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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS TO CELEBRATE
OPENING OF EMPIRE OUTLETS VACCINATION SITE**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: We're not going to let a little snow stop us. Everyone, look, I am so happy to announce that the Empire Outlets vaccination center is open for business. Right now, Staten Islanders are getting vaccinated and we had – yes, you can clap for that. Staten Islanders are getting vaccinated right here at Empire Outlets. And this is really exciting. Look, this is such an amazing place. It's a place that really is about everything great about Staten Island. Staten Islanders coming here to shop. Staten Islanders have jobs here. This is an exciting place that people want to be. And that's exactly where we want a vaccination center to be. That's starting today and is going to grow. As we get more and more supply, I want to see this be a full bore 24/7 site, thousands and thousands of people getting vaccinated here all the time. That's what we want to get to. And as soon as we get supply, that's what we're going to be able to do. I talked to folks who have gotten vaccinated, Staten Islanders, who are really feeling the sense of peace and relief of getting vaccinated. I talked to the folks who do this work and I thanked them for taking care of the people of Staten Island. This is exactly what we need more of. And this site is only for Staten Islanders. And I want to be clear about this, Staten Island had a really tough time with the coronavirus, especially in recent months. There's been a lot of pain here. There've been a lot of difficult moments. This site is for the people of Staten Island, and only the people of Staten Island. We want to reach people. We want to reach to the grassroots. We want sites all over the borough, more are coming. And it's so important that it be a place that people want to be.

Now, what do we need? Supply, supply, supply. Number one problem is not lack of sites or lack of nurses and good people who want to come here and vaccinate. It's not lack of people who want to be vaccinated. What's missing? Supply of vaccine. We need the federal government to take the next step, increase that supply. We need the pharmaceutical companies to do more. We need the State to give us the freedom to vaccinate. We still don't have enough freedom to vaccinate. We could be reaching so many more people if the State would cut the red tape and give New York City the ability to do what we know how to do. It's time for more local control here in New York City so we can get people vaccinated.

So, we're going to keep fighting for that. But in the meantime, as of today, over 1.4 million vaccinations have been given in this city, since the beginning. And every day now we're reaching 30,000, 40,000, 50,000 people depending on the day. And we want to reach a lot more. Give us the supply, we will reach the people. With that, a champion for the people. And he always lets me know how important it is to get Staten Island its fair share, Borough President Jimmy Oddo.

[...]

That's foreshadowing. Okay. Next Assembly Member Charles Fall.

[...]

Council Member Debi Rose --

[...]

Thank you. And Debi, thank you. You are always, always persistent letting me know what your district needs and what the people of Staten Island need. And I thank you for that. Now, two more folks are going to talk. And we owe them a debt of thanks because they're making this happen. They're making this happen for the people of Staten Island. And first, Executive Director from Staten Island University Hospital, Dr. Brahim Ardolic.

[...]

Thank you very much. Finally, Empire Outlets, we could not do this without Empire Outlets. They have been partners, really helping us to get this going. And they've been willing partners because they want to help the people of Staten Island. Special thank you to Senior Vice President for Marketing Travis Noyes. And here to speak on behalf of Empire Outlets, and they've generously donated the space. I want to really emphasize, my thanks for them making the space available so that we can move this vaccination effort forward. This is a really a contribution to all the people of Staten Island. My pleasure to introduce Wesley Rebisz.

[...]

Thank you. I like anyone who includes the word discount in their remarks. So discounted parking, that definitely helps. It's very much appreciated. Last person I want you to hear from – also one of the people who is doing such important work, helping us to make this center happen because of the commitment of everyone from Empire Outlets. He's from the parent company, BFC, owners of Empire Outlets. And we are so appreciative for this support. My pleasure to introduce Win Wharton.

[...]

All right, everyone, we have proven that you can give a press conference during a snowstorm. And I just want to thank everyone and thank our colleagues in the media for getting the word out that such an important thing is happening here at Empire Outlets. And this is just the beginning. I am looking forward to the day we get lots of, lots of supply and this place can be humming 24-hours a day, getting more and more Staten Islanders safe. And we'll be back here together to celebrate that as well. Thank you, everyone.

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