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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 again, everyone. And as usual on Fridays, we began this 11 o'clock hour with our weekly Ask the Mayor segment, 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. Or you can tweet a question. Just use the hashtag #AskTheMayor. Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Welcome back to WNYC.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, Brian. How are you doing today?

Lehrer: I'm doing well. Thank you for asking. And I want to ask you first today about a letter you wrote last week to ICE, the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, saying that you were concerned about ICE agents making representations that erroneously suggest they are local police in order to gain access to homes or otherwise make an arrest. It hasn't gotten that much press with coronavirus and the election and other things going on. But are ICE agents trying to trick immigrants into thinking they're with the NYPD?

Mayor: Yeah. You know, Brian, this is just reprehensible and I think it's illegal. Yes, they are. It's quite clear. They are trying to get people to open the door by saying it's the police. And you know, something that's happened in this city, by the way, for decades, this is something New York City should be proud of is that the NYPD does not ask immigration status, does not ask documentation status and nor do any other City agencies. And this is why immigrant New Yorkers, including non-documented folks feel comfortable going to our schools, our public hospitals. And obviously also going to the police to tell if they've been a victim of a crime, or if they've witnessed – we need that kind of relationship. And so ICE is not only lying and using what I think is an illegal approach to try and get an entry to people's homes. But they're also in the process, I think pretty purposely trying to poison the relationship between the NYPD and immigrants and local government and immigrants. They're trying to sow chaos. And this is what they are at this point. ICE is basically a political wing of the Trump political operation right now. But we are going to try and find any means we can to stop this. But they're being quite brazen about the fact that to gain entry or to get someone to open a door, they will openly lie about who they are.

Lehrer: And I gather there was one such case described by witnesses last week in Upper Manhattan of ICE saying they were with a precinct and another reported by PIX 11, in which an immigration officer wore what looked like an NYPD jacket. ICE says they can use the word police because it's universally applied, including both the NYPD and them. Fair defense?

Mayor: No, it's not. That's absolutely ridiculous. There's a massive difference between the federal immigration agency and our local police, especially when – and this is something, you know, all New Yorkers should really, again appreciate, for decades NYPD has said, we will not ask documentation status. And we've made very clear over these last seven years, we will not collaborate with ICE. We do not allow them on City property unless they have a warrant and a judge confirms they have a right to be there. It's very, very clear that there's actually a huge separation between the NYPD and ICE. And that's been a very good thing. So I think this is purposeful. It's not only to gain entry, it's to try and blur those lines and create distrust in immigrant communities. And Brian, if you talk to immigrant advocates as I have, one of the things they appreciate most about New York City is that the NYPD comes to them regularly and speaks to them as allies trying to work together to make sure immigrants are protected. And constantly reaffirming that the NYPD will never ask documentation status. So look at how cynical this is for ICE to purposefully blur those lines and try and create distrust in immigrant communities.

Lehrer: Before we move on to other things, you wrote this letter to ICE, but without the Police Commissioner signing it too. Is Commissioner Shea not 100 percent in agreement with your position?

Mayor: He's absolutely 100 percent in agreement. He's been part of the police leadership over the whole seven years that I've been in office. And this has been not only an adamantly held view of all of our police commissioners, but for commissioners and mayors before that, by the way, of all parties. Because the NYPD is very clear. We believe in neighborhood policing. You can't have neighborhood policing in a city of immigrants, if immigrants distrust their relationship with police. And in fact, one of the things that Commissioner Shea and others in the PD will tell you is if immigrants know they are safe, that their documentation status will not be asked, they will come forward if they're a victim of a crime or a witness to a crime. And if they don't know that they're safe, they're not going to come forward. And so from a pure crime fighting point of view, let alone a moral point of view, it is absolutely crucial that we never ask documentation status. And that's why we don't do it.

Lehrer: Why didn't the Police Commissioner sign this letter about his agency being impersonated?

Mayor: Yeah. Again, Brian respectfully, I don't know the nuances of how every letter gets written and sent out under whose signature. I – you asked me a really straightforward question, does this commissioner and this NYPD agree 100 percent with what I said? And I just said to you really clearly, yes, they do. It has been their standing policy for all of our seven years and long before.

Lehrer: And last question, because there's a lot of distrust out there, does the NYPD ever cooperate with ICE or Homeland Security investigations, which is part of ICE?

Mayor: Two very, very different things. Homeland Security also includes for example, international and national investigations against sex trafficking. Homeland Security involves

obviously work against terrorism. So there are times that absolutely have been good and valid to work with Homeland Security. But ICE? No, absolutely not. That is a bright red line. We do not participate in immigration investigations.

Lehrer: Natasha in Queens you are on WNYC with the Mayor. Hello, Natasha.

Question: Hi, how you doing, Brian? How are you doing Mr. de Blasio?

Mayor: I'm doing well Natasha. How were you?

Question: I am doing good. I am a bus rider from Queens. And as you know, the City's COVID response has involved transportation. And while initially the subway service declined, people did feel more comfortable riding the bus, and we're still seeing an increase from our central workers and also our middle and low income communities. So in June you announced your Better Buses Restart where you stated that you were proud to offer New Yorkers faster and more reliable options, by promising to speed up buses with 20 miles of new bus lanes by the end of the year. So as you know, the bus lanes can't be added during the winter months because the torch that's used to add the directions won't work in colder weather. So the DOT can only add the street treatments from March to November. So that leaves us with just a few weeks left this year to paint the remaining miles of bus lanes before the weather gets too cold. So my question for you, Mr. Mayor, is that with the 750,000 riders that it will affect across the boroughs, will you keep your promise and complete the remainder of the bus lanes from your Better Buses Restart by November 1st?

Mayor: Natasha, I appreciate the question. I also appreciate your obviously great knowledge of the topic and you know what you're talking about. I want to get you the update on exactly how far we have gotten. When we announced that we felt very confident we could achieve that whole goal on a timeline. The truth is I haven't gotten a progress report in the last few weeks. So I want to, but the last I heard Natasha was this was moving along very well. There was a couple of local issues that were being worked through that still had to be resolved. But that overwhelmingly the plan was moving on pace. So let me get you and everyone an update on that. If you leave your information with WNYC, I'll make sure we get you an update in the course of the day.

Lehrer: Natasha, thank you for your call on that. Do you have an opinion on safety of the subways at this point in the COVID pandemic? I don't know if you saw that study that came out from the Public Transportation Association. You know, Sam Schwartz, the former traffic commissioner, Gridlock Sam in the Daily News, who was involved with it. And apparently as they look at the New York City subways and subways around the world, they're not finding many COVID cases linked to subways. And they have various explanations as to why that might be. They're fairly well ventilated. One is that they haven't been that crowded. So of course that if they get crowded again, it could become more of a risk. But I'm curious if you've looked at that and want to stand here and say to people, take the subways again, it's safe or any version of that?

Mayor: Oh, absolutely. I want to tell people that the subways – I think there's been an amazing positive story with the subways. I think that report was important because look, the fact is that folks needed to know the subways were going to be very, very carefully cleaned. And this is

something, you know, the City and State, MTA, the Governor and I, we all teamed up and agreed that there needed to be a very different approach to the cleaning. And that's why the unprecedented act was taken to close in the late night hours to do that very deep cleaning every day. And I think that's been a very, very positive development. I think more and more people do know and should know that the subways are cleaner than they've ever been honestly. And we are not seeing, I agree with what Sam Schwartz has raised. We're not seeing a nexus to the subways, certainly at this point. So I do encourage people to feel comfortable that they can feel better about subways and buses than ever before. And as we are recovering, it's clear, you know, even though we got some immediate challenges we're working through in some areas of the city overall, there's a hell of a lot more activity in September than we've seen at any point since March and people are coming back to the subways and buses and are feeling more confidence. And there's a good reason for them to.

Lehrer: Let's take another call. Richard in Brooklyn. You're on WNYC. Hi Richard.

Question: Oh, hello?

Lehrer: Hi Richard. Now we got you. Go ahead. You're on with the Mayor.

Question: Hey, how you doing? Thanks for taking my call. I am a small time landlord. I have, you know, a building, a three-story brownstone in Brooklyn. And I rent the top floor out to some people. And one of the people in the top floor is – she's trying to basically use the fact that the eviction moratorium is happening to basically extort money, you know from us. And she is harassing the other tenant. And know leaving dog feces and all of this kind of stuff. And she's just trying to make it an unbearable situation that she can then turn around and say, give me \$30,000 and I'll leave. And I have nobody to, I have no recourse with this. I have no court I can go to, the courts are closed. And I don't know what to do.

Mayor: Richard, I'm really sorry you're going through that. And we want to see if our folks, including our lawyers can help you work that through. I'm going, look the, I think the honest truth –

Question: It's become somewhat of an emergency situation. I mean, she's really, we're making an unbearable living situation for everybody here. And the other thing is she has money to pay. It's not, she's not like broke. She has a job. She just wants to rent strike and try to enrich herself from the pandemic at my –

Lehrer: At his expense. He's saying, yes?

Mayor: Richard, if you'll leave your information with WNYC, we'll have one of the members of our legal team follow up with you today. I think there's two questions here. The first one is, you know, the difference between all those moratorium time ideas, obviously were about people who could not pay. It was never supposed to be about people who had the ability to pay. And like I've said this so many times, I fundamentally believe in protecting folks, you know, a million people lost their jobs. So many people have no ability to pay. Those folks should not be put out on the street, but folks who can pay need to pay. And the court systems are coming back more and more

actually, not all that obviously, but more and more court activity is happening. That's a really good thing. But the other thing is if someone's threatening another person, you know, that then takes on other ramifications. And so there may be a law enforcement issue here as well. So Richard will have one of our legal team talk to you today to get the details and see if there's some way we can help resolve this.

Lehrer: Richard, hang on. We will take your contact information. A question from Twitter after our exchange about ICE and the NYPD. Someone writes this week the Eastern District, I guess that's the US Attorney's office covering Brooklyn and Queens, announced yet another NYPD and fed program to ensure people in federal gang cases, this says, why does the Mayor allow the NYPD which this writer says has a racist and controversial gang database, to collaborate with Trump law enforcement and prosecutors to build dangerous cases? I guess it's about the gangs?

Mayor: Yeah. Look, I know the question is asked in an honest spirit. I think the question is asked from the assumption that all things are the same. And I don't think that's true. Gangs are a real problem in communities all over the city. So for everyone who wants continued police reform and to change the culture of policing and relationship with police and community, I want that deeply. We all need to continue that work, but that's not to say there isn't a real problem with gangs in lots of communities. And I've talked to community members all over the city who want change, who want reform, but also want violence addressed. And gangs are a real issue. And having an appropriate gang database with the right checks and balances is a fair tool to stop violence against everyday people in vulnerable communities. But in terms of the Eastern District, this is, Brian is a really fair question of where does the Trump administration begin and end? And the traditional federal government begin and end? You know, the Eastern District in the Southern District, the two federal prosecutorial arms in many ways, they have continued to follow the norms existed before Trump. And I want to be clear about that. You know, the US attorneys have shown in this city, a lot of independence from the Trump administration. So if they are pursuing violent criminals and trying to stop gang based violence, that is not something that should be seen through the prism of everything we disagree with with the Trump administration. I think that is from what I've heard, a legitimate effort to stop violent crime, of course, we're going to work with the federal government on that. The same point we talked about earlier, if Homeland Security is trying to stop sex trafficking, that's very different than a politicized and very, very punitive approach to immigration. And we have to have the ability to see that some of these things can be different from others.

Lehrer: Let's take another call. Alexa in Queens, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hi Alexa.

Question: Hi Brian. Thank you so much for taking my call. So I am the Community Board Six Chair. That covers Rego Park and Forest Hills. We have been, you know, taking this coronavirus crisis extremely seriously from the beginning. There have been some upticks in our district and 1-1-3-7-4 Rego Park, as well as in the surrounding neighborhoods that are outside the scope of Queens Community Board Six. But 1-1-3-7-5 has not had a demonstrable increase in coronavirus cases as far as we can tell. There are some limitations to the data that's presented on the Mayor's website, the Governor's website and red zones have not really covered with the numbers. I would say that it's not New York smart, if he would like to think that it is. But we are – I'm here advocating for our residents who have had rollbacks in their businesses. Some that have just

reopened that are now in a red zone without the data to back up why that is. I'm advocating for public school parents who had to take out their students from schools in zones that did not have even a two percent data for coronavirus positive cases. And I'm here to just say that the miscommunication and lack of coordination between the State and the City has had a very negative effect on the residents of my district.

Mayor: Yeah. Alexa, first of all, thank you for the work you do, because being a community board chair is a huge amount of work and not compensated. So, thank you very, very much. Look, I really do appreciate the points you're making because the goal here, of course, is never, ever to have to close down a school or a small business unless it is about stopping a second wave. And that's what I just want to put this in real quick context, we are threatened with a full blown second wave here in New York City. We are seeing it in other parts of the country. We are seeing it in a lot of Europe. It's absolutely troubling to see how far these places are falling backwards. We can't let that happen here. So, our Health Department got to a very strong view that there were some areas that if we didn't take aggressive action, we would be threatening a second wave that would engulf all of New York City. And this is why I'm focused on a hundred percent, stopping that from happening.

Now, I – Alexa, you're, obviously, right that it would be nice if there had been one consistent approach from the beginning. That's sometimes hard to do between different levels of government. I'm not excusing it. I'm just being honest. And I've talked about this publicly before, you know, the federal government and state government are not always on the same page, state government, city government. It is not helpful, but it is often a reality. But I think that the thing we need to do now is just get through this as quickly as humanly possible, because we have a chance to get this done in the next week or two, if everyone does what they should do with masks and social distancing and following these rules, and make this something that was a quick period of time, even though it was difficult for folks, it was quick, and then we never have to go back to it. That's what I'm trying to achieve. And so, you know, the decisions were made by the State. They do have that right under the state of emergency determined by the Legislature, but everyone, and this is where the City and State absolutely are aligned, we want to get through this as quickly as possible, so long as it's safe, and reopen as quickly as possible.

Lehrer: Alexa, thank you very much for that. Related, Mr. Mayor, you know, the national news, I'm sure I don't have to tell you, is increasingly about rising cases and hospitalizations nationwide. We've had the spikes in the mostly Hasidic neighborhoods of the city, but you reported yesterday they might be abating, and you were just indicating something like that now. What can you tell us about where we really are?

Mayor: Yeah, look, Brian, I will state, and I'm sure you will agree with this, that the first thing to be is cautious and driven by facts and data and science. So, when I say we're leveling off, and this is a conversation I've had with our health leadership, I'm saying that guardedly. We see some improvements. So, for example, if you look at today's citywide indicators, our overall testing – we're doing a lot more testing we've ever done since March – our overall testing for today in New York City is 1.02 percent positivity. And then our seven-day rolling average number is 1.56 percent, and hospital admissions for the day 77. These are numbers that certainly indicate something is plateauing on a citywide basis. In the communities most affected, there are still

some that are not moving the right direction, but a number of them have either leveled off or started to go, you know, towards better numbers, lower numbers. So, when you composite all of it, we're a lot better off than we were a week ago. The point is we have to consolidate those gains this week, next week, to get out of these restrictions. Hopefully, you know, there is a chance to get out of these restrictions as early as later next – the latter part of next week. That's my goal. And based on the numbers I'm seeing, we're still in striking range of that.

Lehrer: Am I right that the weekly testing in the city schools that are in the so-called yellow zone, which is hot, but not as hot as the red zone, were supposed to start today, but it's being delayed?

Mayor: No, the – a week ago we started testing, mandatory testing across schools all over the city. Last Friday, for example, we did 56 schools, and that's everywhere. Separately, we've been doing testing in the yellow zones throughout, and now starting today, we're going on to a new system, just in the yellow zones, based on the State guidance, where we're going to be doing weekly testing in every school, not monthly, which is our larger system for the whole city, but weekly. But let me give you an example, in the yellow zones over the last three weeks – so, this is literally specifically testing at school sites – we have 3,229 results, individual test results, from schools in yellow zones over the last three weeks and only four cases that came back positive out of 3,229. So, again, the story of the schools continues to be a really good one. But yeah, from this point on, it will be weekly testing in every school, in the yellow zones. And then for the rest of the city, monthly tests,

Lehrer: Channel seven had a story that weekly testing in yellow zone schools was being delayed. You're saying, that's not true.

Mayor: No, it's starting today. And it goes, you know, it rolls across the yellow zone in the course of a week. In the course of the week, we will do all schools in a yellow zone and then the following week we'll do it again. Each one will be on different days, but we're going to keep doing that until these restrictions are lifted.

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

Question: Hey guys. Thanks for taking my call. First, Mayor, I want to thank you and commend you for opening the schools. It's been a very relevant and positive development for my family, but my question is about alternate side parking. So, my experience is that people wait in their cars for 90 minutes and typically their cars are running so it's creating pollution and global warming, and half the time the sweeper never comes. And when it does, they all pull out and they wait for the sweeper ago. And then they all kind of back-in to the spots that came from, and it creates these huge traffic jams and noise pollution. And, to me, it seems all very wasteful for just a few seconds of a brush on a curb. And so, I'm thinking that it possibly could be creating more harm than good, and potentially we could get a similar outcome with somebody with, like, a leaf blower, for example. So, I'm wondering if you think there's possibly a better way to do this.

Mayor: Jason, it is a great question. I have asked myself this many, many times. So, first of all, thank you for what you said about the schools. And I know we're all caught up in the tough challenges and the, you know, the blaring headlines, but something that people should be really proud of is that parents and kids and educators, everyone, came together to reopen our schools. And it's been a really good thing for so many families. But on this alternate side parking, I have felt this since – as a resident, I felt it in my neighborhood in Brooklyn, as a City Councilman. I've asked this question a long time, and this is why we've been experimenting with reducing the amount of alternate side parking. There are streets in some parts of the city that had multiple times a week, with alternate side. And I just felt that that caused exactly the problem you're referring to – a lot of idling, a lot of circling, you know, a lot of traffic jams and problems. So, we're trying to see if we can reduce it.

In terms of eliminating it, we haven't found that – we've had this conversation a lot over recent months – we haven't found a model for a city this dense and a city that, you know, really has to be careful about cleanliness, we haven't found a model that is affordable, that would do what alternate side does when it works. Because there are plenty of times when the street sweeper does come and has an impact. I think your point though is really good. I want to make it as little as possible. I want to see cars moved as infrequently as possible and avoid that idling in particular. So, we're trying to see if there's a way to reduce it, responsibly, while still keeping the city clean and stay tuned, we'll have more to say on that soon.

Lehrer: Steve Manhattan, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hello, Steve.

Question: Yeah. Hi. I live in Murray Hill – and first, thank you for doing this. I live in Murray Hill and we recently found out that there's going to be a permanent homeless shelter that's going to be going up on 40th, near Lexington. And our question is, how do we help homeless people without losing property value and diminishing safety in the neighborhood? And as part of that, it's two things. One, it was – we feel like we were blindsided by this. There should have been some kind of – there should've been better communication to all the residents to say, here's what's happening, here are the pros, here are the cons, but there was nothing. We just kind of heard from someone that heard from someone. So, that was not great for us. The other thing is we don't feel like we have any representation. We understand that it's you, the Mayor, and DHS who makes this decision. And there's no kind of input from the residents. The homeless people aren't just moving into the hotel there. They're moving into the neighborhood. And we're part of that.

When I made calls to different City agencies, I was challenged. They said, how do you know the value of your property is going to be going down? So, I did a simple Google search on property values and homeless shelters. And there were at least five studies that came up, including from the RAND Corporation and the Forman Center, and they were New York City studies done, and they said the property values could go down as much as 25 percent and that we should expect crime. So, again, we're scared. Here are two – I'll give you quickly –

Lehrer: Well, you know what, I don't have time, Steve, – forgive me – for you to go on to your additional examples. But you've laid out a very detailed question for the Mayor, and I do want to get you an answer. So, Mr. Mayor –

Mayor: Yeah, and Steve, I appreciate both the question and the spirit in which you're raising it, because look, this is a – just very quick frame. We're dealing with homelessness now for decades in this city. And what we're trying to do is do something that will, as much as humanly possible, end the phenomenon as we've known it. And it's a combination of a very aggressive street homelessness program to get people off the streets who have been on the streets a long time and get them to shelter on the way to affordable housing and, you know, substance misuse treatment and mental health treatment, all the things people need. And then on the shelter side, to get away from paying for hotels by the night and substandard buildings, and actually have purpose-built shelters. This is the plan, I announced three years ago, to once and for all say, okay, these are the shelters we're having. We're not doing these hotels sometimes, we're doing shelters that come with a lot of services. And then the goal is always to get homeless folks to permanent affordable housing. It's been between 100,000, 150,000 people who were homeless, we've gotten to permanent affordable housing over the last seven years. And we're going to keep building on that.

So, to your specific questions – in my experience over a few decades, I have not seen any kind of sustained impact on property values. There is a homeless shelter within walking distance of my home in Brooklyn. I've heard – you know, I've lived in the community a long, long time, never seen anything that affected the property values there. I'd be interested in these studies. We'll follow up on that, but that's not my experience. In terms of crime, I think there's lots we can do to make sure that does not develop, working with local precinct and with Social Services. And it has certainly not been the case in the vast majority places. But in terms of communicating with the community, what I want to do, if you'll give information to WNYC, I'd like people from our team to follow up with you today and figure out what kind of community forum we can set up to explain why this location was chosen, why it's part of the bigger plan to reduce homelessness, what we can do to address community concerns because a lot of places had done that really effectively, Steve. Community members have come together and said, what's it going to take to make this work. The City's worked with them, put the resources on the ground, and we found in many, many cases like the example I gave you from my neighborhood in Brooklyn at a certain point people don't even know the shelter is there anymore. And that's what we want to achieve for everyone.

Lehrer: Steve, thank you. We'll take your contact information. Let me squeeze in one more for you, Mr. Mayor, partly because I think you will like how future-looking it is and also, selfishly, because coincidentally, it happens to set up our next segment. So, Irene in Manhattan –

Mayor: Happy to oblige.

[Laughter]

Lehrer: Irene in Manhattan, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. This is not a set up. I know you don't know anything about our next segment. Irene, hi.

Question: Hi, thank you very much for taking my call. I manage some small apartment buildings in the city, and, fortunately, many tenants have renewed, but many have left. And of the ones that have left, the apartments that are vacant, excuse me, I can't rent them out. And the couple that

have been rented, are like recycled New Yorkers. I guess, people who can't take their apartments anymore and they just move, like musical apartments. We are not seeing any new people moving to the city. It doesn't matter what rents we charge. We lower them and lower them, no one is looking for apartments. So, I'm hoping that you, Mr. Mayor, and the rest of the City and the State of New York have a plan to lure people back to New York City because people are just not coming back.

Mayor: Sure, Irene, I appreciate the question a lot. And I think when you think about what the city and this country has been through in the last few months, it does not surprise me. I'm not belittling your point at all. I think it's a really important point. I just want to say, I don't think it's the moment you would have seen people coming back yet. This is just to give you the sense of the plan. The plan was this, one, you know, defeat the disease here, which we did very, very effectively through the late spring and through the summer. And now we have a challenge in Brooklyn and Queens and we're beating back that challenge. Again, I'm increasingly hopeful about that, that within the next few weeks, we can get those situations back to normal and continue pushing back the disease. I think that is prerequisite to everything. Again, right now, the daily testing number in the city today, you know, 1.02 percent for the whole city. That's a really good sign that we're going to continue the progress we made. That's going to help bring people back. I talked to one person who split their time between Miami and New York and moved their family back from Miami to New York and said because New York was a hell of a lot safer in terms of the coronavirus. You know, we're going to make progress by being one of the places in the country that gets safest well before the vaccine. The second, bringing back our schools was crucial. It was crucial to the quality of life and what families needed, but it's also crucial to showing our rebirth, and our rebirth is intensifying. And third, a plan for the future of our city and our economy that attracts investments, creates jobs, brings people back.

We're seeing already tech has been a big part of our city's recent history. We're seeing a lot of the big tech companies, very overtly investing now in space in New York City and saying, they're going to have a bigger presence going forward. The next big piece is health care. What I talked about a few weeks ago is a vision for New York City's future, where we are the health care capital of the world, we're the public health capital in particular. We're the place that helps the rest of the world stop the next pandemic from ever happening. We're the place that helps address health care disparity and shows people in this country and around the world, how to do it right. We have the chance to be a great life sciences biotech capital, and that's been something that's been bubbling up, but never consolidated. Now is our chance to do that.

So, I think the answer, Irene, is to create a whole new reality for the New York City economy, where a lot of talented people gravitate here, creative people, entrepreneurial people, because we have the hospitals, we have the universities, we have the infrastructure to be an even greater economic capital than we've been. And it's sort of, rise from the ashes of this crisis, because we've learned more about how to deal with health care challenges than anywhere. And I really am optimistic that people will start to come back, not this year, starting next year and beyond, that folks will not only come back. You'll see a whole new wave of people, sensing opportunity in New York City and realizing it's a great time to come in and become stakeholders here and get a piece of the pie here and build from there. I'm very optimistic about that.

Lehrer: Thanks as always, Mr. Mayor. Sure hope you're right about that. Talk to you next week.

Mayor: Thanks so much, Brian, take care.

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