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

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning, everybody. We've got a lot to talk about today, important steps that we are taking to continue to move us forward as a city. Phase Three has begun. It's begun well. There's a lot more to do to restart our city. I'm going to be talking today about the crucial issue of childcare, something so many families need and are concerned about. We're getting ready to take a big step forward on childcare today. And I want to talk about a continued efforts to bring more fairness to the city, to bring more equality, to make sure that everyone has access to the things they need, and to really work on changing the city as we go forward – I'm going to talk today about broadband access.

But, before I do that, I want to focus again on the very troubling reality we saw this weekend in Harlem, in the Manhattan North command, the work we have to do to address that issue and do so immediately. I want to thank State Senator Brian Benjamin, who convened community leaders from across Upper Manhattan – over 50 leaders gathered yesterday in a Zoom conference. I participated, along with members of my administration and key leaders of the NYPD – very productive conversation on the things that we need to do immediately, not just with policing, but with community leadership, with the leadership of clergy, community organizations, elected officials, the Cure Violence movement, a host of ideas that are being worked on right now to get ahead of the situation for this coming weekend, including a strategy that's been used very effectively in the past by activists and community organizations, occupying the corners, occupying the blocks, a show of strength from members of the community to make clear that violence is not acceptable. A lot we want to do to help young people have positive alternatives, cultural and sports activities, and family activities throughout the weekend that we're going to start to build right away, and opportunities for young people to talk about what they're going through. They've been through so much, they are hurting, a lot of them have been traumatized and we need to help get those feelings out and work with them productively and let them not turn it into a situation where a young person turns to the wrong influences or turns to violence. So, a lot we need to do to provide more and better options, particularly for young people in Harlem, in Upper Manhattan, and a group of committed community leaders of, and by and for the community who are ready to do this work with this administration, with the NYPD. We'll have more to say on that in the next few days, but a lot will be done preparing for this weekend to change the reality on the ground. And what I heard very, very clearly was a commitment and an understanding that the only way you change things is from the grassroots-up. The City government is going to play a crucial role, but the community must be present hand-in-hand, working with the NYPD to make these changes.

Also want to say, crucial issue was worked on yesterday, which is a question of reopening our court system. This is one of the most important factors underlying some of the challenges we're facing right now. Commissioner Shea met with Chief Judge Difiore, of the State court system,

and the five DA's from the five boroughs to focus on how to speed up the reopening of the court system – a very positive, productive meeting with a focus on addressing gun violence. And we know one of the best ways we can address gun violence is to get the court system up and running, get gun prosecutions going again. Some real progress made yesterday, more to say in the coming days.

Okay. Now, let's go to where I started – some of the things we have to do right away as part of this restart to help our families keep moving forward, to help people get their livelihoods back, to help parents who have been through so much. I've talked to so many parents who are trying their best to support their kids, be at-home educators, still somehow either hold down a job or try to find a new job, try to make ends meet. It's been really, really tough for parents. So, bringing it back childcare is crucial. Now, during this crisis, there's been a very limited amount of childcare – 125 childcare programs have been up and running since April for essential workers, kids, but, for everyone else, it's been a struggle. Today, the New York City Board of Health will be considering a plan to reopen childcare centers across the five boroughs next week. Now, this is over 3,000 childcare centers that could come online right away. And the Board of Health is looking at the data, looking at the facts, how to do this properly, how to do it safely. There's been a lot of conversation between the Board of Health and our Health Department and the childcare providers over recent weeks. They are ready to go. They're waiting for that approval. And look, one of the things we see, thank God, is that the data consistently shows a low infection rate among children when it comes to the coronavirus. So, hopeful that the Board of Health will be able to move forward today. Now, let's be clear, this is important because we want parents to have good choices for childcare, safe choices to avoid the kinds of situations that might not be as safe, it might be unregulated. We want parents to know that the best quality childcare will be there for them. So, strict safety requirements will be in place. There'll be real social distancing requirements as well, no more than 15 kids in a room. All kids, all staff will be required to wear face coverings. There'll be daily health screenings, regular cleanings, constantly – very careful regulation of any items that kids might use in common. So, for example, limited sharing of toys. We need to bring back childcare quickly and safely, and that's what we are working on as we speak. And we'll update you later on today on that vote by the Board of Health.

Now, I mentioned also a major step we need to take in the name of not just building back, but building back a better and fairer city. And this takes us to the topic of broadband. Broadband is the way that so many people access everything, education, job opportunities, job training, anything you need, that's where you're going to find it. And yet, for so many New Yorkers there just isn't access – that digital divide is very, very intense. 1.5 million New Yorkers lack home broadband access. So, this is something we have to go at head-on. It's another tale of two cities and it has been for a long time, and it's all, bluntly, about the profit motive. The internet companies have not attended to lower-income communities. They have not done what's been asked of them to really, truly, fairly, equally make sure that everyone has access. So, this is an issue that's been taken up by our internal Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity. And the mandate of that task force is to use the tools of City government to work very quickly to make changes. We're looking at a lot of big structural changes we need to make in the city, but also we needed to make changes immediately to ensure maximum fairness and equity. That's what the task force is doing. And it's going to involve not only the actions of City government, but turning to the State of New York for help as well, because these internet companies have gotten away with something that's just inappropriate. It's unfair. It's not respectful of communities that have such great need, and we have to do something about that. So, we're going to act in that spirit. I've

talked about that spirit of redistribution. First of all, we're, on the City level, going to take resources that came out of the NYPD's capital budget and put it into broadband access for residents of public housing, low-income New Yorkers who need that access, particularly young people who need that access. \$87 million coming out of the NYPD capital budget to go into that broadband access. Combined with other resources, that will allow us in the next 18 months to reach 600,000 New Yorkers who, right now, do not have access. Also, another form of redistribution will be to demand more of companies that have really, really profited without doing what they should do for our communities. So, we're going to fight for a new State law to force internet companies to actually pay the City of New York for the use of our streets. They're profiting, but they're not paying their fair share. We need them to pay. And we would use that money to provide even more broadband access for New Yorkers who don't have it. And here to talk about this initiative, the Deputy Mayor for our city, but also the co-chair of the internal Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity, Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson.

**Deputy Mayor J. Phillip Thompson, Strategic Policy Initiatives:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Many New Yorkers, as the Mayor said, in the last few months, use the internet to work from home, others use the internet to take classes or have a virtual doctor's appointment. The internet is more of a necessity these days than a convenience, and this will be even more true in the future. Not having access to the internet in 2020 is like not having access to public education was in 1950. It closes paths to opportunity and makes our economic and racial divides even greater. When our task force on racial inclusion and equity surveyed community organizations in the neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID, the demand for broadband access was one of the most frequent responses we got, including from the woman who's speaking right after me. As the Mayor stated, this \$157 million initiative, which will leverage private investment as well, will expand low or no-cost broadband access to 600,000 people in 18 months, including 200,000 NYCHA residents. It will include neighborhoods that currently have very little broadband infrastructure, like East New York and Brownsville. The Mayor's Chief Technology Officer and the Economic Development Corporation will contract much of the work to be done by minority and women-owned businesses, as well as nonprofits. Hundreds of young people from hard-hit communities will be hired and trained as certified broadband installers and technicians. We cannot claim to be a fair city or a democratic city when people are denied access to the internet because they don't have enough money to afford it, or because big corporations don't make enough money providing service. Right now, a few companies have a monopoly on providing internet service and they don't pay a dime to use City infrastructure to provide broadband. As the Mayor said, we are working with Senator Kevin Parker and our other friends in the State Legislature to change that, so that corporations pay their fair share and the revenue will help the City ensure quality affordable broadband for all. Thank you.

**Mayor:** Thank you very much, Deputy Mayor. And I want to turn to another leader who joined us on the conference call yesterday related to Harlem, but works to ensure the economic empowerment of people all over New York City. The New York Urban League, for generations, has fought for economic rights – for the economic rights of Black people to make sure that not just was their progress on civil rights, but that had to be progress on economic rights as well. And the work of the Urban League is legendary for the impact it has made and the leader in city will now join us. The CEO of the New York Urban League, Arva Rice.

**CEO Arva Rice, New York Urban League:** Good morning. Good morning. Thank you, Mayor de Blasio for that wonderful and warm introduction. When the Mayor established the Task Force

for Racial Inclusion and Equity, they were tasked with contacting community leaders to hear about our pressing issues and ways that COVID-19 had impacted our communities and business operations. At that time, I was being asked to participate in a lot of surveys, but I took special care and completing this one, because when activated correctly, government policies and practices can positively change people's lives. The Mayor had appointed the First Lady and Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson to lead this effort. So, I believe that the leadership was in place, with the political will to address one of the issues I was compelled to address in my survey. COVID-19 had exacerbated the digital divide that we already knew existed. The divide was keeping our 1.1 million public school children from being able to complete schoolwork that went from in-classroom to a 100 percent virtual studies over the course of a weekend. The digital divide kept families from being able to look for employment options and complete job applications. The divide kept families from being able to be counted in the Census. The divide kept nonprofits from being able to easily pivot to virtual offerings [inaudible] attract their community members information digitally. 1.5 million people in the city, mainly low-income people of color, lack both home and wireless broadband service. This makes it harder for the City's most vulnerable people to access work, education, tele-health, mental health supports and the kind of training that might enable them to obtain a living wage. Community members across the city told the task force that the pandemic is exacerbating the digital divide. Today, I am pleased to be part of the Mayor's announcement that the City listened to our issue and has developed a bold response that will not only lead to better computer access, but will also provide opportunities for minority-owned businesses.

Thank you for reinvesting money that was previously at NYPD capital budget for 600,000 NYCHA and low-income residents to get the tools they need as we recover from COVID-19. I am told that by the end of this year, tens of thousands of NYCHA households will have access to new low-cost broadband options. Over the next 18 months, that number will grow to 600,000 people by the end of 2021, all provided with new lower-cost high-speed internet at \$15 a month or less, which is indeed good news.

Lastly, I'm at the opportunities that this creates for small business development. We all know that small businesses have been hit hard by COVID-19 and it is predicted that over 40 percent of African-owned American businesses may never open their doors again. The Mayor has promised to work in collaboration with the State to end sweetheart deals for big companies and start generating revenue to fund digital equity, investing in infrastructure and digital inclusion resources. The City will also work to amend century-old legislation that could pave the way for smaller companies and M/WBE's to enter the marketplace. In this time of uncertainty, economic challenge, and social unrest, New Yorkers need no-nonsense solutions that will have big results. Thank you, Mayor de Blasio, and the Task Force for Racial Inclusion and Equity for this incredible commitment.

**Mayor:** Thank you so much Arva. And again, thank you to you and everyone at the Urban League who's been pushing so hard on this issue, and I know you're going to be great partners, making this initiative come to life and fighting with us to get the changes we need in Albany as well. Thank you.

So everyone, just a couple more things. And whenever we talk about fighting our way back from this crisis and overcoming the coronavirus, it always comes back to where we began this discussion months ago -- testing, testing, testing. So we've seen a lot of progress on testing and

more and more New Yorkers are taking advantage of more and more opportunities to get tested. We want to go even farther now. So tomorrow, Wednesday, July 8th will be our Get Tested Day of Action. We are aiming over the next week to get 150,000 New Yorkers tested. We need everyone to be a part of this effort. Our City agencies are involved, of course, our Test and Trace Corp, community organizations and with a particular focus on the communities that have been hardest hit. So testing makes such a difference. Now it's more and more available than ever. Let's get everyone tested. And if you want to get tested and don't know where, go to [nyc.gov/covidtest](https://nyc.gov/covidtest).

And now what a perfect segue to our indicators. And again, today we have good news. Indicator number one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, threshold is 200, today 58 patients. Number two, daily number of people in Health + Hospitals ICUs threshold of 375, today 295 patients. And number three, percentage of people tested citywide positive for COVID-19, threshold of 15 percent, today, two percent, a very good number. Yesterday we were at one percent, but we've mainly been at two percent and that is a very, very good place to be.

Okay. Let's just do a few words in Spanish.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

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

**Moderator:** Hi, all just a reminder that on the phone today, we have Deputy Mayor Thompson, Health Commissioner Dr. Barbot, Executive Director of the Test and Trace Corp Dr. Long, and Senior Advisor Dr. Varma. With that, I will start with James Ford from PIX 11.

**Question:** Thanks very much for taking the call. Can you hear me okay?

**Mayor:** Yeah James, how are you doing?

**Question:** Good to see you. This, I suppose, the question for you and for the Health Commissioner. Can you give us more details about childcare? Like how this -- how the decision will be made as to how the opening goes, which centers open? I just feel like we got only kind of cursory information. And I know it's a little early, but can you just provide us some more details, both of you, if you could?

**Mayor:** Sure. James I'll start and I'll pass the Commissioner. So this is something that's been worked on for weeks now by the Health Department, which regulates the childcare centers. Getting the centers ready, having the conversations about what they need, what's going to work, what's going to keep everyone safe. Everything safety first. Let's just keep saying that. Everything begins with the safety question. How do we keep everyone involved, safe? How do we make sure we continue to fight back the coronavirus? But the restart is moving along now. We're in phase three. A lot of people are looking forward to going back to work. They need their livelihood. A lot of the support that came in from the federal government's running out. Folks need to get back to work. And the only way they can do it is with childcare. So a lot of careful

work has been done leading up to this vote by the Board of Health. And the Commissioner will now give you a little more flavor of the kinds of precautions that are being taken. Commissioner?

**Commissioner Oxiris Barbot, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So this vote that's coming before the Board of Health would apply to City regulated childcare centers and school based childcare programs. And in order for the centers to be opened safely, they have to meet regulations that were set out by New York State. So for example, in addition to limiting capacity to no more than 15 children and ensuring that the physical space within the childcare center allows for appropriate social distancing, there are requirements to ensure that staff wear face coverings all the time, to ensure that there are daily health screenings conducted. And that they remain on file and available for review, as well as requirements for top care centers to have safety plans in place that include signage for social distancing, include protocols for cleaning on a regular basis, again to reduce the possible transmission of COVID-19. So all of these things have been set out by New York State. The vote will be coming before the Board of Health. And we through our Bureau of Childcare will ensure that childcare programs get all of the technical assistance they need before opening to make sure that they do so safely. And we will be resuming inspections of these centers. So all of that will be triggered by the vote of the Board of Health this afternoon.

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

**Question:** Thanks. Just a related follow up. Can you talk about what the status is for the decisions regarding the reopening of schools? And maybe address parents' concerns about how that process is going and how it's going to turn out?

**Mayor:** Sure. We're going to have a lot more to say on this this week, James, but the bottom line is this – safety first, health first. Everything we're going to do is going to be with that prism, to make sure that we are convinced we can do things in a healthy manner for kids, parents, educators, staff, everyone. Now we're over two months away until the opening of schools. So a lot can happen. A lot of challenges can come up or progress can happen in that time. So we're going to be ready for any eventuality. But the bottom line is to listen to the voices of parents, first of all, we work for them. And the Department of Education did something amazing. I mean, a survey that reached 400,000 New York City Public School families, 400,000 families responded. I've never heard anything like that. And 75 percent of them want their kids back in school in September. So the people are speaking. It's our obligation to respond to that, but to do it safely, to do it well. So we're going to have more to say on it this week, and then every week leading up to the opening of school.

**Question:** Next, we have Henry from Bloomberg.

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

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

**Question:** I'm okay. I'd like to get back to this childcare thing because we haven't really heard too much about this. These centers, does the State have ultimate authority on opening the centers or does the City have ultimate authority? Does the State have any role to play? Can you be overruled in this?



**Mayor:** So Henry I'll do the very broad strokes and I'll turn to Commissioner Barbot. The State has set out different standards depending on what part of, you know, the economy or what part of government service we're talking about. And in this case there's been, I think deference is a good way to say it to the local level within broad parameters. So we constantly confer with the State, but in many matters, as you know, the State says localities decide what makes sense in your case, within broad guidelines. I think that's essentially where we are here. Commissioner, you want to go more into that?

**Commissioner Barbot:** Certainly this applies to City regulated childcare centers. And it's a vote by the Board of Health. And so the State – the role, the State plays here is setting up the guidelines that the childcare centers need to meet in order to ensure the health and safety of children. But it would not be a vote that could be superseded by the State, again, as long as centers follow the guidelines for health and safety.

**Mayor:** Go ahead Henry?

**Question:** Okay. Thank you. And I'd like to go back to the issue on how to fight crime. The end of stop-and-frisk happened at a time when crime was really being kicked out of town. It was very little crime going on in the city. Do you have any concerns that as violent crime increases to this extent, that the political support for curtailing stop-and-frisk will erode? And that more people will become sort of impatient with this and maybe leap to seeing stop-and-frisk as a tactic that should be used more and more on the streets?

**Mayor:** It's a good question Henry, but I think the systematic, I think overtly racist use of stop-and-frisk was an abject failure. And it has been proven now for years and years. That is not a strategy we're going to go back to under any circumstance. And I think the people of this city feel very, very strongly that it was a mistake. And I think it put our officers in a horrible situation as well and a very unproductive situation on top of being one that was in effect discriminatory. So, no, I don't see us going back there. I also have to remind you when we made the decision to move, you know, deeply away from stop-and-frisk, no, crime was still noticeably higher than where we are now. Remember that we came in with still a lot of crime challenges to deal with. And in fact, it was that we could fight back crime consistently over years, reduce crime without stop-and-frisk. That was one of the things that really proved to people, why it was the wrong strategy all along. So I think that memory will be clear and I don't think we're ever going back to that.

**Moderator:** Next we have Luis from New York [Inaudible].

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Yesterday, the Governor expressed his concerns about hotspots where there was non-adherence over the holiday weekend, one of which was the East Village. He would go on to partially cite an executive order he signed in early April, which detailed the issuance of fines, not to exceed \$1,000. I'm quite familiar with your stance on the issue, but the Governor simply won't let up on this. Now I know we're very close to entering phase four, when allowable gatherings increased from 25 to 50 anyway. Might that be part of your reasoning, sir? Is there anything new you could add to that which you've already stated on this subject?

**Mayor:** Thank you for the question, Luis. First of all, phase four, you know, that's something we have to look at very carefully. As we come up on the potential for each new phase, we watch the data carefully and we watch not only what's happening here, but things we can learn from the rest of the country. That's why we moved forward with phase three, but took the indoor dining piece out. So the same careful consideration will happen as we approach phase four. We're going to analyze it. The State's analyzing it. We're going to be constantly in conversation about it. So, you know, that decision has not yet been made.

But on your question – no I think it's quite clear from what I outlined yesterday. We had a huge enforcement team out over the weekend in places like the East Village. We found overwhelming compliance upon arrival. Our inspectors found overwhelmingly that people are doing the right thing. The restaurant owners, the bar owners, the customers alike. There were some places where some corrections had to be made and people did it willingly when our inspectors and ambassadors directed them to. So, you know, we're going to keep doing the work on the ground. And I want to just give a lot of credit to the people out there who work for the City, who go out and make sure these situations are addressed. And I give real credit to everyday New Yorkers who want to get it right. The vast majority of New Yorkers understand it's their obligation to keep everyone safe and they're doing it. Go ahead.

**Question:** Okay. On the subject of testing and tracing – last week there were reports of Rockland County having to issue subpoenas for the sake of following through with tracing. Has the City experienced anything at all along those lines, that is dealing with uncooperative individuals whom tracers are trying to reach out to?

**Mayor:** I'll start, Luis, and then Dr. Ted Long, who is the Executive Director of the Test and Trace Corps will jump in. Now, I would say the general answer is no. Our approach has not been a coercive approach. Our approach has been an embracing approach to, you know, encourage people to get tested, encourage people to share contacts with us, reach out to those contacts in the spirit of keeping everyone safe, them and their families and everyone, and overwhelmingly, I think we've seen a lot of cooperation. We need to strike a balance always because we want the maximum number of people to participate and we think a more voluntary approach is the best way to do it. Ted, do you want to add?

**Executive Director Ted Long, Test and Trace Corps:** Yes, Sir. Just a couple of things I would add. And I think our approach has been to have more than 50 percent of our tracers be people from our communities, calling people in our communities, so that they're trusted by the time that they're receiving the phone call. And the other thing I would add is that a third of New Yorkers are utilizing our resource navigators for things like food delivery. So, as the Mayor said, we've taken the approach of really wanting to have people embrace what we're doing and do this together. And we have not seen anything like what we heard about in Rockland County.

**Mayor:** Thank you.

**Moderator:** Next we have Reuvain from Hamodia.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor. In discussing the increase in shootings, you mentioned, specifically, the courts being closed while the other police officials mentioned what they call the diaphragm



law and the bail reform in addition to the courts being closed. Do you agree with them that those reforms may be leading to an uptick in crime?

**Mayor:** I think each situation is different, Reuvain. I think the biggest factors from my point of view are the most universal. The fact that so many people have nothing to do, have lost their jobs, there's no school to go to, there's tremendous frustration and pain and trauma, there is no court system functioning – I think those are the really big factors here. I had concerns about the original bail reform law, but some of those issues were addressed in April in Albany. And yet the whole reality is against the backdrop of a court system that's not functioning. So, that's really still the root of so much of this. So, everyone's got different perspectives depending on the work that we do. We're all working together to address the issue, but it comes back to the coronavirus first and foremost, and then all the domino effect we felt from it.

**Question:** Now, my next question is – I believe, if I'm not mistaken, that Commissioner Shea has not joined you at any press conference since there were rumors of his resigning. Yesterday, also, typically you do joint press conferences to announce crime statistics. Is there a divide between you two and in approach to policing the city?

**Mayor:** No, we – look, I chose Commissioner Shea having known him and worked closely with them for six years. I think he is an extraordinary public servant. We talk all the time. As I said yesterday, he was at a meeting with the five DA's and the chief judge at the very time we were doing our press conference and he was exactly where we needed him to be, to try and address this underlying question of how quickly we can get the court system up and running. Chief Monahan was here in his place. But no, we – look, sometimes people have different perspectives and that's okay, but we are united in the broad approach. Look, we all believe in neighborhood policing. We all believe that the only way we're going to move forward is with communities working with the people of this city and that we're going through an unprecedented crisis, but we will overcome it because we always do

**Moderator:** Next, we have Yoav from The City.

**Question:** Good morning, everyone. Mr. Mayor, I wanted to ask you about the chokehold legislation. Last night on NY1, you cited what you called a change in the law at the last moment in the draft. And you said, “The NYPD has raised real concerns about it. But nonetheless, this is a law that is rooted in such deep concern in the city that we have to move forward with it.” And so, I guess my question is, do you still support the law as written or are you – is your sense that this is what the public wants and therefore you're going along with it?

**Mayor:** Yoav, look, there's so many issues at once here and legislation is always going to be a compendium of a lot of different things. That's just the nature of legislation. I served in the City Council for eight years, I know about that reality. This law, we need this law at this moment in history, unquestionably. I am concerned about the wording that was added at the last minute. I know the NYPD is, but we're going to move forward with the law. We're going to do the retraining of officers to address the features of the law. And as with everything in life, we're going to work hard to make it work. And I have confidence that everyone's going to do their best to make it work

**Question:** Okay, on another issue – back when the city was at the height of the coronavirus crisis, the City reached out to other localities for a variety of assistance, and it was done at the time with the commitment that the City would help other localities in return. Now that the crisis has moved to other parts of the country, I'm wondering what the city is doing towards those efforts, and particularly given the budgeting issues here, how are we funding any such help to other places?

**Mayor:** So, I've been in touch with some of my fellow mayors. My staff has been in touch with the staff of fellow mayors. We're offering help. And we honor – people did come to New York City's defense from all over the country, and we want to be there for anyone that needs our help. So, we've been offering help. Mainly, to date, it's been the form of people wanting to learn from our experience, wanting to talk to our experts. There has not, to the best of my knowledge, been a request for, sort of, material help so far. But if that comes, we'll work to fulfill it one way or another, we'll figure out where to find resources even if it means private resources, but I really appreciate all the people around the country who helped New York City in our time of need. And we'll be there for them as well.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Abu, from Bangalore Patrika.

**Question:** Hi, Mayor, how are you?

**Mayor:** Good. How are you doing, Abu?

**Question:** Good, how are you? My question is, you know, New York City school supposed to have the student food benefit, \$420 each student. But do you have any idea when they will get the food card?

**Mayor:** Wait, Abu, I'm sorry, just repeat that last part. What for each student again, please?

**Question:** \$420 food benefit card, each student supposed to get –

**Mayor:** Yeah, I'm sorry. I'm not making sense of this, so we'll follow up with you because I'm not sure, the way you're wording it, if I understand. But look, the bottom line is if you're talking about our commitment to kids, I mean, we're being very, very clear. We're going to continue everything that we've been committed to as we go back into the new school year and again, safety first, but we intend to create the whole range of services and supports for our kids. Did you have a follow up?

**Question:** Yeah. Then there is the thing about couple of weeks, in the evening everywhere there's fireworks and fireworks and people get scared. Is there any comment on it, how you can stop it?

**Mayor:** Yeah, no, Abu, it's been a real issue all over New York City and it's been unprecedented. Again, this clearly relates to all the realities of the coronavirus, people being home with nothing to do and a lot of frustration. But we have seen in the last few days a marked reduction in the number of complaints we're getting, and the activity seems to be reducing, let's knock on wood for that. But also, I want to thank the Sheriff's Office and the FDNY and NYPD, they've made over 200 arrests in the last couple of weeks of people who were reselling fireworks for profit on

a large scale. And I do think that was helpful and we'll keep that initiative going as long as we need it to.

**Moderator:** Last two for today. We have Erin from Politico.

**Question:** Hi there, Mr. Mayor. Going back to the child care – do you have a sense of how many centers we're talking about here? How many programs and how many kids and also with the limit on the number of people per room, are you expecting a situation like with the schools where, you know, not everyone can be accommodated and they have to stagger or things like that?

**Mayor:** Yeah. So, I'll start and the Commissioner will jump in. Again, right now we've got about 125 programs that are for the kids of essential workers, pending the vote of the Board of Health that would open up over 3,000 child care centers. And I think, Erin, my common sense answer – Dr. Barbot can give you a more expert answer – but my common sense answer is we're going to see, of course, a reduced amount of kids, because they have to create the social distancing. On the other hand, you got a whole lot of families right now who are not back to work and will keep their kids home for the foreseeable future. So, to some extent, I think it'll strike a balance, but Dr. Barbot, do you want to add?

**Commissioner Barbot:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So, as the Mayor said, this would apply to roughly 3,000 child care centers with an overall capacity of about 150,000 children. But as many parents continue to stay to work from home, we anticipate that, certainly, they wouldn't go back to the full 150,000 capacity. And as you note, there would also be the requirement of staggered openings. So, not everyone would be coming in at the same time. I think it's important to note here that part of what is driving us bringing this vote before the Board is to ensure that as more families do return to work, that we provide safe high quality child care opportunities and not have families have to rely on potentially unsafe options.

**Mayor:** Thank you.

**Moderator:** Erin, do you have a second –

**Question:** Yes, I do, on a different topic – to follow on the chokehold question, can you just be a little more specific about what language you're talking about that you object to and when exactly it was added?

**Mayor:** Yeah. Erin, look, I've been very clear, I'm signing it. So, clearly, it's something I believe is the right thing to do, but the concern that's been raised by the NYPD is on the language related to the diaphragm, which is different than the language that was there before related to the neck and chokehold. But look, again, we're in a moment where we have to show that we're going to do things differently and we have to address the many, many painful realities of the past and move forward. So, overall, I believe it's the right thing to do to move forward with this legislation. But the NYPD has raised a concern, which I believe they think is real and we have to be mindful and we have to see how that plays out. But, again, when you look at legislation, you balance a lot of factors. On balance, this is the right thing to do.

**Moderator:** Last question for today, we have Brigid from WNYC.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, again, on policing, as you consider how to deepen the reforms within the NYPD there are some who have called for changes at the top. Council Member Rory Lancman has called for Commissioner Shea to be removed. Are you considering any changes to top NYPD leadership, and if not, why not?

**Mayor:** Brigid, the answer is no. And the reason is that this leadership group has achieved so much for this city. And again, I'm worried that sometimes people see things only through the prism of an immediate moment. And I think we have to look at what's happened over years and years. The folks who are now in leadership, this group – I've been working with now the whole group for years, and what I've seen from Dermot Shea, Terry Monahan, Ben Tucker, Fausto Pichardo now in his role, Rodney Harrison in his role, is a group that's really committed to neighborhood policing, to a transformation of the department under the watch of all of these leaders. This is now a majority people of color police department, more and more a police department made up of people who live in New York City, a police department that has reduced arrests intensely, got rid of stop-and-frisk, but very, very important, reduced the amount of arrests to the tune of hundreds of thousands while keeping the city safe. And what we've dealt with in this year has been so aberrant obviously because of the coronavirus crisis, but the track record is really clear. These are reformers who have achieved a lot and we have more to do, and we're going to be doing a lot more over the next year-and-a-half to continue that reform. So, this is a strong leadership team that I have faith in.

**Question:** Then separately on the daycare center reopening, you said there pending the Board of Health vote today, but you're announcing it this because presumably you anticipate them approving this?

**Mayor:** Yes. Look, there's always a process when you're talking about a board, but a lot of work has been done over the last weeks to prepare for this vote. And I think the board feels good about this proposal, and it's really important to tell people that child care centers will be up and running as soon as Monday, because for some parents, that's going to be very, very important to their immediate plans.

Okay, everybody let me just say a quick thing by way of conclusion. We've got to remember that this city is a place like no other and a place of extraordinary strength and resiliency. The issues we talk about every day here, the challenges we take on, I think a lot of the places might feel overwhelmed by them. New York City always finds a way to forge ahead. So, we have been thrown, arguably, the greatest crisis in our history in these last few months. But today, second day of phase three, I see rebirth, I see a lot of strength, I see people coming together, and even when we face new challenges, like what we're experiencing in Upper Manhattan, people immediately join together. They are not pointing fingers. They're not saying it's someone else's problem. People joined together. Fifty people yesterday immediately came together, community leaders, and said, how do we solve this together? We need the work of the NYPD but we in the community have to be a part of the solution as well. That's been true the whole way we've taken on the coronavirus as well throughout these last months. So, the New York City way is the way forward. And I want to thank all of you for what you do every day to help us move ahead. Thank you.

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