that we have a complete ecosystem with talent, the diverse types of labs, the funders, and that we have developed hubs around the city so that we can capitalize on the competitive advantage that is New York City. And so, in addition to therapeutics and medicines, we're investing in new areas so that we become a global leader in health tech, biomedicine, and medical devices.

Scale and diversity is a strength of New York City and we need that in life sciences as well. So, whether you're an investor, an inventor, a researcher, this is where the opportunities are and will be because it will all be here. And talent knows that they have a career that they can grow and flourish in life science in New York City. Life sciences is here to stay in New York City and these efforts will support our local entrepreneurs and create 40,000 jobs for New Yorkers of all backgrounds while building a safer and healthier New York City. I want to thank Mayor de Blasio again for supporting the life science New York City initiative throughout all these years. I also want to thank our incredible life science team at EDC, and our esteemed advisory council who's been guiding us through the past several years, and the broader community who's been working with us to bring this vision to life. We're so excited. Thank you so much.

Mayor: Thank you, Rachel. Thank you for leading the way. And, you know, Rachel made a point I want to amplify, we're saying to people, come here, this is the place to be. We're saying it for a lot of reasons that we just laid out, but there's another reason – you know, after COVID,

tens of billions of dollars of research grants are going to be available from the federal government, from private companies trying to do research to build their products. There's going to be so much in the way of resources flowing and it needs to go where the most impact will be. More and more, we want that to be New York City. The resources will be there, we need to capture them and build our economy, but also build the healthcare solutions of the future. So, this is why it's so exciting on so many levels. I want you to hear from two people who are right in the middle of this amazing moment and who, each in their own way, exemplify the possibilities here in New York City.

First, we're going to take you to a lab at NYU Langone. And I want you to hear from the director of the bio labs, NYU Langone wet lab incubator. It's a premier co-working space for life sciences startups to test new ideas, to develop them, to grow them, to create game-changing possibilities. All of this comes from atmospheres that encourage innovation. It's happening right now in New York City. I want you to hear about it from Dr. Glennis Mehra.

[...]

Mayor: Thank you. Hey, doctor, first of all, I love anyone who invokes New York-style grit. I commend you for that, and the fact that you guys stayed open 24/7, fighting the battle against COVID. Thank you, that means so much to all of us. And you made so many good points, but one of them I want to amplify – why I believe we're going to be the public health capital of the world is because the entire world is here already. Every nationality is represented. Every language is spoken here in New York City. As we create solutions not just for America, but for the whole world, the talent pool here is able to connect with and relate to the whole world. So, this is a place we have the talent and the diversity of talent to actually create global solutions. And thank you for your New York-style grit and for making things happen there at NYU Langone. This is a great example of, I think, something we're going to see a lot more of going forward in this city. Thank you.

Director Glennis Mehra, NYU Langone: Thank you for your continued support.

Mayor: Absolutely. And now, everyone, I want you to hear from another exemplary New Yorker, because he is just starting out. And we're talking about the jobs that this is going to create for New Yorkers. We're talking about a much bigger, richer possibility for the economic future of New York City, because life sciences will have a more important home here. This young man is pursuing his master's degree in biomedical engineering at Columbia – exactly what we want to see more and more young New Yorkers do to build our life sciences community for the future. My pleasure to introduce George Kenefati.

[...]

Mayor: George, thank you so much. I've got to tell you, you make me proud as a New Yorker. I love the fact that you were part of the response to COVID. I love the fact that you are gaining the skills to allow you to thrive here in New York City, and you have hope for what could be created here. That makes me very happy, but I also love your personal story. It's such a classic of New York City – Syrian descent, born in Venezuela, grew up in Staten Island, that's a true New

Yorker. So, very happy to have you here with us and the best of luck to you. I think you have a pretty bright future ahead, my friend.

George Kenefati: Thank you so much for your support.

Mayor: Thank you. All right, before we go to our indicators, want to give you an indicator of good things happening in New York City and how we are coming back strong. Tonight, the Tribeca Film Festival kicks off – and it's back, it's back full strength – 20th anniversary tonight. I remember when the Tribeca Film Festival was just a nascent idea and a fledgling, but now it's something we value and cherish in this city. It's part of the life of the city and back fully, another great sign of New York City's comeback. In the Heights, such an anticipated movie, premiering at the festival. But, tomorrow, I want to say again, a community screening – I am so appreciative to Lin Manuel Miranda and his dad Luis Miranda for what they are doing, a community screening and bringing this extraordinary movie that's going to create such pride in Washington Heights to the people of the community. And I think it's fair to say, there is no better spot to watch In the Heights than in the Heights. And I look forward to tomorrow night.

Okay. Now, our regular indicators, here we go – and they're good today. Number one, daily number of people admitted to New York City hospitals for suspected COVID-19 – today's report 74 patients. Confirmed positivity, 10.96 percent. Hospitalization rate per 100,000, 0.44. Number two, new reported cases on a seven-day average – today's report, 224 cases. And number three, percentage of people testing city-wide positive for COVID-19 on a seven-day rolling average, 0.71 percent. So, we keep making because you keep getting vaccinated. And I thank you for that.

Okay. A few words in Spanish on our future as the public health capital of the world.

[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: We'll now begin our Q and A. As a reminder, we're joined today by EDC President, Rachel Loeb, by Sheriff Joe Fucito, by Dr. Dave Chokshi, by Dr. Mitchell Katz, and by Geoff Brown, the Chief Security Officer and the Head of New York City Cyber Command. First question today, it goes to Juliet Papa from 1010 WINS.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. How are you?

Mayor: Good, Juliet. I'm trying to see if it's your real voice or your computer voice? Which one do we have today?

Question: No, I think it's real. Real deal today.

Mayor: I can hear the rich tones coming out now.

Question: Good, good. Thank you. Yes, I've been using the phone. I wanted to ask about fireworks because they're legal in nearby states. So how, when people traveled there and bring them back, how do you prevent them from coming in that way?

Mayor: Excellent question. And we have an expert here with us. Sheriff Joe Fucito, speak to that.

Sheriff Fucito: Hi, Juliet. How will you? So, that's like any other type of contraband that comes into the city. If we observe contraband purchased out of state and it comes into the city and the person that purchased it was under surveillance. Once they enter the city, they're subject to arrest. And that's pretty, pretty much how we did some of our operations regarding fireworks and tobacco and any other types of contraband that come into New York City that are illegal in the city, but legal in other jurisdictions.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, Juliet.

Question: Yeah, just to follow up. So, what would you do? You would identify people suspected of you know, smuggling these things in? Or, I mean, or are you just going to do car stops? How would you really go about that?

Mayor: As we turn to the Sheriff – he'll tell you what he could tell you, but I don't think he wants to give up all his methods and approaches. But you can speak broadly, Sheriff.

Sheriff Fucito: Juliet, I can't go into the great detail of all of our investigative techniques. I know you would like to know, it's, it's very interesting, but it would actually be a detriment to our investigations. But what we do is we identify people who have acquired illegal contraband, whether it's fireworks or any other type of contraband in our investigations. And once they're in a location that shows that they have violated the laws of New York City in New York State, they're subject to arrest.

Mayor: I like it. You make it sound easy. And we're going to be doing a lot of that until we stop this problem. So, thank you Sheriff, for that. Go ahead.

Moderator: The next is Marla from WCBS 880.

Question: Good morning, Mayor. I'm wondering if you might talk a bit about where we are in terms of herd immunity in the city? I know that you've been touting the number of total vaccinations, the number of New Yorkers who've gotten one vaccination. But where are we in terms of a full immunity?

Mayor: I'll start. And then I know we have Dr. Katz – I actually didn't hear the full lineup today. Dr. Chokshi also, okay. We'll go to both of them. But Marla, I always like to be the layman before the doctors look, I think what's important to recognize here is the COVID numbers are going down consistently. Why? First and foremost, vaccination. And we're at a very high level of vaccination now. And growing literally every day. Clearly, also a lot of people were exposed to the disease previously, and that has an impact too. The point to me is to watch the numbers and

we're clearly on the right track. And we expect to stay on that track. It does mean continuing to build our vaccination efforts. So, I think the notion of herd immunity as sort of a panacea, if you will, or a perfect answer? I think that's a little elusive, but I think the elements we need to achieve a full comeback are here and are coming together. Dr. Katz, Dr. Chokshi, why don't you jump in?

President and CEO Mitchell Katz, NYC Health + Hospitals: Well, I'd first give the Mayor an honorary medical degree for his explanation of herd immunity. In true herd immunity, it means that everybody is protected from infection because everybody else has been vaccinated. We're not at that stage. And that's why there continues to be infections. But we are at functional immunity, which the way I look at it is New York City keeps opening. There's more and more activity. We're hugging each other, we're shaking hands. And yet the number of cases is decreasing, just the opposite of what happened when New York City began to open last year. So, the high rates of vaccination are resulting in fewer infections, despite increased contact. And so that's why I think of it as a functional immunity. Thank you, sir.

Mayor: Thank you very much. Dr. Chokshi, you want to add?

Commissioner Dave Chokshi, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Yes, sir. Just to add briefly, I agree with what Dr. Katz has said. We have to think about this as community immunity that is driven by vaccination. And the numbers speak for themselves. 73 percent of our seniors have gotten at least one dose of the vaccine. 64 percent of New York City adults have gotten at least one dose. And 53 percent of the full population, that includes children, including those who are not yet eligible for vaccination, have also gotten one dose of the vaccine. So, the level of protection that we have gotten to is really driven by those achievements with respect to vaccination. But it's also an opportunity for us to emphasize that there remain people who are unvaccinated. And we want to reach every single New Yorker to extend that blanket of protection as widely as possible across the city.

Mayor: Thank you very much. Go ahead, Marla.

Question: I'm wondering if you can give us an update on that cyberattack on the City Law Department computers. Are they back up and running? And have your investigators uncovered the perpetrator or has there been any ransom put out there? I mean, have you learned anything new in terms of why the Law Department's computers were hacked?

Mayor: Let me preface before turning to Geoff Brown, who leads our Cyber Command. And I want to thank Geoff and all of his colleagues who really do remarkable work, protecting the people in New York City. But I'll preface with this. Marla. I think this is something we'll be dealing with a lot going forward. We've all seen the actions, the governmental actions, the state actors in this – China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, et cetera. Then there's plenty of other negative entrepreneurs out there trying to make money. There's a tough environment and it's something we're going to deal with for a long time. That's why we created a Cyber Command with a lot of capacity to protect us. Investigation continues, so far the facts remain essentially what they were yesterday. And there has been a strong effort to protect the Law Department.

That's the good news, but we still are looking for more answers. Geoff Brown, you want to add anything to that?

Chief Information Security Officer and Head of NYC Cyber Command Geoff

Brown: Certainly. Thank you, sir. So, a couple additional points and to also make sure we're all on the same page. New York City Cyber Command does monitor the Law Department's environment. Our defensive technology detected the attack and we were able to disrupt it. Our investigation is still ongoing with support from law enforcement partners and the best minds in the private sector. At this time, we do still have no comment on the source of the attack or that intent. Also in addition, there is still no evidence of damage to City systems from the attacker. There's no evidence of unauthorized encryption of City systems or data and no evidence establishing data exfiltration. One last point, New York City Cyber Command has established security protocols to reinstate access to all Law Department IT infrastructure and services. The Law Department is reestablishing its services and that's not dependent on our investigation. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you. Very well said, Geoff. Very helpful. Thank you.

Moderator: The next is Andrew Siff from WNBC.

Question: On your tax return –

Mayor: Andrew? Andrew? That doesn't sound like Andrew. Okay. Andrew, can you hear us? Okay. We're going to come back to Andrew Siff.

Moderator: We'll get back to Andrew. The next is James Ford from PIX 11.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, and everyone on the call.

Mayor: How are you doing, James?

Question: I always appreciate your asking. Doing great. It's a beautiful day in New York City.

Mayor: I like the way you articulate beautiful. Well done.

Question: Thank you. I want to start with a shout out to my colleagues at Gothamist actually. And perhaps you saw their reporting that among Correction officers in the city, only about a third have gotten vaccinated for coronavirus. Can you respond to that low percentage? And talk about how the City is trying to counter challenges like that among people who are very resistant to, or very hesitant to getting vaccinated?

Mayor: James, such a good question. Thank you. I'm going to turn to Dr. Katz in a moment because Health + Hospitals runs Correctional Health and obviously serves the officers and staff as well as those who are incarcerated. This has been a challenge. The good news I should say first is a lot of effort has been made by Health + Hospitals, by the Department of Correction to contain COVID and keep the levels low on Rikers and in our Correction system. And that's been

in the scheme of things a good story, especially in the year 2021. They really have done a very, very good job of keeping the rate of COVID in the jails, actually lower than in the general population. But it has been a challenge to get people vaccinated. There are a lot of officers who are not yet ready. There are inmates who are not ready. I think it tracks what we're seeing overall with hesitancy. And where we're seeing higher levels of hesitancy in different communities. And I think the answer is to keep talking to people, keep providing evidence, keep providing trusted messengers. I think it's patient work. We'll get a lot of people to buy in over time. But it's going to take more work. Dr. Katz, you want to add?

President Katz: Not much to add to what you said, sir other than that we keep seeing people come forward for vaccination who have had access for months. So, it does underline the truth of your statement, that people need different amounts of time. And we're not – it's not as if people have stopped coming for vaccination. The very same people who had access to vaccination in January are getting vaccinated now in June. So, I remain hopeful that as more people see the safety of this vaccine and the efficacy of it, that everybody will come and get vaccinated. Thank you, sir.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, James. James?

Question: Yep. Can you hear me okay?

Mayor: Yeah. There you go.

Question: You hear me now. Okay. Regarding this emphasis on life sciences, can you and members of the panel, particularly from the life sciences area, talk about how this push might focus on this pandemic? And maybe more important, preventing and identifying future pandemics that many experts say another one is simply just going to come? Others are simply going to come. Can you address how this push might be ahead of that curve?

Mayor: Yeah. James, you hit the nail on the head because that's so much of what we're focused on here. I'll start and I'll turn to Rachel Loeb. I don't know if Dr. Mehra online, I think not. But we will definitely connect you to her because you should hear from her as someone on the front line. When we decided to build our future around being the public health capital of the world, it was in large measure because it was clear that stopping the next pandemic was going to be a global mission. That literally governments, private sector, hospitals, academic institutions, all over the world were going to be working incessantly to avert the next pandemic. That was going to mean a lot of work had to be done for the good of all. But it was also going to mean a lot of investment, a lot of jobs and noble important work, finding solutions, stopping pandemics before they happen. Also finding better ways to address the beginning of a crisis to keep it contained better than what we saw here. And we unfortunately have very, very real experience dealing with these challenges. And learned from them better ways to work with our communities, better ways to get ahead of the challenge. So, the future is about stopping the next pandemic. And that work should be done first and foremost, here in New York City. That is the goal. Rachel Loeb, would you like to add?

President Loeb: I sure would. Thank you so much. And thank you for your question, because in fact, one of the things we learned very quickly is there is no economic health if we do not have public health. And so, one of the first recovery for all initiatives that the Mayor announced last late last year was the creation of the Pandemic Response Institute. What we saw was we had to spin up during war time to be able to answer the call, but we need to be prepared at all times for the next health emergency. So, we did a convening in the fall with some of the leading minds. We collaborated with Dr. Chokshi and his colleagues at the Department of Health. And then we, as a result of that convening, we issued an RFP to bring together academic, medical, community leaders so that we can be prepared. I'm thrilled to sort of share that those RFP responses are in. We're going through them now. They're amazing. We can't wait to share the winners with you. And we look forward to doing that in late summer.

Mayor: Thank you, Rachel. And just to wrap that together. James, this is so important because we have the ability here in this city to protect our own people, like never before, because of the lessons we've learned. And we've got to share those lessons with the whole globe. We also need to do this work here incessantly, to help avoid tragedies in the future. So, there's a real sense of mission in New York City right now. We learned to do things we didn't even know we could do. No one in this city was building ventilators. They literally had to do it from scratch and pulled it off in a matter of months. That kind of spirit is what defines us. And so we have to lead the global effort to stop the next pandemic before it happens. Go ahead.

Moderator: The next is Michael Gartland from the Daily News.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Hey Michael, how you been?

Question: I'm good. I'm good. A couple of questions. The first one, I want to go back to your appearance on CNN this morning. Bail reform came up and you'd said that you're in favor of it, but you think it needs some tweaks. And I was wondering if you could specify what those tweaks are? What exactly do you want to see changed?

Mayor: Michael, I'd say two things. First of all, it's a very good law, but like every law, again, keep improving, keep refining, keep addressing unintended consequences. Last April some major tweaks were made to the law in Albany and that was really helpful. I think going forward, we want to look at the best way to address some of the issues that challenge us the most. So, obviously gun violence. We're concerned about all gun violence. We're concerned particularly about homicides. I think looking at some of the parallels with domestic violence and how domestic violence is treated vis-a-vis bail, that would be a good area to look at to see if we can make some improvements. It's an ongoing conversation we're having with the Legislature. As I said earlier in the week, I think they will be back this year. And we're working to – looking to work with them on parole reform, on bail issues of course, on the discovery law, some areas where we think we can do better in terms of witness protection. Those are all going to be ongoing conversations to try and achieve some improvements. Go ahead, Michael.

Question: Thanks, Mr. Mayor. On the hack of the Law Department – a couple of things I wanted to raise. The first is just a straightforward question. Has the Law Department been using a multifactor authentication you know, for its employees? And also can someone explain why the Law Department has been using operating systems that no longer get support from Microsoft? We talked to a couple of sources yesterday who confirmed that their operating systems in place that no longer get support, which, you know, they told us as a vulnerability in these type of hacking incidents. So, you know, I was wondering if you or someone else on the call could address those things?

Mayor: I'm going to turn to Geoff Brown. And Michael, I guarantee you, I am not the person to go into those intricacies. But I will say I want everyone to understand our Cyber Command works with all our agencies to create the right defenses across the board. This is never something that's just left to the whim of an individual agency. There is a unified City approach to protecting all of our assets and capacity. And it's been very, very successful and it's something we keep building all the time. So, to your specific questions, Geoff, could you speak to those questions?

Chief Information Security Officer Brown: Certainly. Thank you, sir. And I'll reiterate your point. We're all on a journey here when it comes to building defenses. But then also building defenses that can contend with the cyber threat landscape. The same landscape that results in the types of impacts on organizations worldwide that we read about in the papers and in a very somber way every single week. Do we trust the Law Department? I want to put a simple frame on it, you know, think about it this way. We were able to detect the attack because we have defensive monitoring in the environment. We have added additional security and additional security elements to ensure its safety moving forward. And we'll continue to make recommendations for all agencies as this investigation continues. As we learn more, we will be able to defend better. It's part and parcel of being a cyber defender. You have to learn and then you have to improve defenses. That's exactly what we're doing with the Department of Law and with all the rest of the agencies. Thank for you question.

Mayor: Thank you, Geoff.

Moderator: The next is Matt Chayes from Newsday.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor, how are you doing?

Mayor: Good, Matt. How you been?

Question: I've been all right. Thank you for asking. Earlier this week you explained the NYPD tactics and uses of force in Washington Square Park over the past few weekends because cops were, and this is a quote from you, "confronting people who were throwing projectiles at them, most notably bottles." And that's the end of the quote. So, how many bottles and what other kinds of projectiles were thrown and when? And if you don't know, how can you judge the appropriate initial police behavior against thousands of people without knowing the extent of the NYPD's behavior beyond the NYPD [inaudible] –

Mayor: Appreciate the question, Matt. Look, we'll get you some of the specifics you seek, but I have been at this for a while and I really believe having watched some of the issues emerge in Washington Square Park over the last year or so, and the fact that we really do want an approach going forward that is proactive not reactive, that is putting our community affairs officers upfront to address problems and try and mediate problems. But if we see something structural where we think we've got a community problem, a quality-of-life problem, something that is starting to grow and create conflict we're going to get ahead of it. And lo-and-behold, you know, the curfew was used a few times, it did help to calm the environment. And now, as I said, we expect to use it rarely when necessary. But what I'm looking for is to create calm, positive spaces, avoid conflicts, and I think this approach ultimately is what will achieve it. Go ahead, Matt.

Question: The question was whether you know, but I've got to move on to vaccinations. You've set a goal of five million fully vaccinated New Yorkers by the end of June. New Yorkers being New York City residents. Where are you towards that goal and how are you going to meet it?

Mayor: So, let me do two points first to answer, on the numbers. Right now, in terms of fully vaccinated, we're about 76 percent to goal. In terms of folks who have had at least one dose, and this is crucial, we're at 88 percent to goal. Right now, over 4.4 million New Yorkers have had at least one dose. Essentially everyone who gets one dose comes back. We've been checking the figures. It's 95 percent, consistently. It's actually better than much of the nation. So, you know, look, we're waiting to see, because it actually really depends on the – if people got the three-week vaccine or the four-week vaccine. It's going to be very, very tough at this point to hit five million by the end of June, but we are going to be, certainly, well over four million. And then with hundreds of thousands of other people will be coming in for their second dose soon.

But what matters – the second point, Matt, what matters most is, where are we on COVID? So, it's going to take us a little longer to get to our five million, but we are ahead of the game on COVID. We're at a point of COVID positivity, that's lower than we expected to be at this point and more consistently moving in the right direction. So, we got the result we wanted, coming in a little slower on the total number of vaccinations and, bluntly, that was clearly because of the crisis with Johnson & Johnson. I've talked to my colleagues about this a lot, our health care team, I really think it's unfortunate that the federal government put the hold on Johnson & Johnson, the way they did. I think it disrupted a lot of progress. I think if that hadn't happened, I believe we would have made the goal squarely.

Moderator: The next is Yehudit from Boro Park 24 News.

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

Mayor: I'm doing well. How are you?

Question: Good. Thank you. Thanks for answering the question. On Monday, Governor Cuomo put up a chart of the 25 ZIP codes with the lowest vaccination rates in the state. Before he said that he was going to focus on those areas, a handful of which were Orthodox Jewish neighborhoods. However, at least for the Jewish ZIP codes, those vaccination rates were actually misleading because Cuomo did not separate out the 18 and under age group, which of course got

recently vaccinated, but in Borough Park is actually 60 percent of the neighborhood's population as compared with the rest of New York City whose under 18 age group is 20 percent of the population. So, therefore, because of the lower average ages of Hasidic neighborhoods, Governor Cuomo's statistics do not reflect what is shown by City data, which is that actually 50 percent of adults 18 and over in Borough Park were vaccinated last month, which compares favorably to the 52 percent rate of adult whites and actually exceeded other minority groups. So, my question is, would the Mayor consider asking the Governor to, in the State's vaccination data, to also separate out the 14 to 18 group as the City does to show both that – to show a fair representation of the Jewish community's vaccinations, which are being misrepresented, and sometimes falsely reported and thus opens up the community to many false accusations. But also, just for the State to redirect the vaccination efforts towards other neighborhoods that actually really need it now.

Mayor: Very thoughtful question and detailed question. I'm going to turn to Dr. Katz and Dr. Chokshi on that because I think they'll understand the nuance you're raising better. Look, I think the important point is we have gotten a lot of cooperation and great teamwork in the Orthodox community from institutions, from community leaders. First, with testing, now with vaccination. We want to reach everyone, obviously. You're right that we're constantly looking for what adjustments we have to make to reach places where the rate is lower. But I also want to remind you what you heard earlier from Dr. Chokshi, the goal is to keep reaching every community until we've gotten literally every single person who's willing to be vaccinated. With that, in terms of the specifics you're raising, Dr. Katz and then Dr. Chokshi.

President Katz: Thank you, sir. I agree that doing vaccination as a percentage of the population is deceptive in any part of the city where the number of children is much larger. And we know that it's true about the Hasidic population. So, I think that the way that the City reports its data is better and more representative of what's going on in the Orthodox Hasidic community. And we can certainly give that feedback back to the State, that focusing on the group that are adults and then separately looking at the younger people for whom there was just a recent approval, makes sense to me. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you. Dr. Choksi, do you want to add?

Commissioner Chokshi: Yes, sir. Just to add briefly, exactly right. You know this is, Yehudit, why we do include both percentages for all ages and adults on our data as you noted. And it does help us to guide what we need to do with respect to outreach. And I wanted to touch a little bit on the ways in which we have engaged the Orthodox Jewish community in particular. We launched a dedicated vaccination campaign, you know, specific to the Orthodox Jewish community in May. We've also partnered with the same community-based organizations that were so vital, our testing effort, as the Mayor noted, last year and leveraged those trusted messengers and partners for our vaccination campaign as well. And we are now working with those same groups to do pop-up sites in those communities as well as at our static sites that already exist at places like the Ezra Medical Center, the Rambam Medical Center, and ODA of Williamsburg. So, these are some of the things that are already in flight. But one piece that I do want to emphasize is because eligibility has expanded to ages 12 and up now, this is an opportunity for us to ensure that more and more people do get vaccinated. And so, that's going to be our square focus for the month of June.

Mayor: Thank you very much. Go ahead, Yehudit.

Question: And then just going back to crime. A couple of days ago, you referred to the time of Giuliani as the bad old days, and many workers and people, and just many New Yorkers remember that time as mayor – some people remember it as a time when New York City was more ordered and safe. So, I was just wondering, besides for stop-and-frisk, are there any other anti-crime or policing tactics that either Giuliani or Bloomberg used that perhaps you are not using now that perhaps could drive down crime?

Mayor: It's a really important question, Yehudit. So, let me put it in perspective. The – and I respect that some things happened in the Giuliani years that helped move us forward. Although I would give particular credit to Bill Bratton and Jack Maple more than to Rudy Giuliani, honestly. And I think it's quite striking that when those great public servants were helping to turn around the situation in the city, Rudy Giuliani fired Bill Bratton because he was getting such favorable press. So, let's put things in a little perspective. The way we lowered crime in 2014, '15, '16, '17, '18, into '19 far surpassed anything you saw in the Giuliani years. So, let's just be clear. The high point for reducing crime in New York City and making New York City safe and making New York City the safest big city in America happened during my administration. We had levels of crime that hadn't been seen since the 1950s. So, when I say, I don't think it was the good old days it's because one, there was not a respect for the police leadership that was actually moving us forward. Two, it's well-known that Mayor Giuliani divided this city painfully. I don't want to go back to those times. We need to bring police and community together. We need to bring all our communities together and before the pandemic, that's exactly what we were doing. And we will again.

Yehudit, I think it's so important to understand we will – you know, this too shall pass. We will overcome this moment and turn things around. So, no, I do not want to take tactics from the past that led to a negative relationship between police and community. What I want to do is take the things that work. CompStat works. Precision policing works. Neighborhood policing works. Take the right officers, put them in the right places, continue to develop community-based solutions to violence as well, because we know Cure Violence and Crisis Management System work. I think we have the tools. We're going to come out of the COVID moment, things are going to glue back together. The court system's going to get going again, and we're going to go right back to the really good situation we're in. It's going to take a little while, but I have no doubt we're going to get there.

Moderator: We have time for two more for today. The next is Ben Evansky from Fox News.

Question: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor, for taking my question. A quick one on street renaming. It will be the anniversary of the death of Otto Warmbier on June 19th. Also, was set to move to Manhattan so he would have been a New Yorker by now, had he not been tortured and killed by the North Korean regime. There has been a proposal in the City Council to honor him and represent human rights by naming the block in front of the North Korean missions, the UN, as Otto Warmbier Way. What message would this send to the world, as New York City has long stood as a bright symbol for human rights?

Mayor: Yeah, thanks for the question, Ben. Look, we are a symbol of human rights to the whole world and we have confronted, in this city, dictators and tyrants historically. This is a place that has really led the international effort against oppression. There's no government more oppressive than the North Korean government. And the fact that an American lost his life there is something that we need to remember. And we need to honor his family and we need to speak out against the oppression that the North Korean people go through every single day. So, I think we have a good history in this city of standing up to tyrants and we should keep doing it. Go ahead, Ben.

Question: Just a follow up. Would you be supportive of renaming the street after Otto?

Mayor: Absolutely. Again, whether it was confronting the apartheid South African regime or so many others that oppress their people, in this city we stand up for human rights and dignity. And I think, again, there's no – there's literally not a worse regime on earth than North Korea, so I'm very comfortable we need this to end up against them as well.

Moderator: Last question for today goes to Gersh from Streetsblog.

Question: Hey everybody, how's everybody doing today?

Mayor: Well, Gersh, how are you?

Question: Well, I don't like to get personal, but I'm the last question. Mr. Mayor, my air conditioning broke four days ago and I hate to be a wimp, but I am – I am really swimming in it. I'm sorry. Anyways. I'm not my best. I'm not –

Mayor: Gersh, Gersh, you should have blamed me. I mean, if you're a real New Yorker you would have said, my air conditioning broke four days ago and it's your fault. I would have felt much more at home with that.

Question: No, I wouldn't do that, Mr. Mayor. Anyway, listen, you do seem to like when journalists bring to your attention things that are going on in the city and last night on the Upper West Side a community board panel passed a resolution demanding that you ban electric bikes in the city bike lanes. You know, they claim that there's been – you know, the NYPD is not enforcing speed limits on these electric bikes, which we know to be actually not true. They are enforcing it. So, first, do you have a comment on a resolution demanding the banning of e-bikes in bike lanes?

Mayor: Well, obviously e-bikes are legal. That's State law. Gersh, you know, I like to be straight up with you. I have concerns very obviously about the safety issues with the different speeds being mixed together in bike lanes, but that's something we have to work on with City rules and with the right kind of education, the right kind of enforcement. So, it does not make sense to ban them in bike lanes because they certainly shouldn't be out in the flow of traffic. It's something we're going to have to work on to keep improving, but that's not the way to do it. Go ahead, Gersh.

Question: Yeah, that kind of sets up my follow-up. You know, you're seeing it all over the city, there's slight pushback to some of the improvements you made during the coronavirus. For example, like on people who are suddenly pushing back on the Open Streets, the permanence of Open Streets, or there's this rally this weekend about, objecting to the – some of the restaurant piazzas you've created. So, you mentioned going forward, what we're going to do, you don't want to ban e-bikes. You don't want them in with car traffic because that would be deadly. And as you know, Streetsblog has reported repeatedly on First Avenue, Second Avenue, and Kent Avenue that many times there's more cyclists on those narrow bike lanes than there are cars on the roadway adjacent to them. So, perhaps maybe you can look a little broader and say, okay, well we've got way more bikes sometimes than we have cars crammed into a tiny little eight-foot-wide bike lane. Maybe you want to, at this point, talk about expanding bike lanes and taking more room away from cars or maybe something else, maybe you have a different safety idea.

Mayor: Look, Gersh, fair question, or fair point. We clearly have been expanding bike lanes very successfully in the sense of more and more people using bikes. That's a total blessing for New York City. You know, the announcements we made for the Brooklyn Bridge, Queensboro Bridge, for example, give more space to bicyclists and pedestrians. That works. That makes total sense. In a lot of places, we're finding there is more need and we should act according to that need. We're doing some real interesting things like the bike boulevards as well. So, just like we said, hey, there's places where buses need more space and we do busways or Select Bus Service, there's places where bikes need more space, there's places where pedestrians need more space. I think this is all about the rebalancing of New York City and that needs to continue. And it's been working. It's been making the city a better place.

But I want to key in on the opposition point because even though you and I tangle from time to time, I think we're probably pretty unified on this point. There's been opposition from day one to Vision Zero. There's been opposition from day one to bike lanes, including the right kind of bike lanes that have been very successful. I always want to hear the opposition. I always want to listen for the parts of it that may be valid, and we need to address, but in the end, I've been really clear. We're doing Vision Zero, period. The future is mass transit. The future is biking. The future is walking. It's not the individual automobile. And Open Street and Open Restaurants have been a tremendous success for New York City. They are our future. Anyone who says they would rather have a parking space than jobs for New Yorkers in a restaurant and a beautiful amenity that makes our whole culture better, our whole life better, I'm sorry, I'm not going to pray at the altar of parking. I want a city that works for everyone. So, we're very, very clear about the direction we're taking. And I hope whoever succeeds me in this office will build upon it.

And with that look today we've covered a lot of ground, but one thing that's clear throughout everything we're talking about is there's a very bright future for this city. There's a bright future in terms of our public spaces. There's a bright future in terms of becoming a safer city. And there's a very bright future in terms of the future of our economy because we can and will become the public health capital of the world. And that will be a game changer for this city and also allow us to help protect lives all over the globe. That's what New York City is all about. Thank you, everyone.

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