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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON HOT 97'S EBRO IN  
THE MORNING**

**Ebro Darden:** Mayor de Blasio!

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning.

**Ebro:** Good morning.

**Laura Styles:** Good morning.

**Ebro:** How are you?

**Mayor:** Feeling good, feeling good. How's it going?

**Ebro:** Oh man, just feeling great out here. New York City – it's kind of warm today, rain. Are you back in town Mayor de Blasio?

**Mayor:** Oh yes, Sir. I'm giving my big State of the City speech tonight. It's going to be live on New York 1 this evening.

**Ebro:** Alright, very nice, very nice. So, wait, real quick before we get to all of that, I want you to be able to get your stuff off. How are you? How's the family?

**Mayor:** Family is wonderful – Chiara, finishing college in June. Dante, off at his elite eastern Yale University.

**Ebro:** His very fine Ivy League situation.

**Mayor:** Ivy League. He speaks now and when he picks up his coffee cup his pinky is out. He speaks proper Queen's English.

[Laughter]

**Ebro:** So, Mayor, do we have Rosenberg? Rosenberg? Can you hear the mayor?

**Peter Rosenberg:** I don't hear you. I hear the mayor, but don't worry I don't need you. I do hear the mayor. Mayor, could you hear me?

**Mayor:** I can.

**Peter Rosenberg:** Wonderful to talk to talk to you, Mayor. I'm out here in San Francisco for the Super Bowl. I wanted to jump at you with a somewhat politically-heavy question but it was something that crossed my mind this week – Ebro and I were discussing – obviously, you're out there in Iowa, or you were, and you did a great job for Hillary but in listening to Senator Sanders, there's certainly a lot of qualities he has as a candidate that, knowing you as a person, the candidate we think would appeal to you. So, as someone who is out there fighting for Hillary Clinton, what do you think about Senator Sanders as a candidate because he does seem like someone you would potentially like?

**Mayor:** Sure, I like him a lot. I think he's done a great, great service by getting out there and talking about income inequality and really calling out the problems we're facing in this country. So, I've actually had a lot of good feelings about Bernie Sanders for years and years, long before most people knew him. But here's the thing, I think Hillary Clinton is someone who has put together a very progressive platform, a very progressive vision for the country, including taxing the wealthy more, raising the minimum wage, paid sick leave, paid family leave – all of the things that would fundamentally change lives of working people and middle class people. She's put together that platform. What I know about her, because I know her personally for almost 20 years – and obviously much more of a close, personal relationship than I have with Bernie – what I know about her is she will follow through and get things done. And these are urgent, urgent matters. People are suffering and they need these changes. I have faith she'll know how to do it.

**Peter Rosenberg:** So, Mayor, with Bernie being very socialist-sounding, is there – how does Bernie work into the overall thing because obviously I'm a dreamer, I'm not that politically savvy, I want it – I love what Bernie has to say and would love to see him working with Hillary. But I feel like Hillary would have more success on Capitol Hill because she would be able to bring people together because she's more moderate. Is that what you're seeing as well or you see something else?

**Mayor:** A little bit different – I would say, first of all, look, again, it's actually a good conversation when you have two candidates talking about the things we need to do to create economic fairness. Now this is kind of the big picture, when you get beyond the rival in the moment, and the voting right now in the primaries, caucuses – big picture, two leading Democrats talking about the issue that people really care about – the lack of economic fairness in our society. Why is wealth and power concentrated in the hands of so few? How are we going to change that and create real economic opportunity again across the board? They're both talking about that. They're both putting forward real serious proposals on how to do that. So, I think the good news is the whole American debate is changing in the last year, I think, for a lot of other good reasons like all those workers fighting for \$15 dollar minimum wage. So many things have changed what we think is possible. Now, in terms of them following through in the White House,

I think it's fair to say, first of all, Hillary's got an extraordinary [inaudible] experience about how to actually get things done in the [inaudible] of Washington. But second, look, she's proven she could stand in the fire and take it and make things happen. I always talk about 1993 and '94. She took on the big health insurance companies for two years straight fighting for national health insurance reform and got millions and millions of dollars of ads thrown against her. She never flinched. I think her fight then, even though she didn't prevail then, I think it help set the stage for what President Obama did later. So, it comes down to – if two people are putting forward great visions, who do you think can best achieve it for everyday people? I think that's Hillary.

**Ebro:** So, de Blasio, here locally we're watching our Commissioner Bratton on the cover of the paper the last two days with all of the slashings on the train. A couple of days ago, Bratton says it was being blown – well, not being blown out of proportion, but it's just a moment in time where things seem to be crazy. But that same day there's another slashing, yesterday there's two more. Today, Bratton is ordering cops to make sure people aren't sleeping on the subway, which a lot of people who work late and very early tend to do because they're exhausted. What does our mayor have to say about what's going on? And are we just hearing about these things – because those of us that ride the train know we see crazy things all the time. So, now it's headline worthy. Are we just seeing it more because it's headline worthy or is there something really taking place?

**Mayor:** Well, there is no pattern here. We had a long press conference at One Police Plaza yesterday. We went into the details of everything that's happened lately. First of all, the good news, and we all know that good news doesn't travel very far, the month of January 2016 was the safest January in any year in the city's history. We had a huge decline in murders and shootings this January compared to a year ago. And something very important is happening as major crime continues to go down all over the city. That's the thing we should think about first. But we've had these incidents in the subway, they're obviously distressing to people, and the fact is they are individual incidents. They are not related. And the police are doing a lot to reinforce. They're sending a lot more cops into the subway, both uniform and undercover. So you'll see plenty of presence. They'll be plenty of eyes on the situation. But here's the overall fact, a typical day in the subway – almost six million rides – almost six million people take the subway, and there are approximately six or seven crimes committed in the subway each day. And most of those are property theft. Most of those are someone taking an iPhone or some other kind of electronic. So, that's – I think what Commissioner Bratton was saying was a simple thing. We're definitely seeing, you know, those kind of thefts on the subway that happens a lot of the time because people fall asleep and leave, you know, their stuff unattended, be careful about that. And he's saying that in terms of this, you know, number of other incidents that there's going to be plenty of police reinforcement to get ahead of the situation, and make sure it's shut down.

**Ebro:** Do you feel like the good news about the work you and Commissioner Bratton are doing doesn't travel is because, like I say often when you call, I believe the elitist who don't like you push the media agenda to make it look like New York City is unsafe because you are the mayor.

**Mayor:** Well, I'll say it again a different way, it's very interesting that people when I was running tried to do this message about 'we're going to go back to the 1970s and the bad old days'. Since I took office here are the facts, we have the highest population we've ever had in this city, we have more jobs than we've ever had – literally 4.2 million jobs in New York City,

we picked up over 200,000 jobs in the two years I've been in office. Crime has consistently gone down while we ended the broken policy of stop-and-frisks. Stops have been reduced 93 percent, and crime went down consistently. So, if I lay out that picture to you, you would say wow, not only did we not go back to the bad old days we've continued to move forward and become stronger and fairer as a city. Well, there's clearly some people who don't like that, and they try to portray an alternate reality that's just not true. But, you know, I do think the people are more discerning. I think the people see past the [inaudible] headlines. They understand that, you know, for whatever reason the media dwells on conflict instead of anything that suggests progress. And, you know, in the end I think people look at their own lives: if they see change in their own lives that's what they register.

**Ebro:** There it is.

**Peter Rosenberg:** Mayor, we are – are we doing better when it comes to Vision Zero, which was a big thing for you in the last year-and-a-half? There were a lot of accidents when it came to pedestrians and drivers. How are we doing with regard to that in the city?

**Mayor:** This is such an important thing. You know, Vision Zero – I got so deeply engaged in this particularly when I came to realize that the number of people were losing in traffic crashes each year was almost the number of people who were murdered each year. It's just astounding how much of a problem – remember, there's more and more cars than ever before, and too many people who drive recklessly or drive under the influence, etcetera. Vision Zero has really to change that – 66 fewer deaths over the last two years because of Vision Zero, the fewest pedestrian deaths since 1910 last year. Something very, very big is happening because we lowered the speed limit, we got a lot more enforcement of speeding and failure to yield to pedestrians because we changed a lot of the streets themselves. And we made them safer. All of these things are changing behavior and actually saving lives. So this is something that's worked, but it's worked really fast. We only started Vision Zero less than two years ago, it's already had this kind of impact.

**Ebro:** In other news headlines, there is a streetcar that you're planning. Today in the newspaper it says a street car named de blas –

[Laughter]

**Ebro:** – a street car that goes from Astoria, Queens all the way to Sunset Park. It looks like it would run almost similar to the BQE, but it would be a streetcar.

**Mayor:** A little different than the BQE because it would really stay near to the East River throughout. But it's something I think is going to make a huge impact for hundreds of thousands of people. And by the way, we're talking about neighborhoods that are growing in terms of population. We're talking about neighborhoods that have more and more jobs in them. We're talking about neighborhoods that have almost 50,000 public housing residents, and places that have never had enough access to opportunity. Red Hook is a great example – this line would go through Red Hook, Brooklyn. Red Hook has always been left out, but now imagine if you have a light rail line going right through there connecting them to all the other surrounding

neighborhoods, that's going to really open up opportunity for people. So, to me this is the kind of thing we need in this city. You know, more and more people are not going into Manhattan to work, they're going to Brooklyn, they're going to Queens. This connects the two biggest boroughs and just makes people have a lot more ability to get around, a lot more opportunity. And I think it's going to increase the quality-of-life in those neighborhoods. We're really excited about what this could mean.

**Ebro:** So, you're saying you're going to spend \$2.5 billion. Where does that money come from? Because you know that's going to be the fight – something is going to suffer right?

**Mayor:** But here's the interesting thing, it's somewhat like what was done with the extension of the number 7 train. You know, under the Bloomberg administration they created a plan for the Hudson Yards on the far West Side of Manhattan. And they said to do that they had to extend the number 7 train. The way they financed that was with all the development that would happen there they were able to project a lot more revenue for the city because, of course, there would be property taxes coming in on all that development. Use that money to create the additional mass transit. Well, here's another example like that, the values for this area is – there's going to be more job development. There's certainly – we already know there's going to be more residential growth. The values are going to go up because this is going to be something that improves the neighborhood. And that additional value will mean more revenue for the city. So, we're – what we're really doing here is we're creating new value that wouldn't have been there otherwise by putting in something that people value the most – more mass transit, taking that extra value of revenue we get from it, applying it to creating the mass transit. It's a really nice, sort of, closed loop where we would not have had the revenue if we didn't do this, but by capturing that revenue we create something in people's lives they never would have had. Again, you look at a neighborhood like Red Hook that is so cut off in so many ways. This will change people's lives for the better.

**Ebro:** So, you're saying 2019 this would start and it would take what five years?

**Mayor:** I think that's a pretty fair estimate. These things always take time, but once it's built, you know, hundreds of thousands of people get to benefit from it.

**Ebro:** Yeah I like this. And are you running for a second term because, obviously, this would be off your watch?

**Mayor:** I am definitely running for a second term and a lot of the things we've projected – a lot of the things we want to do to address climate change, to get people out of poverty – there's so many of the things we put forward in our OneNYC plan. Some of them are going to happen while I'm still in office if the people give me another term, others we projected far into the future because we have to set New York City on a different path, and a path that will be more inclusive and more fair to people. So, you know, it's nice when you can get things done while you're still in office, but a lot of the biggest things that have ever been done were started by one mayor and then continued onto the future.

**Laura Styles:** Mayor de Blasio with tolls getting higher and rent in New York City getting super expensive, what can you tell us about the increase in minimum wage?

**Mayor:** Look, I am very hopeful. This is an incredible moment in history. A year ago, two years ago if I had told you \$15 dollars an hour had a real shot at becoming the minimum wage across this state or across this country, you know, you have said I was probably crazy. But now the momentum has built. And that was the people speaking. That was working people speaking all over this country. What we've done here, I'm very proud of, I announced a few weeks back for 50,000 city workers and people who work for non-profits that have contracts with the city – for 50,000 people who were not making \$15 dollars an hour, we just increased their wages to \$15 dollars an hour. And we have shown that, you know, here in New York City we're going to lead. We're going to do it ourselves while pushing the State of New York to make the \$15 minimum wage the formal minimum wage for the state. We're going to go up to Albany and fight for that in the next few months. Not surprisingly, there are some in Albany particularly on the Republican side who don't believe in the \$15 dollar minimum wage. So, it will be a real fight, but I think we have a shot this time. And I think the national discussion, again, is more and more about raising wages and benefits. And that suggests to me it's just a matter of time before we get it done.

**Ebro:** There's the first dispensary Mayor de Blasio has opened up – I think near Union Square right?

**Mayor:** Excuse you?

**Ebro:** I heard a rumor that there was a marijuana dispensary that –

**Mayor:** You know, you just said dispensary, I think it says an interesting thing about you that you just said dispensary and assumed we all were thinking marijuana.

**Ebro:** That's right.

[Laughter]

**Ebro:** That's right.

**Mayor:** Okay. I think you need to think about that.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** Now, that's medical marijuana, let's be clear. That's medical marijuana.

**Ebro:** I mean listen, I was taking you down the path of me dreaming here.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** Yeah, yeah that's good. That's good. That's called projecting.

**Ebro:** Exactly. You see where I'm going.

[Laughter]

**Ebro:** You see where I'm going. So we have a medical marijuana dispensary here in Manhattan.

**Mayor:** Yeah.

**Ebro:** How long before weed is legal for the people?

**Mayor:** Well, I'm going to answer your question and then unfortunately I'm going to have to go on to do the people's business.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** But— so, that's a state policy. State voted for medical marijuana to be available, which I think is a smart thing. In terms of the larger issue, I think we have to see what happens in Colorado and Washington State. Those are two big states with big cities in them. That's going to play out over the next year or two. You know, look there are real mixed realities here, a sort of double-edged sword. I'm sure there would be some positives, I'm sure there would be some negatives, but we have a real good experiment we're watching right now in those two states and we have to see what comes of that.

**Ebro:** And we now we always see the headline as, obviously, the tax dollar — \$6.2 billion, I think, the State of Colorado is going to make in tax dollars. I'm not sure if that's correct or not, obviously, things you see on the Internet you can't believe everything. And people, obviously —

**Mayor:** That is one of the smartest things you've said all day.

[Laughter]

**Ebro:** Really, really Mayor.

**Mayor:** Well, you know, but there were space aliens that landed at Gracie yesterday.

**Ebro:** Exactly, exactly. So, the tax dollars isn't persuading any of the people to vote in favor of this, are they?

**Mayor:** I think it's a very complicated issue as always because we have to look at all of the impact. What impact does it have on, you know, safety? What impact does it have on health? You know, you can throw revenue in the mix. But again, my gut feeling here is we have two states that have decided to go do it. Let's find out what happens with them and then we can judge from there.

**Peter Rosenberg:** Last thing, speaking of Colorado – Super Bowl Sunday: Denver, Carolina. Who do you like Mayor?

**Mayor:** This is – okay, I’m going to out on the limb and I may be embarrassed for this, but I don’t even think it’s a contest. I think Carolina – Cam Newton is in the zone. You know, I give honor to Peyton for all he’s done over the years and Denver has a hell of a defense. I will say that, but I just feel like Carolina’s got that team of destiny feel about them.

**Ebro:** And de Blasio before we let you go it’s only right if the mayor of New York City hits them with a dab – Dab on them mayor. Dab. Dab. Dab.

[Laughter]

**Ebro:** Do you know what the dab is?

**Mayor:** You know I was trying to get a clue here.

**Ebro:** Hit them, hit them, dab.

**Peter Rosenberg:** Ebro, you can’t dab on the phone.

**Ebro:** You cross your arms twice, and then you – it’s like you’re smelling your armpit, Mayor. It’s like hit them, hit them, dab.

**Laura Styles:** It’s the dance that Cam Newton does, Mayor.

**Mayor:** You know, I think its become incoherent at this point.

[Laughter]

**Peter Rosenberg:** Thank you, Mayor.

**Ebro:** Give it up for Mayor de Blasio.

**Mayor:** Thank you.

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