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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO PUSHES FOR TOUGHER STATE LAWS TO
KEEP DANGEROUS DRIVERS OFF THE STREETS**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everyone. We're here at the 7-8 Precinct, this is my home precinct and I want to just thank the men and women of this command for all they do for our neighborhood and our city. They had to respond to the tragedy at Fifth Avenue and Ninth Street. I want to just emphasize how tough that is for our men and women in uniform to have to deal with a tragedy like this – the loss of two young children. And they are the ones that have to try pick up the pieces, they are the ones that have to try and comfort the caregivers and the parents and try to make sense of a situation that makes no sense. So I just want to thank the officers of the 7-8 Precinct for everything they do. And I feel such pain for these families. I know the officers here feel the same. Our whole community is still reeling from this tragedy. I talked to a lot of my neighbors. Everyone is taking it very personally and for good reason. We've all walked through that intersection a thousand times. And we assumed when the lights you know says walk, it's okay to walk. And that's what everyone felt that day. And you've all seen the video, it's terrifying.

The notion of people going about their business - perfectly normal day, middle of the day, suddenly a car is plowing into them and two children are lost. It's something we can't accept, and that's what today is all about. We want to use every tool possible, to protect our children and to stop these crashes.

The families, they all have received a tremendous amount of love and support from this community and from the whole city. They know the people are with them, but that doesn't bring them their two precious children. Abigail Blumenstein was four-years-old, Joshua Lew just a year old. These children are gone forever, and it's a clarion call to all of us in this city to go farther to take Vision Zero to the next level, and to do that we need help from our state government, and we're going to talk about that today.

I want to thank the Speaker of the State Assembly Carl Heastie and the Assembly Majority. They passed a one house bill this week, a budget bill, with speed camera expansion in it. I really want to thank them for stepping up and showing that change can come in Albany and we're going to need their help to protect more kids. I want to thank the Speaker for that.

I want to thank all of my colleagues who are here. All of whom share a sense of mission. I want to acknowledge – you'll hear from a number of folks, but I also want to acknowledge NYPD Chief of Transportation Tom Chan, who's been one of the great leaders of the Vision Zero initiative. And I want to thank for hosting us the new commanding officer of the 7-8 Precinct Captain Jason Hagestad.

As I said we lost these two children, and we're all feeling that very, very personally. We also lost in January a young man, 13-years-old Kevin Flores, another young person who should not have died. And everyone one of us when we hear of these tragedies we think what if that was my child. And for Chirlane and I, it's immediately personal. We went through that intersection literally I think thousands of times is not unfair with Chiara and Dante over the years and living in this community since 1992. That's right in the center of our community. So, it's just shocking to all of us and once you say what if that was my child it put things into real perspective that we've got to leave no stone unturned.

I want to say to everyone in Albany this cannot be about politics. It cannot be about politics, it cannot be about political convenience. Everyone at this point has to recognize it's a matter of life and death. And I'll tell you one thing we learned from Vision Zero, a lot of people said in the beginning that if you lower the speed limit, you'd get a lot of political opposition. If you redesign streets, you'll get a lot of political opposition; if you put bike lanes on Queens Boulevard you'll get a lot of political opposition. It does not matter if there is political opposition. We can listen to communities, we can work with communities, but this is about saving lives. And I got to be clear about that, it's not business as usual so when we talk about things like speed cameras around schools; think about it for a minute. It's a speed camera, nothing happens to you if you're not speeding. It's near a school, that means there are kids there. If you want the right to speed where there is kids, there is something wrong with you. So no one should be afraid of a speed camera around the school. You should just follow the law. And no one should be afraid of the political consequences of making sure our kids are safe.

The Vision Zero concept is literally to lose no one, to end these crashes once and for all. And in the beginning there was some cynicism about whether progress could be made. But now we have four years of experience in the biggest city in the country to prove this approach works. We just have to keep going farther, and we got to keep changing behavior. I want to emphasize this, one of the things I think has been most powerful about Vision Zero is it has made people wake up, it's made them think about what it means to drive a car. If you don't drive your properly, if you drive your car recklessly. You have a weapon in your hands, it's no different than a gun misfiring. You have a weapon in your hands, and you can kill someone if you don't handle that car the right way.

I think for a long time in this city, and in this country that wasn't what people were told. People were told drive your car with impunity, doesn't matter what you do. We've got to break the back of that mentality once and for all. When you drive a car you have a responsibility to everyone else, and if you don't, if you don't drive your car the right way someone could die. We've got to get that through people once and for all. And I do think Vision Zero has helped a lot.

Public education is great, but consequences are important too, so every time one of those speed cameras goes off, everyone an NYPD pulls someone over who is speeding or who fails to yield to a pedestrian, it changes their mind. It's a wakeup call. So we're going to do a lot more of that. We're proposing today three pieces of legislation and we will fight tooth and nail for them. And we have the best allies there are. The families that have experience tragedies I wish none of them came into this struggle because they experienced tragedies, but I honor them for taking their pain and turning it into action.

The first proposal would allow the city to extend and expand the school zone safety camera program. We want to double the number school zones with cameras, and we want to make sure we can put them cameras where they're going to have the biggest impact in terms of protecting kids. Right now we are limited in the locations that we can put cameras around the schools. It's a very narrow law. We need to be able to put the cameras where the NYPD and the Department of Transportation know they will do the most good.

If our proposal passes, it will allow us to go to any intersection near a school that might pose a danger and put the speed cameras in. I want to be very specific. Had this legislation been in place previously, we would have had the right to put a camera at the intersection of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue. We need that right so we can protect kids. We know the cameras are working. Again, when you've got four years of experience under your belt you've got real facts, it should change the discussion. The cameras are working. On average speeding declines 60 percent 6-0, 60 percent in areas where speed camera is in place. Injuries decline 15 percent, pedestrian injuries in particular decline 23 percent. That's what we found already. And that's without the ability to put the cameras where we think might be the ideal location. Even just having some cameras present has already led to that kind of progress. We want to go farther.

The second proposal, we want to increase penalties for drivers who get speed red light violations, speed camera violations. And it's very simple. Right now as we saw in the case of this tragedy a driver can get numerous violations without a consequence, now the theory behind that is, you don't know if the person to whom the car was registered is the person driving. Okay, that's a fair point. But we still have to address the issue. The current reality is unacceptable.

So we want penalties to be on the car owner, the person who holds the registration. The more the car runs the red lights, the more the car gets the infractions because they went through the speed cameras the more they will pay. And if they do it too many times their registration will be suspended. It's very straight forward, if you repeatedly break the law, you will suffer consequences. And you shouldn't be able to hide behind the fact that the car is registered to you but maybe someone else was driving. You have to take responsibility for you own vehicle. If someone else is driving your vehicle and they're regularly speeding and blowing through stop signs and red lights, you shouldn't let them drive the vehicle. And you have to take responsibility because now you're part of it too.

The third would require doctors to notify the Department of Motor Vehicles whenever one of their patients has a dangerous medical condition that might lead to the inability to drive a car. This right now is only a voluntary rule in New York State. It is not a requirement. We specifically obviously want to focus on people who may have a condition that causes them to

lose control of the car. We're not talking about people with everyday medical conditions. We're not talking about people who are disabled. We're talking about if a doctor identifies a special condition like a propensity to seizures that could cause to someone without any warning to be unable to control their car.

Someone in that situation should not be driving a car. Right now there is nothing truly stopping that in New York State. So we know and we have a good example from our neighbors in New Jersey. We know this could be required of doctors to report it to the DMV and then the DMV has to act.

These are the kinds of measures that will make us safer. Obviously these are the kinds of measures that could have averted the tragedy that happened in this community. So I'm just going to say a few words in Spanish. But I want to conclude with two points before we hear from our colleagues.

One, our goal is to get these proposals passed in this legislative session in Albany by June, it's as simple as that. And everyone here is going to fight for them. And I don't think there is any further evidence needed for the legislature in Albany to see why this is so important.

Second, we can't accept a reality where it is normal for someone to kill a pedestrian with their vehicle. We just can't let that be anything we regard as normal in our society. For too long people would negligently kill another human being with a vehicle and essentially walk away. We've got to end that once and for all. And these proposals I think will really make clear there are serious consequences to the kind of behavior that was accepted for too long. In Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that I know want to turn to the First Deputy Commissioner of the NYPD, Ben Tucker who will give you an update on the NYPD's efforts under Vision Zero.

First Deputy Commissioner Benjamin Tucker, NYPD: Thank Mr. Mayor. Good morning everyone. So the Mayor mentioned Vision Zero and the initiative and it certainly as the Mayor indicated, the whole purpose here is to save lives. And so I just want to go through some of the data and give you some updates as to where we are and what the success looks like thus far to date

So in 2017 New York City experienced the lowest number of vehicular fatalities on record, pegged at 216 -- down 6.9 percent from 2016. And this was highlighted and I think underscored by 30.9 percent reduction pedestrian fatalities in particular. With respect to enforcement going back to 2014, since that time the department's continuing focus on dangerous driving has led to a 27.3 percent increase in speed enforcement, a 54.1 percent increase in failure to yield to pedestrian enforcement, and a 95 percent increase in texting enforcement.

Moreover, the highly successful Dusk and Darkness safety campaign is a great example of our partnership with Commissioner Trottenberg at DOT as well as TLC and the NYPD, and it's Vision Zero partners overall. The initiative which focuses on drivers and diminished visibilities

associated with the short of daylight of hours so this data from October 27th to March 11th, in that six months has led to a decrease in pedestrian fatalities from 53 in '16 and '17 to 40 in the six months period from October to March of 2017 into 2018.

The NYPD increased its presence during the sunset hours during this project, focusing its enforcement on dangerous drivers who speed and fail to yield to pedestrians. The department is certainly supportive of extending and expanding as the Mayor mentioned, the school zone speed camera program. The speed program provides an efficient compliment to the enforcement by our officers. And speed cameras at key locations will certainly be effective tools in reducing speeding.

In addition fines should be elevated, obviously for repeat offenders and that will send a strong message, certainly and must be sent to people who choose to violate the law in that area.

At the same time the department is also supporting the legislation requiring physicians to notify DMV to report medical conditions which already are being done in other jurisdictions – in New Jersey and certainly in California. And in light of the recent tragedy, this is obviously a common sense approach and hopefully will result in fewer tragedies such as those, that which we experienced here in this precinct.

Certainly driving is a privilege and not a right and so with respect to the legislation drivers who fail to recognize the responsibility of operating a vehicle must be held accountable. Unlicensed drivers, drivers who should not be driving that have medical reasons and experience medical conditions and those holding repeat traffic offenders accountability, must be held accountable.

And certainly the department will continue our work with our partners in Vision Zero and the public to achieve the goal of Vision Zero which is to reduce traffic deaths all the way down. Strengthening the laws will certainly give us the opportunity to protect our citizens on an ongoing basis.

Mayor: Thank you very much, Commissioner. Now I want to turn to the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation, Polly Trottenberg, who is going to be talking about things DOT is doing with Vision Zero and what is coming up ahead in DOT's actions and efforts.

Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Department of Transportation: Thank you Mr. Mayor and again thanks for your leadership and thanks for the leadership and the partnership of NYPD and our sister agencies, the city and state elected officials, the advocates, and the regular New Yorkers who've all been such a part of Vision Zero and I've heard from many of them and join them in the grieving with the Mayor for the two young lives last weekend and the other lives lost. And it's part of what drives us in this work.

And I think as the Mayor as pointed out I'm often asked as DOT Commissioner what do you think is the most important factors in Vision Zero and I always talk about speed for the logical reason, no matter what's happening on the streets, if you are driving at a safe speed, you're going to have more reaction time. If there's a collision there is less likely to be a fatal consequence. So

the Mayor is right, reauthorizing and expanding the speed camera legislation is our highest legislative priority.

As many as you know we've had the ability to do speed camera enforcement in 140 school zones and we think it has been one of the key elements in the fatality reductions we've seen in this city at a time when as many of us know fatalities on the roadway have gone up nationally. And so we've been up in Albany and the Mayor spoke about the leadership there. We will be working with them. We hope to get this legislation reauthorized because it expires this summer, and expanded as well.

You know as the Mayor said we've seen extraordinary drops in speeding and in injuries at the school zones but none the less, 85 percent of the deaths and severe injuries on our roadways in recent years have occurred in times and places where we cannot use speed cameras including in Ninth Street in Park Slope.

So we also talked last week, I testified in front of the City Council, many of you know we are going to be looking at potential street redesign elements on Ninth Street, you know among the things we are looking at -- protected bike lanes, pedestrian islands, turn restrictions, new signal timing, and pedestrian signals. And of course we will also be taking a careful look at the curbside uses -- it's a busy street, a lot of businesses and institutions. We hope to be presenting something at the end of the month and obviously taking feedback from local community, community board, etc., and working that through the community board process.

And as you heard from Commissioner Tucker, continuing our work on campaigns like Dusk and Darkness. We are going to have another campaign, we're going to be potentially rolling out for the summer months, another time where we sometimes see spikes in fatalities -- those first warm summer weekends. So we will be working with NYPD on that.

And once again we also stand ready to be part of the efforts up in Albany on the important the legislation the Mayor has announced today. I think obviously the tragedy that hit last week you know reminds us, even as we found so many areas to continue our work on Vision Zero there is still so much more to be done. Thank you Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Thank you very much, Commissioner. And now I want to turn to my colleagues from the City Council. They have been front and center in fighting for these changes and the Council has acted legislatively, has acted as allies in the fights in Albany -- I really want to thank them for their vigorous advocacy. First I want you to hear from the chair of the committee on public safety, Councilman Donovan Richards.

[...]

Mayor: Thank you very much. That was obviously from the heart and I appreciate your activism and your voice. Thank you.

Okay, let's take questions about these legislative proposals and everything related to Vision Zero, and then we'll go to other topic. Way back?

Question: Mr. Mayor, so, obviously [inaudible] vehicle registration suspensions, but what about drivers who can continue to drive with a suspended registration? [Inaudible] happened before where people are killed. Are you looking at increasing penalties for that offense? What is the actual penalty –

Mayor: I'll let my colleagues from law enforcement talk about that. I think this tragedy pointed out something that was a glaring gap in the law – that if you were pulled over by an officer for these types of offenses, there was a clear sanction – escalating sanction. But if your car was caught on a speed camera repeatedly, it didn't lead to the same outcome. And again, I get the argument – maybe you weren't the person driving your own car – but the problem with that argument is, it explains away reckless driving and dangerous driving, and it unfortunately leaves open the possibility of someone being hurt or even killed. We've got to put things in their proper order – protecting human beings comes first. So, what we're proposing here makes sense because it says, look, if it's on your vehicle, it's on you. And it doesn't happen the first time, it escalates, but if there's a pattern of your vehicle consistently blowing through stop lights and stop signs, there will be much more severe penalties than there has been in the past. As for the question of what the penalties are now, if someone drives – I think you said with a suspended license or a suspended registration – could either the Commissioner or Chief – do you want to speak to that?

Chief of Transportation Thomas Chan, NYPD: An individual – if we come across a vehicle, it's parked on the street and the officer or the agent scans that particular registration and it indicates that the registration is expired, simply, we can issue a summons and we're certainly paying more attention to it. We can also have that vehicle towed once that summons is issued to that particular vehicle in question.

Question: [Inaudible] mentioned [inaudible] any other specific conditions that doctors will have to report and will this be modeled on New Jersey's law?

Mayor: I think – I'm not an expert, obviously, on the New Jersey law or the California law, but I think it's good that we have something to work from that clearly has more teeth. I think seizures are an obvious example. Anything where a doctor believes that an individual could lose control of their vehicle involuntarily with no notice, that's the kind of thing we have to act on. Again, we –

Question: Could there be specific conditions? Or would it say anything a doctor believes?

Mayor: I'm not going to talk about the legislative drafting. I think it should be clear what the goal is – the kinds of things that could cause someone to lose control of their car suddenly. I would imagine some specific conditions will be named, but my focus is – very pinpointed focus on where are the conditions that could lead to someone not being able to control their vehicle.

Question: Could we get an investigative update – perhaps this is a question for the Chief – you said you'd hoped there would be charges, if I'm not mistaken –

Mayor: I did.

Question: [Inaudible] even see charges under the current State of New York law?

Mayor: I'm just going to reiterate before turning to the Chief. I think, as a non-lawyer, two children were killed because of reckless driving – of course there should be charges. That's the way I look at it. Everything I know about the law – that's what should happen. I respect that there has to be a very careful investigation. I respect that if charges are going to be brought, they need to stick. And I understand why the NYPD and the DEA have to be meticulous. But it makes no sense to me that someone killed two children and would not be arrested.

Go ahead, Chief.

Chief Chan: The Police Department, the CIS Unit, and the Brooklyn DA's office were on the scene that particular afternoon when the collision occurred and they've been working hand-in-hand with us. ADA [inaudible] and also the Vehicular Crimes Unit bureau chief is also on board and working with us closely on that. So, certainly, our team, working together, are investigating. We're taking a look at the medical records. Subsequently, once the records are ascertained, the DA will also review those records to make sure what are the parameters – the medical portion of it in reference to the ability of the driver and things of that nature. So, it's a joint investigation, and it's moving forward, and it continues to be active. It has the priority of the Police Department, and certainly of the DA's office. It's got our full attention.

Question: Has she been arrested or interviewed at all?

Chief Chan: The woman was hospitalized. My understanding is that her license was suspended. We served a suspension notice to her. There will be a further hearing date with the Department of Motor vehicles. We believe that's going to be at the end of this month. Currently, her license to operate a vehicle is suspended. Our investigators and the DA's office is working closely on this particular case.

Question: [Inaudible] interviewed her?

Chief Chan: The individual was interviewed at the hospital and also possibly on the scene. But again, I'm not going to go into the details of the investigation.

Mayor: We're going back to front on this side, and then we're going to that side.

Question: You said the Assembly passed a speed camera expansion as part of this budget bill. Does that include all of the speed camera measures that you want? What stage – have all of these ideas been written and introduced? What stage are you –

Mayor: Let me separate, and Commissioner Trottenberg will help me on this. I haven't seen the final wording that the Assembly passed. I know it did pass an expansion, but I don't know for sure if it was the way we had articulated.

Commissioner Trottenberg: I think it's similar language to what the Assembly actually passed at the end of last year's session, which is expanding our ability to put cameras from 140 school zones to 290, allowing us to use a radius instead of the abutting street, because sometimes kids are crossing on dangerous street that are not the abutting street. So, we think that would be a very powerful step forward.

Question: What about the doctors? The medical measure?

Commissioner Trottenberg: Those are bills – Senator Hamilton has introduced a bill and Assemblymember Carroll, but there's not been any legislative action.

Mayor: Right, so we're going to be working with our colleagues in Albany on the other two elements to make sure that entire an existing bill matches them or a new bill is introduced to achieve the outcome.

Question: [Inaudible] Chief Chan, I know the driver in the Park Slope crash was hospitalized afterwards. Is she still in that hospital? Where is she now?

Chief Chan: She's been discharged.

Question: Do you know where she is? Or is she in any kind of police custody? Is she being –

Chief Chan: She's not in police custody at this time and she was released from the hospital.

Question: Mr. Mayor, under the new proposals, is the suspension for the underlying violation for failing to pay – is it for the underlying debt violation or is for failing to pay bills? Because under the current State law, drivers are suspended for failing to pay bills and not necessarily for the current –

Mayor: Great question. And again, I'm not a lawyer, but I'll just give you my common-sense answer. I'm not interested in people breaking the law and paying a fine and then going and breaking the law again. This is meant to have a bigger consequence if the behavior is repeated. So, yes, there is a fine structure – the more you violate the speed cameras, or go through stop signs – there's an increased fine structure, but then it leads to a suspension of registration. So, it's not – certainly what I want to see happen is not something you can just pay your way out of. It's about identifying a pattern of behavior and then showing to everyone that if that behavior continues there are much more severe consequences.

Question: So [inaudible] it hasn't been drafted yet [inaudible] interested in seeing legislation that, you know – in which the suspension is dependent, at least, in part, the actual violation.

Mayor: Absolutely. And look, the goal here is not to see people's registration's suspended willy-nilly. We want to make sure there's a fair process. Obviously, as with everything else, there's an appeals process. But what we're talking about is, repeated behavior in a limited timeframe, which, to me, is a no-brainer. If you once in a blue moon have a violation, that's one thing. But if the behavior is repeated and it's in a sharp timeframe, there's not much to discuss here. It makes

very clear that unfortunately you're not a responsible person, and you have a deadly weapon in your hands, and it you're using it recklessly. There needs to be a sharp consequence for that.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I think that's idiotic. Let's get real here, we've been fighting this battle for four years. I don't know who said that – you could at least let me know who said it so I know who I'm directing my feelings to.

[Laughter]

Please? Is it a blind quote?

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: One of their communications people, okay. So, tell that individual, please, I said that was idiotic.

[Laughter]

For four years – for four years we have been pushing the Vision Zero initiative, including for an expansion of speed cameras. This is not new. And the families have been fighting for this vehemently up in Albany. Everyone in Albany is quite familiar with the presence of those families for what they regard as justice, and I agree with them. So, let's get real, how about people feel something about this tragedy, because it could have happened to any of our children, and do something about it.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Well, we got the original cameras and we have maintained those, even though there are clearly loud voices that want to get rid of them. I think this is a matter where every member of the Senate will be held personally accountable by their constituents. I know the family members are going to be up there in force, again. I know there's going to be a lot of activity in each Senator's district, making clear how important this is too – I have no question about that. You either are doing something about it, or you're not. So, here's a chance to save lives. And again, if some people don't like it, well, you're supposed to stand up sometimes and be counted when it comes to something this morally important. So, my answer is – it isn't politically convenient in the eyes of some, so let's make it politically inconvenient the other way and let them feel the voices of people at the grassroots. Let them feel the wrath of these families.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I have – as you know, the end of the last session – worked very well with Leader Flanagan. I have a lot of respect for him. We managed to work on some very important matters, for example, on education. I have no doubt we can come to reasonable solutions, but the members have to step forward and say it's time.

Question: Street design is another aspect of Vision Zero. [Inaudible] are you planning on increasing the budget for DOT to increase the pace of the [inaudible] redesigns.

Mayor: I'll turn it to the Commissioner, but I want to say two things. One – whatever the Commissioner has asked for that can be done, I have supported putting in the budget. And I want to be absolutely clear that when we put money in the budget, we have to believe – and certainly, that's what the Office of Management and Budget is there for – we have to believe the money can and will be spent on the timeline laid out. And I believe DOT has done a fantastic job of moving a wide variety of projects. I'll always to the Commissioner, if you find a way to do more, faster, you're going to have the money you need. The second point – let's be really clear about this incident. This is about a problem in our laws that I think these specific proposals really get at. How was this individual allowed to have all of these violations with no consequence? We have to change the law. How was an individual with a medical condition – as far as we know so far – a medical condition that caused her to be unable to control her vehicle – how was that not report and acted on? We have to change our laws. This one – I've seen the video – I've never seen anything like it in my life – the car is at a dead stop and suddenly then it's plowing into pedestrians. So, this is about tougher laws and more enforcement. That, to me, is the way we change a situation like this. We care deeply about the intersections too, and we're certainly going to give the Commissioner she needs.

Commissioner Trottenberg: And I will echo that. You've heard me say this, David – I mean, I just testified that in coming years I'm going to have a \$1.5 billion to invest in Vision Zero projects. And I'm grateful to the Mayor, and what he says is true – he has never denied me the resources I need. We have – I think each year that we've been in this administration, we've done more and more street redesign projects. And as I've told some of you, it's not just a numbers game. I mean, we've done – working on Woodhaven Boulevard, Queens Boulevard, some of the biggest, most difficult corridors. So, it's not only the numbers – some of those corridors run for miles, and miles, and miles, and I think you've seen the results. When you look at Queens Boulevard or Grand Concourse, we haven't seen a pedestrian fatality on those two streets in several years, and those were both notorious places for fatalities. So, I thank the Mayor. We have the resources. There's always going to be work to get the designs right, to work with communities, etcetera, but I think we're working at an aggressive pace.

Mayor: I also want to thank the Council, because, you know when we – every budget is a choice, and I'd say about these two members, and a lot of other colleagues, when all that money went into Vision Zero, they understood something else could not be accommodated but they always made it a priority too.

Question: [Inaudible] on the speed cameras and the fact that lives are at stake, you know, you're suing the big oil companies and opioid manufacturers – if you're saying that the State legislature is basically, by not doing this, costing lives, are there other more dramatic steps you can take to make this happen?

Mayor: Look, you know I will consider any step that will work. This one is really straightforward to me and I do believe people are going to respond to this tragedy. I want to look

at this from the positive point of view first. I think everyone in this city felt the loss of these two children. I think the members of the Legislature are going to understand that. And it's not particularly defensible that someone could have a medical condition and nothing be done about it, even if it endangers other people's lives or that a car could be part of numerous violations that obviously indicate a pattern of recklessness and nothing happens. No member of the Legislature wants to see people die who shouldn't die, right? So, let's be clear – I want to assume they will be listening, but we will of course use every tool at our disposal – never have hesitated to do that.

Question: [Inaudible]

Chief Chan: Drunk driving – yes. That's a program, certainly, that has been very useful. Not only are individuals driving while they're intoxicated, while drinking alcohol, but they could also be under the influence of drugs. Currently, this year – as a matter of fact, this month, we started training our police recruits – how to interact with individuals during a car stop possibility and to identify infractions that may be prevalent during intoxication or drug use, or things of that nature. So, we are training our police academy recruits, and we're also training our officers out there. And again, this is something that we certainly look at. When the officers, if they look at an individual and they appear to be impaired, and it may not necessarily be alcohol on their breath or things of that nature – if there's a possibility and they believe there's some type of impairment, then they will ask for our drug recognition expert officers that will respond and, again, do the testing, and if they're arrested, certainly follow through on looking for drugs as a possible cause for their driving impairment.

Question: And are there more or less arrests since the program's been re-instituted.

Chief Chan: Not necessarily re-instituted – it's something that was started – it has been increasing. And again, we are training more officers to recognize that, and we have 22 individuals in the New York City Police Department who are trained as drug recognition experts. So, that is a program that will continue to expand and be used.

Question: Was Dorothy Bruns ordered by a doctor to not be driving during the time of the crash? And was she under any type of medication?

Chief Chan: I'm not going to go into the details on that because it's being investigated at this time.

Question: Mr. Mayor, according to the chart here, the fines escalate but nothing really happens until the fifth incident. Don't you think it would be more effective if people had to pay a [inaudible] earlier on?

Mayor: Again, this is what we think sends a very clear message that, in short order, you can pay the ultimate penalty, which is to lose your right to use your vehicle. And we're mindful or trying to make clear that that's where this goes. We're mindful of something we think answers the kind of concerns we would expect from the Legislature about how to balance the issue of it not being the same as a car stop with a police officer with an individual identified. Again, I understand that

those violations might be with different drivers of the car, but we're trying to send a message that very quickly if that pattern exists, it doesn't matter whether it's different drivers, it still has that outcome.

Question: [Inaudible] time frame from, let's say, how many incidents in a year? Or how many incidents in –

Commissioner Trottenberg: That penalty, Juliet, it's over a two year period.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I haven't but I'd certainly be willing to think about it because I've seen people crossing a street texting who are absolutely oblivious to everything around them, and they're putting their life in danger and they're certainly maximizing the chance there might be a crash. I think we have to look at all pieces of the equation. I don't have a proposal for you today, but that's something we would certainly look at.

Question: [Inaudible]

Chief Chan: I don't have any additional updated information, but we can look into it further for that.

Question: Commissioner Trottenberg, you said that you're looking at [inaudible] two dozen pedestrian fatalities in the city so far this year. Are you doing that same review every single month [inaudible]

Commissioner Trottenberg: Every time there is a fatality or a serious crash, DOT's team goes out, as does NYPD's and we take a look at the street designs, etcetera, and we also often at that time go back and look at the crash data as we did in the case of 9th Street. In many of those cases, we will do some types of interventions, and we also are looking, as many of you have seen, our Borough Pedestrian Safety Action Plans where we look at five-year data of what the crash history looks like on some of the major corridors around the City. And DOT and NYPD together, that's where we target our enforcement, our education, and our engineering efforts.

Question: While this is going on, Councilmember Joe Borelli wrote on Twitter that the DOT has been against adding speed bumps in certain places and making all school crossings mandatory four-way stops. He's saying there's some sort of discrepancy there in the approach.

Commissioner Trottenberg: I'll take a crack with that. Whenever we get a request from anyone – from community, from elected officials – for speed humps, for all-way stops, for traffic signals, we go out and do an analysis. There are often reasons you can't put speed humps in – you don't put them in where you have buses or trucks, or where you have a lot of driveways. So, we put them in – generally, we put them in where we can. There are sometimes streets where they don't work from a geometry point of view. For signals and stop signs, we use – some of you have heard me talk about this – the federal engineering tests, which look at traffic volumes and whether putting those in will make the intersection safer or not. I would say, under this

administration, we have been accelerating the pace in which we install signals, all-way stop signs, leading pedestrian intervals. So, we're ever-increasing that work every year, but, it is true, we don't say yes to every single request everywhere because we have our engineers go out and take a look.

Mayor: So, I want to follow on that. It's unquestionably correct to say that there are situations where sometimes people in a community want something that physically actually wouldn't work or would cause all sorts of unintended consequences. That being said, I want to pick up on the point the Commissioner just made. We have been speeding up the approvals and changing our sense of the criteria, and we're going to keep evaluating that. Vision Zero has to be consistent. It has to be an idea that we apply everywhere and in every way we can. So, I respect the Councilman, and I think it's a fair concern to say should we go and make sure we have not missed an opportunity to put in those additional measures? Yes, we are going to keep looking at all of them and go back even over ones we have previously rejected and look at them again.

Question: In what ways does making a four-way stop at a school intersection ever made it less safe?

Commissioner Trottenberg: When the engineers look at it, they look at traffic volumes – and this has come up in a couple of cases in Staten Island. You have to also – when you look at the crash data of what's happening there, what is the cause of the crashes? The one thing you don't want to do is – and you can sort of envision these – in places where there are very low volumes of pedestrians, if you put those stop signs in, sometimes vehicles will get in the habit of not obeying them because they almost never see a pedestrian. And so, when the pedestrian does cross, they have a sense of safety which is sometimes unwarranted. One thing we have been doing, to the Mayor's point, is, I think, we have been trying in recent years to really refine the times that we go out, working closely with schools or other institutions, to figure out exactly the times of day when we are most likely to see those pedestrians. And that is part of why we have been increasing the pace that we install these, but it is – we use sort of the engineering standards that every jurisdiction around the country uses to determine when it makes most sense to put them in.

Mayor: Okay, I want to see if there's anything else on the announcement today before we go to other topics. One more chance on Vision Zero – going once – okay, going to other topics.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I'm very troubled by it. Hold on, let folks have a moment to leave. Thank you, Cara. Thank you very much, appreciate it.

[...]

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: [Inaudible] pass to the Commissioner. I'm very troubled by it. This was a premeditated killing of a police officer. That should be life in prison, period. Just nothing else to discuss. I don't understand how there possibly was parole in that situation.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Yeah, just listen. I was in the – I was on the job then back in the early 70s and the time that I came on and came out of the academy, we had only [inaudible] and Jones but Rocco – Greg Foster and Rocco Laurie assassinated – premeditated assassinations. And of course more recently in '14, Ramos and Liu assassinated.

So from my perspective – and the Mayor is correct, if we catch you and we prove that you've done it, you've been tried, convicted, then you should spend life in prison. It's as simple as that because it's not just about the personal impact that it has on the city and the officers but it has – it speaks volumes about our system and the way it's supposed to work.

And when you start to shoot police officers who represent those who protect the rest of us, everyone, then you run into some serious concerns. And so you know it's just pretty clear that if you're in, you should stay and serve the time.

Mayor: Yep, okay, let me see if there's anything over here. Coming over. Marcia?

Question: So, I have two questions. Number one is [inaudible] homeless shelter [inaudible]?

Mayor: I have not gotten all the details but what I do know is that one of the facilities is temporary. When the caller called in, I don't blame her for being concerned whether it be a permanent facility or not, I know one is definitely temporary. It is, as I understand it, a hotel that is paid by the day and that is slated ultimately to be shut down not right away but that's part of the overall plan to no longer use those types of hotels.

But I also emphasize we are trying to make sure that everyone on the street comes in off the street, that everyone who by law has a right to shelter has it. We need to find locations that allow us to do that while consistently closing down those cluster sites.

And you've seen a number of announcements lately that we are getting rid of more and more of those all the time and the next step will be to get rid of the hotels. But we'll keep looking at that community to make sure that what's done is fair.

Question: And my second question, it has to do with the Mangano trial. Lawyers are threatening to call you as a witness [inaudible] plea deal. I'm wondering [inaudible] –

Mayor: I've spoken to this so many times. I really have nothing to add. What we did, what my team did, what I did was legal and appropriate. We've discussed it exhaustively. There's really nothing else to say.

Question: [Inaudible] –

Mayor: Again, I'm not a lawyer. I'm just speaking to what I know. There's nothing else to say. Go ahead.

Question: Mayor, when the Daily News had a series about Detective Rice who had sort of investigating certain cases or [inaudible] –

Mayor: Say it again, I'm sorry.

Question: Detective [inaudible] –

Mayor: You'll be shocked to know I don't read everything in the Daily News.

Question: [Inaudible] extensively at the time said that –

Mayor: Okay but I'm saying I don't know it by the way you're referring to it. So, please explain.

Question: [Inaudible] Rice who had lied about meeting with witnesses to crimes [inaudible] when he hadn't actually investigated them –

Mayor: Right, okay.

Question: At that time, you had said if that had happened under your watch he would have been disciplined differently and potentially be fired. The News launched a new series this week focusing on disciplinary actions of the NYPD including two high-ranking NYPD members who were disciplined for stealing time and you know falsifying overtime sheets and in another case for getting into an altercation with another police officer [inaudible] relationship. But those people who were disciplined under your watch weren't fired or anything like that. Are you satisfied with the disciplinary action –

Mayor: Okay, I think you're blending together a lot of stuff so let me try and piece it apart and obviously feel free, if you want to add Ben.

I believe if you look at the discipline record of this administration and of the NYPD, I think there's been a consistent approach to ensuring that there's real disciplinary action when an officer does something wrong. Of course there are due process rights, we respect that, but there have been a series of very tangible often very severe acts of discipline by the department.

I think the example you use of the officer who falsified records of numerous crimes is apples and oranges from some of the other things that you described which I'm sure I don't know the facts of any cases but are serious. But what I responded to in the question several weeks ago was the notion of someone consistently abrogating their responsibilities to the people and to their profession on a systematic basis.

That's an entirely different situation than some of these other examples you gave. The bottom line to your core question – do I have confidence in the disciplinary process of the NYPD? Yes.

Do I have confidence that Commissioner O'Neill meets out discipline in a way that he believes is consistent? Absolutely.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: I would just reinforce the Mayor's comments. But more importantly I would add just this notion of you know I'm responsible for discipline in the NYPD so the trial, the department advocate, the internal administrative trials process, but also in making recommendations to the Commissioner with respect to firearms review and discharges. I oversee the force investigations division which is new as of the middle of 2015. And that was – I mean we really tightened up our investigative process. It's much more transparent and the investigations are much thorough than I believe than they had been in the past.

So, in every respect, when it comes to the disciplinary process, the way in which discipline cases are processed, on how quickly they are processed. There were some backlogs early in 2014 when the new department advocate came onboard – Commissioner Richardson. That process has been tightened up and I think streamlined and even our work with the CCRB is I think much more effective with respect to how quickly those cases move once they come to us.

In many respects, we've striven, as you know, to build trust with the community outside. Much of what we've done with discipline internal to the department as has been directly impacted on our officers who are disciplined, who get into trouble. They know that they're going to get a fair shake. They're not going to be languishing and waiting for a decision to be made. We're pretty well expediting those cases as quickly as possible.

By doing that, we build trust with the officers. They understand that they're no longer going to be sent to the hinterlands and never eligible for promotions or whatever depending on obviously the nature of and the seriousness of the conduct in which they've been engaged.

So, the process is really as tight as it's ever been. It's fair and equitable and of course when it is, officers come to work, they do their job, and they treat the public more – better as well.

Mayor: I'm going to add only one thing. I think you have much more institutional memory than me but I think it is tighter than it's ever been. I just want to amplify that one word choice because from what I have seen and been in a lot of meetings on the topic of what we need to reform the police department – I believe it's clear that there will be discipline when people commit an infraction and that that process had been made clearer and more consistent.

Question: Last week Chairman, MTA Chairman Joe Lhota, Ronnie Hakim testified in front of the City Council particularly about the need to fund the subway action plan. \$400 million that you've previously said you were not going to do until Albany gives back the money. Speaker Johnson seemed pretty receptive to it if there's a few conditions which Chair Lhota seemed willing to make and discuss. So, my question is have you changed your opinion on funding the subway action plan and if the City Council puts it in the budget will you sign it?

Mayor: Okay, let's break that into several parts too. No, I have not changed my opinion. The way the budget works is that I propose the executive budget and then the Council holds hearings and then we obviously negotiate on a number of the specifics.

So, as with every dynamic in the relationship between the executive and legislatures, the executive puts budget forward. I have no plan to put that money in the budget because I have been very, very clear – and I don't honestly know why this has not been more interesting to the media. \$456 million was diverted from the MTA. Why is that not more of a concern? It's almost half-a-billion dollars. I honestly say this, guys, if I had done that you would be all over me and you would be right to be all over me.

So, I don't remember a single article tracing that \$456 million and how it was possibly diverted and they got away with it. It was MTA earmarked revenue, give it back. The State is very creative in its accounting – guarantee that statement. They can out that money back into the MTA budget. That would cover all the needs of the subway action plan.

Second, the Speaker and I have had a number of conversations. We sat down at length yesterday. We talk several times the day before. We have been working together very, very closely. I want to thank him for continuing to say any action taken in Albany that generates revenue whether it is for-hire vehicles or zones or anything, it needs to come with a lock box to guarantee the money stays in New York City for our subways and buses. It needs to come with local sign-off on the specific priorities.

He's been fantastic on that point. He and I have a difference – and I don't think it's a giant one – we have a difference on the subway action plan but we're also in regular dialogue. So, I'm very comfortable that that's a natural difference that we talk through and we're working together on the big picture of what has to happen.

Question: Somewhat related question and then a second question. Are you at all worried about how this [inaudible] the MTA and NYCHA a little bit of wheeling and dealing. And your thoughts on the Governor –

Mayor: Explain what that means to you.

Question: Just that the State government saying [inaudible] and more money from the subway you know – excuse me vice versa – [inaudible] more money for NYCHA in you [inaudible] more money for the subway. It seems to be almost there's been wheeling and dealing going on.

Mayor: Well, I don't know if any wheeling and dealing has occurred because I certainly have not agreed to anything and Speaker Johnson and the City Council members didn't agree to anything and that was made quite clear by their response to the awfully strange letter that came from the Governor's Office.

So, no, I think our view is more straightforward. I'll certainly speak for myself. First of all on NYCHA, the State of New York owes us \$250 million. That's a quarter-billion dollars. \$50 million from the 2015 budget – I wish I was kidding but go back and look. \$50 million that was authorized, signed, sealed, delivered in 2015. It still has not arrived.

\$200 million more that has not arrived, also signed off. The legislature voted for it. The Governor signed the budget. We provided the proposal, answered all the concerns, now strangely in that letter additional conditions were being added to something that was from an approved budget. I've never seen anything like that in my life. You can't add the conditions later on. It was part of the budget. Just give the money to NYCHA so they can get to work. The State's been delaying for months and months.

So, I want to amplify what Speaker Johnson said. When you're talking about a capital need of what looks like now well over \$20 billion, yes, the money matters. And if you want to see – and I think we need to do a better job of showing all of you how money is being used at NYCHA.

I want to take you to Queensbridge Houses to show you how the roofs were fixed, internet service was put in, obviously the work that's been done on safety there that reduced crime, reduced shootings. This is all work NYCHA is doing every day and getting the job done.

And anyone who is paying attention to the specifics of NYCHA would understand that. So, we need that money. That's job one and equally we need the \$456 million back for the MTA.

So, I'd like to see the focus being on the State. Just – this is all money from the past – just keeping its obligations first on the money that's it's already supposed to give us. Then as you saw the Assembly, to their credit, is calling for an additional \$200 million particularly to address things like the heat situation. That would be tremendously helpful and we're ready to get right to work on that and I hope the legislature will follow the Assembly's lead.

Question: [Inaudible] question –

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: Have you [inaudible] conversation with your wife about what she would run for?

Mayor: No, when my wife said that she was interested in running – you'll be pleased to know that she issues statements without coming to me for approval. And that said – the nature of our partnership and our relationship is she will say what she believes and what she feels. So, I was pleasantly surprised to hear that that day when she said it weeks ago. She said very clearly what she wouldn't do and some of the things she would think about but this is years and years into the future and not the focus right now.

Question: Mr. Mayor, you're saying that the NYPD – back to Jill's question for a moment – you're saying that the NYPD disciplinary process has been made clear [inaudible] that it's never been tighter than it is now but because, as we all know, of the disciplinary records being largely undisclosed, New Yorkers essentially have to take the City's word for it. So, do you have any concern about what that does to public trust in police department? And you know, also, can you tell us specific actions that your administration has taken this year to change 50-a.

Mayor: Absolutely. So, first of all, the number one thing I do vis-a-vis Albany each year is I testify in front of the budget related committees. I made clear that was one of highest priorities

for the city there. I have spoken out publicly in favor of 50-a reform. I mean I can go back and count how many dozens of times in the last year I have called for it. My team in Albany has been lobbying individual legislatures consistently on it.

I have raised it to the Speaker of the Assembly. I have raised it to other leaders in Albany. I have also called for people who are supportive in different movements for reform to join us. It's an ongoing effort to build up support. We understand the barrier that we have to overcome. We understand the historic reluctance of the Senate to act on this.

But when you have the Commissioner of the biggest police force in the country calling for it, his predecessor Bill Bratton called for it, I would think the Senate would understand that's all the validation you need. If the police leadership is calling for it, why don't we yield to them as the experts?

Question: Do you – sorry, just the first part of the question – do you concerns generally speaking about what this law and what this situation does to public trust in the NYPD?

Mayor: We would be better off if 50-a was reformed. We would be better off if we could put out more information. It would engender more public trust. That being said clearly there have been a number of instances where the discipline was reported even if it wasn't through the process we would like it to be. You all have gotten a lot of information however you get it and you've put it out.

So, there's lots of instances where people see that there is an outcome and there is a disciplinary process that works. Second, we've been now releasing body camera footage and all of our officers – patrol officers will have body cameras on them by the end of this year. I think that's another very important part of engendering trust. Obviously I think neighborhood policing is as well.

So, I would take your question to heart and say, I think that trust question plays out on a lot of different fronts. I think on most of the things we're doing it is engendering more trust. I think we'd be better off the day that we get that reform in Albany.

First Deputy Tucker: And let me just – to follow up to your question because it's important to note that we also – I mean internally – we are looking at ways in which we can get as close to the line as possible with respect to sharing information about disciplinary proceedings. So, we will do that and shortly we will be publishing some of our trial decisions in a way that will be summaries but at least give and provide more transparency and additional information.

I'm not going to give you a date as to when we'll actually do that. We're still finalizing it and what that should look like in structuring it. But that will happen as well.

So, when it comes to transparency that's what we're trying to do, it's to move in that direction. It's not because of a lack of will. We have the statue in our way right now and hopefully we'll through this legislation change and fix, we'll get to a point where we can be even more candid.

I will also add that looking at that website – look at the NYPD website with respect to we have tons of data and information probably more than any agency that I'm familiar with in this country with respect to some of what happens or much of what happens in the agency. So, there's – we've demonstrated, I think, in a number of ways our willingness to be open as opposed to you know keeping things closed.

Question: Mr. Mayor, I have two questions for you. I want to go back to the back and forth last night between the Governor and the Council Speaker. What is your [inaudible] of what went on there that initial letter from the Governor's Office then 24 hours later this response. Do you have sort of an analysis of what went on from the – what the Governor was trying to do?

Mayor: I think it's really, really strange. I spoke to Speaker Johnson before he went into this meeting, I spoke to him after he came out of his meeting. And I sat down with him yesterday. And everything he said was consistent in every conversation that nothing was agreed to and that they had – the Council delegation heard some things they were open to and other things that they were far from convinced about.

I don't understand how an official of the Governor's Office could summarize a meeting in a way that wasn't accurate. It doesn't make sense to me. It's not going to achieve anything.

Question: I have just another question. We had a story out this week that looked at some of the benefits that labor unions that work in NYCHA get as part of their labor contracts. And you know we looked at some things such as paid holiday [inaudible] able to leave early during the summer hours. All of these things cost money – cost a lot of money [inaudible] overtime costs are rising. I just wanted to ask if you could respond to that but also if you could speak to the relationship between the labor unions and NYCHA and these [inaudible] they have and how that affects the overall state of the agency considering how much money it needs.

Mayor: I think there's a real issue there we have to work on and we hope to find a way to work cooperatively with the union involved. People need help in NYCHA buildings. They need repairs. They need work to be done as quickly as possible.

And we want to make sure that the structure of the work under the contract allows for that to happen. And obviously, we've pushed for that previously and there's been some resistance. I'm hoping as we go back to the table going forward that we can make some real progress.

Question: The Governor just put out a letter to the State Education Commissioner calling it unconstitutional for schools to have blocked students from participating in walkouts yesterday. [Inaudible] doors being blocked. Do you concur with the view that it's unconstitutional and are you looking into those reports yourself?

Mayor: I have not heard those reports to date. The reports I heard were on – of a lot of participation and things that went pretty smoothly. But if there's any evidence that happened, I agree that it would be inhibiting the right of free speech. So, I would not accept that. So, I want to know more about that and if there's evidence then certainly there will be repercussions for that.

Question: Mayor, in regards to [inaudible] any indication that the Trump administration [inaudible] show of support to it in conversation [inaudible]?

Mayor: I am mystified by the President's tweets and actions on the Gateway Tunnel. This is one of the most important things for the future of the New York City economy. The folks who he turns to for advice from New York, from everything I know, all understand that this is crucial. So I just don't understand why he is ignoring their counsel.

But I've – we've also come to realize that what the President tweets one day is not necessarily what he does the next day. So, we'll fight for this. Biggest single thing that could happen for the Gateway Tunnel is for the Democrats to take the majority in the Senate which would mean that Chuck Schumer is the majority leader and I know it's a priority for him.

So, I think we're going to get there one way or another but I'm just shocked. It makes no sense. This is the single most populous metropolitan area in the country. This is the key to our future. It's the kind of thing any President of the United States should be trying to support 100 percent.

Question: So, the First Lady said that she disagreed with your statement that she should be paid for the work –

Mayor: As I said, she does not seek prior approval. Go ahead.

Question: [Inaudible] can you explain what the line of thinking was and [inaudible] –

Mayor: I have no regrets.

Question: Do you still have the same position?

Mayor: Look, let me try and break it down. There are laws that prohibit it and I understand those laws and I respect those laws and we're certainly not making any move to change those laws. I was speaking humanly. I see her work hard everyday. I see her get a lot done for the people of New York City and yet she cannot be compensated. I find that strange.

I think someone who's working that hard and getting things done should be compensated but I know she's not going to be and she knows she's not going to be. So, life goes on.

Question: Mayor, two quick questions. One – Comptroller Stringer is out with an audit today showing a rise in absentees among homeless children in the shelters. Is the City doing anything to address that issue and to make sure that children who are already homeless are also going to school?

Mayor: Yeah, absolutely. I have not seen the report. Let me [inaudible] but we're very concerned to ensure that there is good attendance by kids who are in shelters. So, first of all remember that a couple of years we moved to add school bus service where it didn't exist for kids in shelter and then we put forward a year ago an entirely differently model for how we're

going to approach shelter that focuses on keeping families in their own borough and ideally as close to their home neighborhood as possible, one of the number one reasons being so kids could go to their home school, you know to the school they've been a part of a lot more easily.

That is increasingly becoming the norm as people come into shelter they are being moved to a location that's close to their home community as possible. We also have put into shelters tutors and attendance officials to help make sure that there's follow through to get kids to school.

So, it's a real issue, no question. But it's one we're trying to address at the root and one we take seriously.

Question: [Inaudible] do with, you were asked about the Herman Bell parole, you said you didn't agree with it. This is real time world happening. Should the – the PBA was informed that you agree he shouldn't have been paroled and wondered could the Mayor do something? Could you make a phone call? Would that be something that you would try to stop before it happened?

Mayor: I would absolutely try to stop it. I don't know personally what impact such a phone call would, if it would make a difference but I would be very ready to do that because I don't think he should get parole. It's as simple as that.

I'm going to do two last ones. Go ahead.

Question: In January you said that reforms to the property tax system were coming soon and the creation of a [inaudible] commission to look into the issue. It's been more than a month now. Where does everything stand on [inaudible]. It took you about three weeks to put together your monuments commission, why is it taking so long to put together the property –

Mayor: The monuments commission was no small matter but property tax reform is a gigantic undertaking. Stay tuned. You will see an announcement very shortly on this. We need to get the right combination of people to do work, which as I've said is probably going to be a year or more because of the level of complexity. But this is an announcement you can expect quite soon.

Last call.

Question: Mr. Mayor, Percoco was found guilty of several [inaudible]. Just wanted to get your reaction on that and do you think it changes things for the Governor who's [inaudible] re-election [inaudible]?

Mayor: I will disappoint you by not doing punditry. I want to talk about two things. One – it's just humanly very sad because there's obviously a family involved. Two – it's unfortunately another indicator that the culture of Albany has to change. This has been going on for a long time. Some deeper kind of reform and change has to happen because we can't see this kind of thing recurring. It really undermines public faith. So, that's all I got for you.

Thanks. Thank you, everyone.

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