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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS APPEARS ON WCBS'S THE POINT WITH
MARCIA KRAMER**

Marcia Kramer: Mr. Mayor, thank you very much for joining me. I want to get right to it. There's a lot of things to ask you. So first of all, the city is facing a big budget problem. We have Wall Street that the profits are down, the money from COVID and from the pandemic funds is drying up, people don't want to go back to work. I wonder if you think that this is going to mean at some point you have to cut the workforce, if you have to reduce the number of cops, firefighters, budget, any other kind of budget things, even garbage pickup?

Mayor Eric Adams: Well, first congratulations on your show.

Kramer: Thank you.

Mayor Adams: I'm excited to see you report this news and these current events. And you're right. We're dealing with turbulent times. And I stated when I was running for office that we must use taxpayer dollars and use them appropriately. And that is why I indicated while running that we're going to do a 3% PEG, Programs to Eliminate the Gaps. We did the 3% in this budget. We're going to do another 3%, and then in out years, we're going to do another 4.4 %, because we have to manage our finances. We're going through a fiscal cliff with the financial dollars that were from the federal government. They're going to dry up. We have to be smarter. We believe we can do this without layoffs and without cuts in services.

Kramer: Are you really sure? I mean, we're looking at a lot of money going down the drain.

Mayor Adams: Well, that's why, when you hear me talk about making sure we manage our school budgets, when you hear me talk about managing how we are spending money, this is why I am talking about that. I am not trying to be the Scrooge. I am just trying to be fiscally responsible so we don't go back to those financial crises that we all experienced in the '70s.

Kramer: But I wonder if this new wave of asylum seekers coming into New York City, which is taking a lot of funds, will also add to the problem and possibly make you have to reduce the size of the workforce.

Mayor Adams: The new waves of asylum seekers are really unprecedented. No one would have expected that you'll see 11,000 to date. Over 8,500 are currently living in our shelters, and we have several buses that are coming now. We may get anywhere from seven to eight buses today. It's clear that the southern states, particularly Texas, they have made up their minds that they have a new blueprint, and that blueprint is to send asylum seekers here. We're going to do our job, we're going to live up to the right to shelter, but it is something that we need help from the federal and state government.

Kramer: Do you think that the governors of Texas and the governor of Florida are doing this because they're running for office and they think it's going to get them votes, or do you think it's going to hurt them? I mean, is this going to end in November when they're no longer running for office?

Mayor Adams: We're not sure. And you're right. And that's a great question. I think it's really inhumane what we're seeing, using people during a difficult time as a political ploy and not coordinating with cities. Every city that the migrants are passing, the governor of Texas should have communicated with, and he should have communicated with New York. This is a burden on cities for, I believe, for political reasons.

Kramer: So what is going to happen to the homeless or the near homeless who were facing possibly being thrown out of their apartments? Rents are rising. It seems like we're going to be in for a larger homeless population as well. And where are you going to put all these people?

Mayor Adams: Well, these are the challenges that we're having, and that's why I went to Washington, D.C., to speak with Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand, and Congressman Nadler, as well as the president's senior team, to talk about these issues, because we do have to make sure New Yorkers that are here receive the resources and services that they are required to receive, that we are obligated both morally and legally to do, and we are doing that. But we have this heavy influx, and that's why our legal team is looking at what legal challenges we could do with Texas, as well as how do we properly ensure everyone receives the necessary services they deserve. And we're going beyond our call of duty. What we're doing around healthcare, what we're doing around education, we are going to make sure that everyday New Yorkers get what they deserve as well.

Kramer: Well, you did say that you'd like to see the best legal minds look at ways to go after these, what you called, rogue governors. Is there a way to stop this?

Mayor Adams: We're looking at that. We believe there's some options we have, because when you involuntarily place someone on a bus, we believe that actually skates the law. And so our legal team is looking at this, and all of us should come together. This is an all-hands-on-deck moment. We should not be spending our energy trying to play, "I gotcha". We should be spending our energy of saying, "I got you" as a city. And so many people have stepped up. Catholic Charities, other volunteers. There's a large number of people that realize this is a crisis, and we can coordinate our way through this crisis.

Kramer: So do you think that there's possibly a court option where you can stop the people from Texas or the people from Florida from sending people here because it's inhumane to treat people this way?

Mayor Adams: We believe the options that we're looking at. We're not leaving any stones unturned to make sure that New York is being treated in an unfair way.

Kramer: So are you exploring other options? For example, if you were to find these ... I know you want to get them work permits right away. If you were to find jobs around the state, and I know that the governor has said there are a lot of jobs around the state, moving them to other places, would that be an option? Or can you look at using unused dormitories or space on Randalls Island or Wards Island or even Camp LaGuardia that was used by your predecessors, Rudy Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg? Are all of these things on the table or what are the best options?

Mayor Adams: Yes, we're - we examined everything from the legality of using any type of cruise ship for temporary housing. We're looking at everything to see, how do we deal with this? Think about this; 11,000 people in this city-

Kramer: Mind boggling.

Mayor Adams: Right. And then look at what we are doing on the federal level. We're saying, "You could come here, but you are not allowed to work." That is unbelievable. When you think about the insanity of this whole concept of telling people, "You're not allowed to work." Now we have a shortage in restaurant employees. Some of the people who are coming have experience in that. We may have medical professionals, we have shortage in nurses. So there are many people who are coming here, not all are coming here without having some professional criteria or understanding. We need to look and see what we are facing shortages, how do we go about allowing people to take care of themselves? If not, we, the government, must take care of them. That just makes no sense.

Kramer: So how do you fast track the work permits? And how can you do it and how quickly can you do it?

Mayor Adams: It's a combination of the Department of Homeland Security and the Congress. It's a combination of both coming together to make that determination.

Kramer: And I mean, I want to pursue this thing about the cruise ships. Is that really a possibility that you might be able to do that?

Mayor Adams: We're looking at that. That was something that the previous administration, Bloomberg administration of my understanding, they looked at that during the surge. And so we're looking at that as a temporary measure, not as a permanent measure, a permanent measure to get people into housing, but at the same time with this influx, we have opened 23 emergency shelters. We are predicted with the influx of opening, probably, 38 additional emergency shelters. So we have to find temporary measures to address this issue.

Kramer: And what about the fact that you could find them jobs in other places in the state?

Mayor Adams: And that's what we're looking at. We went to coordinate with the governor. The governor has been an amazing partner. She stated, "Let's put our heads together and figure out

how we could coordinate throughout the state." There are parts of Upstate that's dealing with real employment issues, so this is an opportunity for us to take this situation and see if we could address some of the other concerns we've had in the state.

Kramer: So you've been on the job now for about nine months. I wonder if there's anything that surprises you about the state of the city that was left to you by your predecessor?

Mayor Adams: Well, I say it all the time, when you start peeling back layers, this is a city where you have great employees with bad systems. We had a downstream mindset for so long, Marcia, where we just waited for people to be pulled out of the river instead of going upstream and preventing them from falling in the first place. I mean, when you look at some of the things that we were doing year after year, generation after generation, people often say, Eric, what is the one or two things you want to do? I want to change the foundation of taking out, keeping our city downstream. That's why we did the dyslexia screening, 40% of our inmates are dyslexic on Rikers Island. That's why we are leaning into foster care children. That's why we are dealing with how do we feed people in this city, and really stop the foundational crisis that we have. And sometimes it's not the most sexy thing to do, but it's the right thing to do to move our city in the right direction.

Kramer: I mean, it just seems like a lot of the agencies that you inherited were in a lot worse shape than you had the impression that they were in. I mean, take a look at NYCHA, for example. I mean, we're still paying - you - up until next week, you'll be paying a person to run the agency who still gets reimbursed to going home to Minnesota, he doesn't even live here and hasn't lived here. I know you've moved to correct that, but that's the kind of thing you inherited. Doesn't that frustrate you?

Mayor Adams: It does. You know what's interesting, Marcia? How little control the mayor has over NYCHA right now. We put in place, the federal government came in, there we have to agree with the leadership, we have to agree with the special monitor, which Marcia, I don't know what he's doing. Millions of dollars we are paying for, And I'm not sure it is as though he's been here for so long, what have we saw differently? And our power to fire and hire, or to send the right message, we don't have that power, we need that power back. And we're hoping the federal government realizes we should be able to point to the mayor and say, "It is your obligation and responsibility to fix NYCHA." We do not have that power right now.

Kramer: I have to ask you a quick congestion pricing question. I know that it's a very unpopular thing with a lot of people who are your constituents, but we have a situation where, because of the traffic being diverted, you're going to have a lot of truck traffic in the South Bronx, more pollution. People have a lot of asthma problems there. Would you consider asking the members of your appointees to the MTA board to ask for more studies, to make sure that you could fix that?

Mayor Adams: Oh, we do need to have studies. We cannot state that we want to fix a problem and create a crisis, so we have to get it right. We have to get it right on the charges, the amounts, what are we going to do with those who come from outside the city, how it's going to impact on the neighboring communities. We should not rush into this. We have to get it right, because for far too long places like the Bronx, Queens Bridge, those areas have dealt with environmental crises, we cannot create another environmental crisis.

Kramer: Should it be delayed a little bit?

Mayor Adams: No, we just need to sit down at the table and stop figuring out these problems now. We knew this was coming, so it's about getting that board in place, and sitting down and getting this correct.

Kramer: But it seems like people are surprised that all of a sudden there's going to be these problems in the South Bronx, where they have the worst asthma and the worst problems ever, and they're going to increase the pollution.

Mayor Adams: And that's why we have to factor and figure it out to make sure we get it right. And we need to factor that into the decision we're making around congestion pricing. The concept is an amazing concept, we need to deal with the over proliferation of cars in central Manhattan, it's impacting businesses, we can't get anywhere, but at the same time, we should not be that expeditious that we are going to create a crisis in communities that have historically dealt with these crises.

Kramer: Mr. Mayor, we'll leave it right there for now. But my conversation with the mayor doesn't end here. We'll talk more about running the city that never sleeps, immediately following this show on our streaming channel, CBS News New York, we'll be back in a moment with our panel.

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Kramer: We're back with Mayor Adams for this Exclamation Point, a conversation you'll see here on CBS News New York. Mr. Mayor, one of the things that's coming up is the United Nations General Assembly and when we come to this kind of thing, there's always a concern about possible terrorism. We just got done with 9/11, are we having concerns still about other terrorist groups that may want to attack New York again, and what are your concerns? What are you doing about it?

Mayor Adams: That's very interesting. And with my conversations with intel, we have amazing apparatus in place that really involves all of our law enforcement agencies in the country. But here's our new threat, 2001 was a different threat. What we are experiencing in 2022, we are experiencing a lone wolf. Those individuals that you saw shoot on the subway station, those who had the bombs and makeshift bombs, and the shooting in Buffalo, we are dealing with those who are being radicalized right in their homes. That's the real challenge.

Kramer: How do you find them?

Mayor Adams: It is extremely challenging and families must play a bigger role, because at one time, you could lock your door, Marcia, don't worry about any danger coming in. Right now, social media has allowed the danger to come in. So parents and loved ones and family members, we need to engage to find out what the people within our orbits are actually doing, because if you don't, they will radicalize right online. Now, we're doing all the things we're supposed to do. The Lower Manhattan, we have 50,000 cameras, we have over 830 members of our team that are part of the Joint Task Force on Terrorism. So we are building the infrastructure, using all the

technology that's available, but the lone wolf is the real challenge. The days of those organized entities outside our country is not what we are facing right now. It's that person that's in that home at that computer.

Kramer: So do you have intel people looking at social media, trying to look for keywords or things like that? How do you find these people and how do you sort them before they can do something terrible?

Mayor Adams: Oh, our counter-intelligence teams, they are amazing with seeking information, looking for those keywords as you're talking about, going into some of these chat groups. These chat groups are now radicalizing each other. Chat groups are no longer sitting in the basement of someone's home. Chat groups are across the country and the globe.

Kramer: So are we talking about the deep web now, I mean, the dark web, whatever they-

Mayor Adams: Well, it's just a combination of how those who are spewing evil, they no longer have to come into a particular area. They can now do it through the internet. Families must pay close attention to what is happening with that individual who is isolated, who appears to be a loner, who's by himself. We have to get engaged on the ground. And when you see something, say something, do something, and let's notify your local authorities.

Kramer: But here's the question. I mean, what if there was a terrorist? I mean, do you have the capability, they used to have the capability, I don't know whether they still do, but you could put machine guns on helicopters and planes and shoot planes out of the air. Do we still have that capability?

Mayor Adams: We don't want to give away the secrets that we have.

Kramer: Oh, come on. Just one secret.

Mayor Adams: But the New York City Police Department is clearly the most equipped police department when it comes to keeping the city safe. And the duality of now fighting crime, fighting the over proliferation of guns because of the Supreme Court ruling, and dealing with the external threats and the internal lone wolf threats, we're pushing the police officers and our police department and they are rising to the occasion every day.

Kramer: Does it keep you up at night?

Mayor Adams: It concerns me. Public safety is the prerequisite to prosperity, public safety and justice. I have an amazing police commissioner who's focused, determined, and we have an amazing team of officers that they know one thing, they know this mayor has their backs. They do the right thing, I'm going to be there for them. And if they do anything that's going to tarnish that shield, then they're not going to serve in this city's police department.

Kramer: So we only have a few seconds left, but I would like to ask you, I know that you're the mayor who's everywhere, you're the mayor for the city who never sleeps, but what do you do for yourself? I mean, what's me time for Eric when you just want to get away from it all?

Mayor Adams: Great question. As you know, I'm a big believer in meditating, breathing. I believe that when you know that you've had enough, do for yourself. There's a reason they say, if you are on a plane and the air pressure drops, put the mask on yourself before you put it on your travel companion, because if I'm not good to Eric, I'm not going to be good to the city. I love this city and I want to serve this city to the fullness of my capacity. People are not going to always agree, they tell me, but they say, "Eric, we agree on how much you are up every day, giving it your all, nonstop."

Kramer: Is there anything special that you do to decompress besides just things you do? Take a walk in the park or run or do something that is just special for you?

Mayor Adams: I shared it on the campaign trail, hot bubble bath with rose pellets. You know, I just soak. Men like that too.

Kramer: On that note, Mr. Mayor, thank you very much for joining us today.

Mayor Adams: Thank you.

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