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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW**

**Brian Lehrer:** It's the Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC. Good morning, everyone. And we begin this morning with our Friday Ask The Mayor call in, my questions and yours for Mayor Bill de Blasio, at 6-4-6-4-3-5-7-2-8-0, 6-4-6-4-3-5-7-2-8-0. We've been doing this in the 11 o'clock hour recently, but today it's at 10 to accommodate some changes in the Mayor's schedule. So, here we go. If you have a question for the Mayor, our lines are now open at 6-4-6-4-3-5-7-2-8-0. Or you can tweet a question. You never get a busy signal on our Twitter feed. So, just use the hashtag, #AskTheMayor and we'll watch those go by and pick some good ones. Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Welcome back to WNYC. Oh, he's not here yet? Now he's here. Hi, Mr. Mayor, I think we have you now. You're there?

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Yes, you do, Brian. How are you doing today?

**Lehrer:** I'm doing all right. Good morning to you. Well, there was an election this week –

**Mayor:** Good morning. And Brian, can I just give you a quick piece of breaking news I think you're going to like? Today's the last day of school and I just want to take one quick second to say thank you to the educators, to the parents, to the kids in New York City who made this school year work against the toughest odds. And, you know, we brought our schools back. A lot of places didn't. Kudos to everyone in our school system. We're coming back strong in September. But here's the news, we've done 1.5 million COVID tests as of yesterday, 1.5 million COVID tests in our schools. Here is the latest number COVID in the schools, 0.03 percent. So, this is a testament to the vaccination effort and to the work of our educators and school staff and parents. COVID is almost non-existent in New York City public schools right now. That's a good sign for the fall.

**Lehrer:** That's a wonderful sign for the fall. And I certainly second your congratulations or your thanks and appreciation to everybody. Parents, teachers, staff, kids themselves, who had to put up with everything in the remote learning era, which hopefully is over now. Hopefully we won't need it. But before we declare victory too firmly, and just go onto ticker-tape parades and fireworks and celebration. You know about the new outbreaks of the Delta variant elsewhere in the country and elsewhere in the world. Israel, which did such a good job at vaccinating has now re-imposed indoor mask requirements because the Delta variant is dominant there now and is infecting even vaccinated people at higher rates than the other variants, although not with serious illness so far, very much among the vaccinated. But I'm curious if you have any contingency plans, if low vaccinated areas in New York City experience resurgences because of Delta?

**Mayor:** Well, I had this conversation with our health care leadership yesterday, and we looked very, very carefully at the Delta variant and the impact. It is obviously present here in the city and we've had a chance to see what it means. What we still see consistently is vaccination works. The more vaccinated people, the better. And we're at a very substantial rate now. We have 4.1 million fully vaccinated New Yorkers, 4.6 million who have received at least one dose. And that means overwhelmingly they will all come back for the second dose. And the effort continues and will deepen. And now we have a lot more people we can reach because kids are eligible, you know, from 12 and up. And we've actually been ahead of the national average in vaccinating kids between 12 and 17. So, I truly believe, and our health care leadership believes that the best answer to the variant is just keep deepening the vaccination effort. But Brian, we're going to watch it carefully. There's no evidence at this moment that it changes the trajectory, but if anything occurs where we have to make adjustments, we will make them quickly. And that's part of why I'm going to keep doing morning briefings, giving people the latest data on COVID in this city for the foreseeable future, because we're staying vigilant.

**Lehrer:** So, I hear you are saying, if cases rise above a certain cutoff, you would reinstate some kinds of restrictions?

**Mayor:** No – wait a minute, that's respectfully, you're reinterpreting. We don't see any evidence at this point of the variants having a major impact here. We just don't. And we don't have, at this moment, that kind of specific level we're looking at for any reversals. We believe right now that the high level of vaccination in the city, is the thing that's keeping COVID low and will continue to. There's no plan at this moment to do anything different than what we're doing now. If something changes, we'll assess it. But what we learned with COVID and the health care team has really educated me on this. And thanks to Dr. Varma, Dr. Chokshi, Dr. Katz for everything they've done. It doesn't happen overnight. If there's a trend line, it happens over weeks or even months. There's plenty of time to make adjustments. But we do not see that right now. We see tremendous consistency. And the answer of course, for anyone concerned about this is make sure everyone in your life is vaccinated. That is the defense.

**Lehrer:** And one other thing on this. Would there be any plans under any circumstances to implement restrictions only in the hard-hit areas of the city while letting other areas stay more open because the vaccination rates are disparate by neighborhood?

**Mayor:** That's a theoretical in the sense of it would really depend. I can't say that now. Absolutely cannot say that now. Because we'd have to see all the facts and again, they would not be – it's not an on, off switch. If something was going on, we would see a trend line and we'd have plenty of time to figure out how to address it. I think the bottom line is we are starting to see better results in places where there has been more hesitancy. There's been amazing outreach efforts. Just one yesterday that we were celebrating, the actors Benicio Del Toro and Zoe Saldana did a really wonderful video series speaking to Latinx New Yorkers in English, in Spanish about the facts to help dispel the rumors, from voices that people care about and respect. We're going to be doing a lot more of that and a lot more focus on youth vaccination, which my son, Dante, has been playing a big role in. We're going to get out there and vaccinate a whole lot more people. A lot of parents are going to want their kids vaccinated ahead of school in

September. So, that's the key. Stay on the offense. We're not focused on defense. We're focused on offense right now.

**Lehrer:** Clive in Manhattan, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hello, Clive.

**Question:** Good morning. Thank you. I'm a hearing officer with OATH, Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings. I and some colleagues want to go into the office to conduct remote hearings and we are locked out through the calendar year by the Commissioner. I wondered Mr. Mayor, if you knew about that. I know you want the city to be open. If you knew about that and if you knew the reason why?

**Mayor:** Clive, thank you for calling. This is exactly one of the reasons I love the Brian Lehrer Show because I hear things that I had not heard before. I will pursue that immediately. I do want to see the city fully reopened. Obviously, we brought back all of our City office workers and that went really well. And it's been a very healthy experience. Also, what I just said about the schools is the ultimate measure. Again, 0.03 percent COVID positivity in our huge school system right now. So, I want people back. I will find out if there's something particular at OATH that they're trying to navigate. But I guarantee you, we will get you a response quickly and please leave your information with WNYC.

**Lehrer:** All right, Clive. We'll take your information off the air. Linda on Staten Island, you're on WNYC. Hi, Linda.

**Question:** Hi. Tree destruction has started in a coastal wetland forest in Graniteville, Staten Island. It's an EGA community. They are destroying 18 acres for a BJ strip mall. Mayor, why can't you push for a better place? Residents told you their concerns about flooding. Your own DCP maps show that this area is in severe risk of flooding. Please do something. We feel that you can.

**Mayor:** Linda, thank you. I'll take another look at it. I did – people did raise it to me before I followed up with City planning and other agencies, and really honestly, folks did not see an environmental challenge there and thought it was acceptable. I'm going to go back and check it again. I absolutely honor that you're raising a concern and I'm always concerned about environmental justice issues. Let me take another look at it. But I do want to affirm from the last briefing I got, I did not see a reason to stand in the way of it. But we'll get an update. Please give your information to WNYC and we'll get you an update.

**Lehrer:** Linda, hang on. We'll take your contact. Question via Twitter, listener asks when can students not wear masks? I guess the answer is three o'clock today since school's out for summer.

**Mayor:** You beat me to it, Brian. Three o'clock today. That was going to be my great moment. How dare you? So, right now the working assumption, abundance of caution, is kids keep masks on, this is City and State rules both. Kids keep masks on at schools and there's other areas, obviously hospitals, health care facilities, mass transit, where we want to keep mask usage going. You've got vaccinated, unvaccinated people all in the same place. It's a smart thing to do. Now, I've said many times and firmly believe, we're going to see changes in the CDC guidance and

most likely State rules as more information comes in. So, if a trajectory continues downward with COVID and we're at the lowest level we've been right now since the crisis began, I'm not going to be surprised at some point in the course of the summer, or right before school, the mask restriction comes off. But for now, out of abundance of caution, we're keeping it on.

**Lehrer:** Another listener asks on Twitter, I see – oops, that one flipped off. Sorry, sometimes Twitter goes by so quick. So, I'll ask this one instead. This is another good one. This says radio silence on the role of contact tracing, which typically plays a critical role as a pandemic slows down, see New Zealand and other successful countries and public health knowledge base. What has happened to contact tracing? And I will throw in another contact tracing question. We got this for you last week, but I didn't have time to get to that caller. A contact tracer for the City wanted to know why contact tracers aren't among those being celebrated efficiently and the ticker-tape parade?

**Mayor:** Oh, of course contract contact tracers are going to be celebrated. Yeah. This is an interesting thing, Brian. I've heard different groups, very rightfully say, what about us? And I don't know where the communication broke down. The parade's going to be very inclusive. Test and Trace Corps, absolutely, our Vaccine For All Corps, absolutely. Everyone who has been out there with the vaccine effort with the testing effort. Of course, they're all going to be celebrated. So, let me just set that record straight. The parade is very, very inclusive of every form of health care hero, first responder, essential worker. We want them all celebrated. And we'll follow up to make sure that everyone in Test and Trace knows that. But as to your larger question, no, this is something we continue to be very proud of. The fact that New York City built the largest Test and Trace Corps in the country. And that it was very aggressive in its approach is one of the reasons we beat back COVID. And it's absolutely necessary to keep it. You will see in the budget that will be passed for next year, we're keeping Test and Trace Corps and our Vaccine For All Corps, 100 percent constant through the next fiscal year. Ultimately, they will convert into a larger public health corps for a variety of needs, which is something I announced last September. Right now, about 4,000 strong. So, that corps of fantastic public health workers, public outreach workers are going to be around and strong and ready to deal with anything. But they are one of the reasons that we beat back COVID. And talk to Dr. Varma, who's studied these efforts around the world. He consistently in internal and public conversation says, don't forget how important the Test and Trace Corps was in protecting the city and turning the COVID situation around.

**Lehrer:** By the way, you should include in the ticker-tape parade, our show's most central essential worker, Juliana Fonda, who's been at the audio controls pretty much every day for the last year, going into the station while I, and the producers, did it from home. So, just shouting out our personal audio ticker tape parade here for Juliana Fonda.

**Mayor:** To Juliana, wait this is important. Hold on, this a fact here we need to share. Thank you, Juliana. And we have invited media, both the on-air personalities and the print journalists, but also the production folks. The folks behind the scenes. The media played a crucial role in educating people and getting people facts and information they needed during this crisis. So, we want to celebrate the famous people like you, Brian, but also the folks who make it possible for this work to happen. So, contact tracers welcome, all media personnel welcome. We want this to be an inclusive parade.

**Lehrer:** There you go. And hooray. Another question from Twitter and I will set this up with a little background for the listeners after I ask it. The listener writes, can you please explain why the decision to end to-go sales of wine and cocktails from restaurants, were given only 24-hour notice that the COVID program would be coming to an end? No lead time has many negative effects. So, let me just say to the listeners who don't know this story. That this really comes from the State, not the City, as I understand it. Which officially ended the pandemic state of emergency. And the part that's getting the most press is that it's the end of the very popular cocktails to-go. So, would you like to see takeout drinks made permanent? Or what would you say to that listener?

**Mayor:** I think it's a mistake to cut it off so soon. I think it would be smart to continue that opportunity for bars and restaurants to do more business, to stay alive and strong and come back. The State does control this 100 percent. This is not something the City can do. But what I would say to the State of New York is don't make it permanent, but do continue it at least for this calendar year, maybe into 2022. Because we need our restaurants and bars to be strong as part of the life and the economy of the city, hundreds of thousands of jobs. We need them as part of tourism coming back. And this is part of how they survive. So, why not give them a little more of a helping hand? It worked, it really did work.

**Lehrer:** And people can now smoke pot in public in most, or all places where cigarette smoking is allowed. But I don't think you can legally sit on a park bench and have a beer? Is that a disparity worth addressing?

**Mayor:** I think it is some apples and oranges there. I think we do need to be careful. I could speak long and hard about the challenges that come with alcohol. And, you know, unfortunately alcoholism and touched my family, so I have very, very strong views on this. I think we got to strike a balance. But I do think specifically allowing the bars and restaurants to do the take out for now again as part of their comeback, I think that does make sense.

**Lehrer:** Nick, in Rockaway Beach, you're on WNYC with Mayor Bill de Blasio. Hello, Nick.

**Question:** Hi, thank you so much, Brian. And thank you, Mr. Mayor for taking my call. I've been a resident of Rockaway Beach for about 12 years now. And when you started the initiative for Vision Zero, there was always this white ghost bike that I could see from my apartment. And I only learned what it meant from your Vision Zero campaign, when, you know, there was an advertisement on the bus stop. And over the years, you know, the beach has been built up. There's a lot of people crossing in front of my building. And I did reach out to DOT a number of years ago and asked them to put a crosswalk in where there are some cut curves for handicap access. And they got back to me and said that, you know, it wasn't really viable. There wasn't enough foot traffic. And then the other day on Sunday, there was a really tragic motorcycle accident also right on the same stretch of road in front of my building. And you know, yesterday speed cameras went up, and I thought to myself, okay, so, you know, what is the progress of Vision Zero in the sense that, you know, it takes these tragic losses of life for actions to take place? And I was wondering if you could kind of give me a sense of the progress you feel you've

made with the program? And also, maybe help put in a crosswalk so that no more lives need to be lost?

**Mayor:** Nick, thank you. Very, very important question. First of all, I want to ask you to give your information to WNYC. I want our Transportation Commissioner Hank Gutman to call you personally about this. I think historically there was reticence at DOT, as much as DOT played a really heroic role in Vision Zero. There's reticence, to some extent based on federal regulations, to go the next step in terms of certain crosswalks, stop signs, stoplights, etcetera. I am – I take an expansive view here. I think we need to keep doing the work of protecting people, even when it creates some challenges in terms of slowing down traffic a little more, because there's nothing more sacred than protecting the lives, our kids, our seniors, our families, et cetera. So, I've been pushing DOT to go farther, and I think Commissioner Gutman has been realigning some of those policies, so we can do more of this life-saving work. If this is a place – and it sounds like it is – that needs that kind of treatment, then we should do it.

And I do think to your bigger question, Nick, look, I can just say this, thank God we have Vision Zero. When we started it in 2014, a lot of people said it was too much, it was asking too much of drivers, and it was going to slow down the city too much, all those doomsayers were wrong. It has greatly increased safety and we need to do a lot more. We need to pass the legislation in Albany, that did pass the state Senate, now needs to get through the Assembly when they come back, the Crash Victims Act. We need more street safety. We need more consequences for hit and run drivers, drunk drivers, but also, we need to keep doing what is really worked with vision zero, Queens Boulevard, which used to be called the boulevard of death, night and day now how much safer it is because we changed Queens Boulevard, protected bike lanes. We know they work. We just need to keep doing more, it's a big city, and we just got to deepen Vision Zero all the time and more speed cameras to boot.

**Lehrer:** Nick, thank you for your call. Well, Mr. Mayor, there was an election this week. You might've noticed. The counting has a ways to go, but was democracy well-served in the race to succeed you, so far, by ranked choice voting and your opinion?

**Mayor:** From what we're seeing so far, yes, absolutely. Brian, I think, look, let's consider two big changes that happened in the last few years. Ranked choice voting and the referendum that I sponsored to change our campaign finance system and make it possible for people to run for office without ever talking to a big donor. We saw the most diverse slate of candidates for mayor in history, and if you look at all the other races around the city, much more competition, much more diversity. We're going to have the most diverse City Council we've ever had. We're going to have representation of a lot of communities that have never had a single elected official. We're going to have more women than ever in the Council. Unquestionably, something's working. Now, people are still getting used to the system of ranked choice voting and we got to see how the next count goes, and if it goes smoothly. We also have to see how many New Yorkers did five full choices, especially for the top offices, or, you know, at two, three, four choices. If we see that people really use their ballots to the fullest across all communities, I think it's an absolute ratification that this was the right approach. If we see major disparities among communities, it tells us we have more work to do in terms of people fully utilizing this new

system. But so far, I think it has really led to a very representative outcome and that's exciting for the future of the city.

**Lehrer:** Eric Adams said a very striking thing in his primary night's speech, that people on social media don't decide elections, people on social security do. And the Marist poll that came out shortly before the election did show Adams winning among people over 45, but only coming in third among people under 45, who Maya Wiley won in that poll, and this seems to cross racial lines. But to Adam's point, the percentage of the electorate that is older was expected to be much larger than those who are younger. I saw press reference to your son, Dante, is voting for Maya Wiley, there are other press references to, you won't say so, but you were more of an Eric Adams guy. So, it seems to me we're a city divided by age on whatever different approaches to criminal justice were in play in this campaign. Is that something that you perceived or thought about?

**Mayor:** Look, I think, first of all, we haven't seen the full results and we need to see the full results to really be able to make sense of what happened in this election. I think generational differences are nothing new in politics. You know, 2016 is a great example of where in so many democratic families, you know, folks over a certain age were leaning much more heavily to Hillary Clinton, folks under a certain age, we're leaning much more heavily to Bernie Sanders. I mean, we see these kinds of things consistently, but I don't want to overrate it at the same time because that's a great example to me. I always said, and I was, you know, involved in that year, and saw people who adamantly liked one candidate or the other, but overwhelmingly agreed they would come together for the other candidate if they prevailed. So, I don't think these differences should be made too much of, I think in the end, there's a core set of progressive values that are dominant in New York City right now. A massive rejection of Trumpism is – you know, we're talking about over 75 percent of the people that city would agree with that, and, you know, absolute – what I've said about, for example, public safety. I believe the overwhelming majority of New Yorkers would agree with this statement, they want to make sure there's effective policing, but they want it to be fair and non-discriminatory and respectful. So, I think there is more of a consensus than sometimes the coverage might show, but in the end, yes, some generational difference kind of goes with the territory in politics from my point of view.

**Lehrer:** Here is Lauren, who says she's a doctor, calling from Manhattan. Lauren, you're on WNYC with Mayor. Hello.

**Question:** Hi, thank you, Brian. I've been a long-time listener, and this was my first call and thank you Mayor. I want you to point out that many of my patients who are New York City retirees of being forced into Medicare Advantage Plan. I think Medicare Advantage is a disadvantage for them because it may limit their choice of providers and choice of hospitals. And although the plans differ in each one, these people have no voice, they've had no choice in this decision by the city to switch them summarily from traditional Medicare into Medicare Advantage Plans. Although these plans are cheaper for the City to administer, they are controlled by the HMO's or insurance companies, not by the government anymore. Of course, they do – still have Medicare Part A which covers hospitals, but that may insurance companies may still restrict which hospitalists are in network and which providers are in network further. So, you might get free eyeglasses and free hearing aids, but then there are other restrictions that my patients don't want, and my patients have asked me to speak up, and I'm on the New York County Medical

Society Board, and I'm not speaking as a representative from the New York County Medical Society, but I'm speaking as a representative for my patients were distressed that the city gave them no choice and no voice in this decision.

**Mayor:** Lauren, I appreciate the question. I appreciate the work you do, obviously, and that you're advocating for your patients, but I want to be honest with you, that's not the fact – those are not the facts of what's happening. There's been a long, careful process with the labor movement of this city representing municipal workers. This is not something the City can decide on its own. It can only decide it in coalition with the union leadership that was voted for by these very same people you're advocating for, and you know, my administration was voted for by the people. So, we have two democratically elected groups of people working on a central question, which is how to protect the most generous health care benefits for retirees anywhere in the United States of America. Let's give this a moment of context. This country tragically has turned away from a defined benefit pensions, turned away from employers giving proper health benefits in so many ways. This has been a race to the bottom in the United States over decades. Thank God for the Affordable Care Act, and we've got a long way to go, and I believe in Medicare for All, and that's the vision of the future. In this city, we did a guaranteed Health Care for All, we did NYC Care. Every single new Yorker can get guaranteed health care, and if someone doesn't have health care right now, does not have insurance, call 3-1-1, we will get you health insurance or health care coverage, even if you can't pay for it. But the problem is even with the incredible commitment this city makes to its retirees to give them the best health care benefits in the country, it's still a staggering cost and there's tremendous danger in the future of the cost becoming overwhelming. So, the question was, how do you make sure these benefits are absolutely sustainable and generous? And that's what we've worked on with the Municipal Labor Council to determine a way to keep the benefits in place but make it financially viable. As you just described extraordinary, specific things that people can get on our plan that just don't exist for so many other plans, but no, this has been a thoughtful, careful process. It's not fully complete. We're still working on it. We will make sure that people get as good or better benefits through this plan, but it will be financially viable and sustainable.

**Lehrer:** Joe on Staten Island. You're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hello, Joe, thank you for calling in.

**Question:** Oh, thanks for taking my call, Brian, and your honor, I'm calling about another Vision Zero issue. I live on the street in Staten Island. That's often used as a cutoff from a main thoroughfare and as a result, people speed down it constantly. There have been accidents. We've even had a car flip over and I decided I would petition the DOT for some speed bumps, and I went around the block, and I was met with great enthusiasm, but then in two families that we went through to get signatures, they told us that they had already tried to get a speed bump and they were just summarily dismissed. And then I found that when I wrote to the DOT, they dismissed me as well, and they told me that the block was not long enough, they wouldn't be able to slow down. I then pointed it out to them that there was a 20 mile an hour speed advisory on the street and the length of the street, you know, which is over 800 feet is long enough. So, they told me, okay, we'll go get your signatures. And like I said, I've got them, but I'm afraid that it's all going to be for naught because it seems to be falling on deaf ears. So, I'm just wondering if

the spirit of the law and the letter of the law are two different things on Staten Island, then what you think I should do to pursue this to completion?

**Mayor:** Well, Joe, I'm really glad you raised this because I –way back when, when I was in the City Council, I worked hard to get speed bumps on a lot of streets in my district and I found the DOT process often frustrating. One valid issue is what do people on the block one? And if you've got a real big support on your block, that's tremendously helpful. Also, a valid issue sometimes, is if a street is a bus route or a truck route, sometimes there are legitimate physical reasons why a speed bump doesn't work, but in many cases it does work. I'm going to ask our Transportation Commissioner Hank Gutman to call you directly. Joe, please give your information to WNYC. I'm a believer in speed bumps, especially if you have had a speeding problem. So, I'm going to make sure the Commissioner calls you and listens with a sympathetic ear to see if this is something that we can get done and, you know, unless there's a real, physical problem, it's something I'll certainly encourage him to do.

**Lehrer:** Joe, hang on. We will take your contact information. I see we're almost out of time. Let's end on a little bit about tourism and the city's economy. I see the city is mounting its biggest advertising push in decades to get tourists to come to the city, now that the pandemic has eased, obviously that would help the economic recovery. How much is already happening or not happening on its own in terms of tourism?

**Mayor:** It's quite amazing how much has already happening. I honestly, Brian, thought, you know, tourism we wouldn't see a lot in 2021. We'd have to wait when we were thinking back in the depths of the pandemic. What we've seen in these last few months is astounding. We're seeing tourism come back very aggressively. We had, I think last week or the week before, something like 430,000 hotel room bookings in the week. Very surprising and positive numbers. So, what we're seeing is it's kind of like concentric circles, a lot more regional tourism. People are coming back because there's so much happening this summer in New York City, concerts and obviously sports and so many outdoor activities and the open restaurants. Now, Broadway starting to come back earlier than expected. I think that that's going to happen. A lot of other theater coming back, that's going to help really move people.

So we're really pleasantly surprised this effort to reach tourists around the country and around the world on that concentric circle concept suggests we think more and more people from outside the metropolitan area are going to start coming to New York because they're going to perceive it as a place where they can have a very, very rich experience ,rightfully, and a lot of folks are not so ready to travel overseas at this moment, now New York's going to be an even more appealing destination for folks who want to experience all the cultures of the world. And then we're starting to see even the foreign tourism is coming back, and I think that will grow intensely, especially as we get into next year. But I think this is going to be a very big year for American tourism to New York City and going to have a surprisingly positive impact on our economics comeback.

**Lehrer:** And I do see that the city's unemployment rate as the economic comeback begins is still around 10 percent, much higher than the national average. What sectors do you see bouncing back strongly on their own in addition to tourism and which ones are struggling more than the nation as a whole that might need support from city government?

**Mayor:** So, what we're seeing is our rate of job growth is actually faster than the nation now. And so that's very encouraging. We were laid very low, but the comeback is actually going faster now in New York City than in the nation as a whole. Clearly, the strength areas unquestionably tech. Tech is not only growing in New York City, but it's growing in terms of jobs and use of office space. That's fantastic. Life sciences is going to be big. It's starting to get big this year. It's going to be much bigger in the future because the whole world is going to be trying to do a lot more research to prevent the pandemics of the futures, New York City is going to be a big recipient of those research dollars. Those are strong areas, finance is actually quite strong at this point and bringing their office workers back. That's going to be crucial, because the finance community has been really clear, they want people back in the offices and they want them back soon, that's going to have a big impact on surrounding small businesses, you know, diners and newsstands and you name it. The fact is the area that we're going to have the biggest challenge in is hospitality, unquestionably, but what's been positive is so much of the previous reality we faced is turning quickly. Restaurants and bars are coming back. We just opened this new Quick Start Initiative, and by the way, we want to advertise that. Any restaurant, bar, small business of any kind trying to come back that's been closed or anyone who's starting a new business, you can call 3-1-1, you can get connected to Quick Start, which is small business services. Within 48 hours, you get a response to your concern. If you're trying to figure out how to open, you get a concierge, literally a concierge, a single person who will stay with you throughout your entire reopening process, we believe this is going to cut in half the time it takes to reopen or to open a new business. So, I think you're going to see hospitality coming back strong, particularly on the restaurant side, a little longer on the hotel side, that's the area we have more work do.

**Lehrer:** Thanks as always, Mr. Mayor, talk to you next week.

**Mayor:** Thank you, Brian. Take care.

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