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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON CNN

Jim Sciutto: New York City, once the epicenter of the coronavirus in the U.S. is now seeing an uptick in new cases. Joining me now is New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. Mayor, thanks for taking the time this morning.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you, Jim.

Sciutto: You've heard the warnings from Dr. Fauci and others, like Professor Osterholm there, the months ahead are going to be bleak. I don't have to tell you New York suffered among the worst in the early stages of this pandemic, but got it under control through a lot of hard work. And I wonder, as Mayor of New York, are you concerned about the city losing control once again?

Mayor: Jim, look, the whole focus here – singular focus is to stop a second wave from hitting New York City. We've got to hold this virus at bay. We've shown it can happen. You're right, we went from worst to first. We became one of the healthiest places in the country because folks got very disciplined about wearing masks, about social distancing. We did put some tough restrictions in place. We were able to lift a lot of those over time because people are careful. We really just – we follow the data and the science. But now we have a threat from everywhere around us and a growing threat. So, we've put some restrictions in place in some areas that needed it. But I'll tell you, in the end, we're going to do everything in our power to stop a second wave. And it really comes down to the people. I think this is one of the big stories that hasn't been given the attention it deserves – when the people buy into a solution, it goes far beyond what government could do. And here, in New York, people have bought into being tough, being disciplined to fight this disease back.

Sciutto: I've seen it on the streets of New York. I mean, mask wearing there is nearly universal. I do want to talk about the economic effects here, because they are real around the country, but also New York. A study found that a third of New York businesses may never recover from this. Broadway is not open till next spring, that has enormous carry-on effects to all the businesses that then depend on Broadway. I just wonder, how deep a hole economically is New York in now and how do you get out of it?

Mayor: Very big hole to say the least, and a lot of pain – a lot of businesses have been suffering and we will lose a lot of people's livelihoods. It's horrible, but we can come back. New York City came back after 9/11. New York City came back after Hurricane Sandy. There's so many examples of this city coming back and being a beacon to the country of resiliency and fight-back. But look, the only thing that guarantees the comeback is a real federal stimulus, a serious one

that helps cities and states that helps people get back on their feet, helps small businesses come back. That's going to be the game-changer. We have the – you know, all the tools beyond that, because New York City is a place that's had a booming economy as recently as February. But if the federal government doesn't help, you know, not only New York, but the whole country with a true stimulus – why do they call it stimulus, Jim? Because it's supposed to stimulate economic activity and make things different. We've been lacking that. When we get that, this city comes back strong.

Sciutto: Who do you blame for not getting that, right? I mean, do you believe blame is shared among Democratic and Republican lawmakers?

Mayor: I don't, honestly. I had this conversation even with President Trump back in the spring, when I was communicating with him pretty regularly, during the worst of the New York City crisis, and I said to him, if you would speak up for a stimulus, you would move the Senate with you. We'd be done here. He's never done it. You know, the last few weeks he suddenly got a little interested because he needed to get reelected. But no, look, if President Trump had said from the beginning stimulus is the way forward, if he had learned the lesson that Franklin Delano Roosevelt and other great leaders, we would already have that stimulus, this city and a lot of other places would be in the middle of our comeback right now. He did not provide the leadership. He literally wouldn't even comment on it for weeks on end. That was the lost opportunity.

Sciutto: I want to talk about crime, because New York City, I don't have to tell you, has seen a big jump in violent crime [inaudible] – 76 percent increase in murder, 127 percent jump in shooting incidents. Last month, Mayor – rather, Governor Cuomo said, we have a problem in New York City when it comes to crime and he demanded that you and other city officials lead on this. How are you leading?

Sciutto: Listen, Jim, this city over the last six years previous to this horrible year, 2020, we drove down crime for six years in a row. We had the lowest crime since the 1950s, we then hit a perfect storm. Everything fell apart because of the pandemic. People didn't have jobs. Kids didn't go to school. Houses of worship were closed. You name it, let's be honest. And we saw this in cities all around the country – crime spiked because society started to fall apart as we know it. Now, things are starting to come back together. They're starting to get re-glued. New York City has been doing a lot better on the health front and the economic front. And NYPD has been doing a great job, sending resources where they're needed most so we can drive the crime back down. This was a horrible, temporary reality, but we will overcome it. We've done it before. We're going to do it again.

Sciutto: I've spoken to the Commissioner of the NYPD a number of times and he has pointed to bail reform in the state as a problem here, it's led to decarceration. I wonder if you agree with that and does bail reform need to be a reform?

Mayor: Look, we've worked together, the Commissioner and I, on that issue, but I think the bigger point is the pandemic by far. How do you have six years in a row where crime kept going down? In fact, a quarter-century overall where crime kept going down in this city. We were the

example to the country of neighborhood policing, of bringing police and community together, and then a horrible global, historic event unglued our society in so many ways. Let's be clear, that's what happened here. But it will pass, Jim. There will be a vaccine. Society is going to come back together. The tools of fighting crime, we have – we know what works, which is bringing neighborhood and police together through a neighborhood policing strategy. We've seen it year after year work. It will work again.

Sciutto: All right. Well, myself and other fellow New Yorkers will be watching. Mayor Bill de Blasio, thanks so much for joining this morning.

Mayor: Thank you, Jim.

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