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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. Years from now, we're going to look back, we're going to see this as a turning point in the history of our city and certainly the history of our nation as well. We're going to look back and see this as a moment where things changed, many of which seemed impossible to change. We're going to recognize this as a moment where the pain that people were feeling, the anger, the frustration came out in a new and powerful way and change happened because the people's voices were heard. And in that is a positive notion, unquestionably. The notion that in a democracy, the voices of people can and will be heard. And when they are heard, when change comes, in a sense there is a rebirth as a reminder of what we are capable of, what our potential is and a free and democratic society. A rebirth for this city, because we come to grips with our contradictions and our pain, and we act on it. Our people have been demanding something better. People have felt that what they have lived through isn't right, isn't fair. There's not respect. There's not decency. They deserve better. And they are right. And their city is listening. Their city is acting. I'm listening. I'm acting. I feel what people are saying. Things have to change. They are changing and they will change more. And together we get an opportunity to re-envision our city, and decide that we can do something better and something different than said that in this moment, not only where we're dealing with the profound issues of structural institutional racism, but we're dealing with the disparities that have come up because of the coronavirus that we can and will create a different city that we're not just going to bring back a broken status quo, but something better and fairer. That's what we will do over the next year and a half. And today I will provide further evidence that change is starting right now.

One of the bellwethers for a fair and just society is whether there is accountability across the board. Whether there's one standard for everyone. Whether our officers in uniform or government officials are treated the same way as everyday New Yorkers. Whether justice is the same for everyone. We have seen in these last days, profound actions to prove that it can be that way. It has not been in the past. It can be, it must be. The action the legislature took on the 50A law, ending a fundamental interference with transparency, and openness, and democracy. That action has now opened up a world of possibilities for us. Yesterday, I announced that we are releasing all audio and video from body worn cameras worn by police officers in key moments, key instances. That will be released as a matter of course, going forward. And I want to be clear that I talked about that policy in terms of what's going to happen from this point on, but I also want everyone to know, we will apply that new policy retroactively going back to the first day that we used body worn cameras for our officers here in New York City. So, all audio and video from cases that meet the standards I discussed yesterday will be retroactively released in the coming weeks.

That is an important step forward, but what I want to announce now, I think is a profound step, because it goes to what real transparency looks like and how the end of the old law in Albany has now opened up a world of real opportunity to show people what's going on, and to give people faith that the truth is there for them to see. The things we're going to talk about today literally would have been very hard to imagine just weeks ago. But it comes down to this, if we're going to have trust between police and community, you have to have that transparency, because think about what it feels like. I've heard the voices of people who say this, if they feel they were mistreated, but they don't think there's going to be any consequence for the person who has mistreated them, think what that feels like. Now, again, I've talked a lot about white privilege lately. I've talked a lot about what some of us have experienced and others haven't. Many of us have not experienced the reality of feeling disrespected by a police officer or feeling like our rights were violated, or we weren't heard, or we weren't seen, or we were treated in a manner that was totally inconsistent with what was going on. We haven't gone through that, a lot of us, but many millions of New Yorkers have in one form or another. If you're that person who feels wronged, if you're that person who feels disrespected or devalued, you want to know that there's going to be some consequence for that. You want to know there's going to be actual due process. You want to know that your voice is heard, and it's painful to think it might not be. And too often, that's the reality that people simply felt no matter how right they were, no matter how wrong was the thing that happened to them, nothing would be a consequence. There would be no consequence for what happened. When people don't think there's going to be justice, how is there going to be trust? So, we have to restore trust, and the best way to restore trust is to show that the accountability is there. That the internal disciplinary process of the NYPD will be fast, will be fair, will be transparent. When you believe that the process is actually about justice. It opens up the pathways of trust and communication.

Now, we know for too long within the NYPD even when justice was served, it took a very, very long time, and that corroded trust in and of itself. The internal affairs Bureau charged with rooting out misdeeds of all kinds is given by law and by policy months and months to do investigations, years for any internal judicial process. And every day that passes the people who felt victimized feel more and more pained, because it doesn't feel like justice is coming. It doesn't feel like there's an honest process. It causes a deeper loss of faith, it causes more frustration, more anger. The very process that's supposed to bring justice in many cases has made the situation worse. And this has been particularly true when someone got hurt, when someone got killed. Any time where an individual civilian was harmed, that's where people are watching especially. And they want to know there will be speedy justice. And I mean justice, which means following the facts wherever they may lead. Sometimes those facts show that officers did exactly the right thing. Sometimes it shows they did not, or any point in between, but it has to be a process that people can see openly and that moves speedily and that people have faith in because they see results. Everything comes down to consequences and results. When they actually exist, people start to have faith again.

Today, I'm announcing two major changes for the justice system within the NYPD, involving any case where there's substantial injury to a civilian. First, on the immediate decision, in any such case of whether an officer will be modified, meaning that their badge and gun will be taken away or suspended fully, that decision in cases where there's substantial injury to a civilian, that decision will be made by the police commissioner within 48 hours. I will note that, of course,

there will be exceptional situations. When for example, a district attorney gets involved or there are other very particular dynamics that might cause more time, but the standard will be 48 hours for that initial decision. And then the standard for the Internal Affairs Bureau will be to finish its full investigation for immediate decisions about the disciplinary process in two weeks or less. People deserve to know that if an officer has done something wrong, that the action involving their immediate status is very quick, and that the decision about whether there will be further disciplinary action happens in a meaningful timeframe. Internal Affairs Bureau will be given two weeks to come to that initial decision on what needs to happen next with a judicial proceeding. It has never been this quick in the history of this city, and it has never been based on an open, transparent timeline like I'm discussing now. This is what we have to do in this city today and in our future. This is what we need to do everywhere to show people there will be real accountability.

Now, another piece that's crucial. With the 50-a law repealed, we now are able to ask the question, what can we do with this new ability to share information with the people. Today, we're going to start a massive effort to make public information regarding to police discipline. And this information will move very quickly and ultimately all of it will be available online. I'm going to describe to you three phases that we'll undertake immediately. First, as immediate action, all trial decisions now will be published. This was not allowable under 50-a, now it will be.

Second by July, we will publish information on every pending case within the NYPD. Every case where charges have been filed – that is 1,100 cases – those are the ones in the pipeline now – we will publish the officer's name, charges, the hearing date and the ultimate resolution when it occurs. Third phase, and this is a longer-term phase, but it will allow us to do something historic to create a comprehensive, publicly available set of disciplinary records. This is historic because it will cover every active member of the police force— all records for every active member available in one place, online, publicly, all past trial decisions will be available. And any other formal actions that came out of those disciplinary proceedings, it'll be online, it will be easy to use and to access. This is the nation's largest city, we have the nation's largest police force, for the nation's largest police force to take these actions, sends a message, not only to the people in this city, but to people all over this country, that we can do things very differently. And transparency is not something to fear, but something to embrace because that's where trust and faith will deepen, when people see that all this information is out in the open, just as it would be for any of us as citizens. Every officer will be held accountable, and for so many officers who every single day do the hard work, do the right thing, they will know that the work that they do, the fact that they're out there protecting people will be honored and respected. And for folks to do the wrong thing, just like the rest of us they'll know that the consequences will be clear, but the goal is to move us all forward. The goal is to use that transparency, to build a sense of trust again, to build a sense that we can work together, that it's not one standard for some of us, another standard for others, but a single standard, and that is the basis for a new and better relationship.

So, I have fundamental belief that accountability is the way forward. These standards will now change the entire discussion right down to the grassroots right down to every block of New York City, and give us a foundation from which to move forward. I said in the beginning, the voices of

people are being heard, not just the voices from the recent protests, the voices of people I've heard over years and years in this city. And it's so important to always listen to those voices, and I also hear people in the city talking about their fears of all of the other challenges that they're facing this moment, as I've been out around neighborhoods and the city, people are talking about their fears about what's happening to their livelihoods, to their jobs, to their families. What about their health? What about the future health of their families? What about the coronavirus and what it means now and going forward? These are the things that people are talking about. We have to hear those concerns; we have to act on them. One of the biggest concerns has been the desire for more information for each person, and that means testing. Coming back to that key concept again, people want testing, they want it to be easy, they want it to be fast, they want it to be free, they want it to be very near where they live. And that's our mission to give more and more testing to the people of New York City opening this week, five new community testing sites, two in Staten Island, one in Queens, one in the Bronx, one in Brooklyn. And I, myself experienced testing yesterday at the Health + Hospitals Gouverneur Clinic. I want to thank everyone at the clinic, wonderful people, who've been doing this work now for weeks and weeks. And I talked to them about how people in the community are responding and they say there's been a lot of gratitude. Folks are coming in realizing how fast and easy it is spreading the word, I want to urge all New Yorkers, go get tested. It is fast, it is easy, it is free, and I want to emphasize that it is free. We now have over 200 sites citywide to find out where you can get tested, go to nyc.gov/covid-test. And we're bringing testing to the people wherever they may be. Today, in the Bronx, we're going into parks outside the Clinton playground, in the Bronx, today. And on Thursday and Friday, outside the Gouverneur playground in the Bronx. Staten Island, today through Friday, at 1441 Richmond Avenue, mobile testing trucks, easy to find, easy to use. And we're going to keep ramping things up in July, there'll be 10 testing trucks available, 800 tests per day, everywhere New Yorkers are, we're going to just keep building and building. So, everyone knows they can always get a test when they need one, and again, for free.

Let's talk about our indicators. Number one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19 the threshold 200 patients, today's report 55. Number two, daily number of people in Health and Hospitals, ICUs, that threshold is 375, and today the number is 333. And most importantly, the percent of people testing positive citywide for COVID-19, that threshold is 15 percent, today – another very, very good report, only two percent. Everyone knows what I feel that is because of the hard work you have all done and are still doing and need to keep doing so we can move forward to phase two and beyond.

A few words in Spanish.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

And with that, we will turn to questions from the media and please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: We'll now begin our Q&A as a reminder, we're also joined today by Deputy Mayor Vicky Been, by Senior Advisor Jay Varma, and by Dr. Andrew Wallach, the Director of Testing for the Test and Trace Corps. First question today goes to Jillian from WBAI.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Good morning.

Mayor: Good morning, Jillian. How are you?

Question: I'm well, how are you?

Mayor: Good.

Question: Okay, great. First question yesterday, the council announced a vote tomorrow on the public oversight and surveillance [inaudible] making the NYPD publicly disclose what kind of surveillance equipment it uses and where, and how it's deployed. I realized I've asked you about this before, but you're increasingly talking about police transparency, including today. If the council approves the post act, will you sign it?

Mayor: Yes, Jillian, I appreciate the question. I've looked at carefully, and as I think I said to you, my concern was to balance transparency with our ability to deal with profound safety concerns, including terrorism, which unfortunately still as a part of our lives. But I am convinced that the wording of the act is appropriate is balanced, so I'm comfortable supporting it.

Question: My second question is about the board of elections, which is pretty dysfunctional in the best settings, but we know that they're being overwhelmed right now with all the applications for absentee ballots and everything that's been going on since COVID. I'm getting a lot of feedback from listeners and guests that they're really concerned they haven't received their ballots yet, and I was wondering if the city has any contingency plans and does that include maybe reestablishing the voter systems commission as an independent unit that was create in the '89 charter. Thanks.

Mayor: Thank you, Jillian. Look I have that same concern, Jillian. This is going to be another moment of truth for the board of elections. Obviously, they have known for a long time that people were going to be overwhelmingly voting by mail and the board had every opportunity. And I hope I wish them success that in the coming days they will deal with the volume, turned around, get out to people and that everyone can vote effectively by mail. What I think is the fundamental problem is that the board structure doesn't work for the 21st century. I think it is time to abolish the board as it is currently constituted, make it a modern agency. I think the notion of it being an independent agency has correlated with it being unaccountable and ineffective. So, I don't wish them ill will, Jillian, and I hope they get it right this time, but we need to be honest that this is an entity that just doesn't work in its current form. And I want to see a future where voting becomes much, much easier and many more people participate and that's not going to happen with this current structure. So, we'll do anything we can to support them, I've offered them a lot over the years, including funding they wouldn't take because it came with demand for reforms, but whatever, whatever we can do to help them in the here and now we will. I don't think another commission so much as the answer, I think changing the board foundationally is the real answer.

Moderator: The next is Yoav from The City.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. At the same time that you're announcing these new disciplinary reforms, the police unions have said that, that they're not planning to submit to remote interviews by the CCRB. You know, because of the crisis, the CCRB is going to remove to – move to remote interviewing, I think in about a week, and I guess I just want to get your response to the police unions saying essentially they said we don't do Zoom.

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: So, they're not going to cooperate.

Mayor: Yeah, Yoav, I don't – I haven't seen what they've said specifically and I haven't seen what the CCRB has said. I understand work is going on to resolve that issue. I think it's incumbent upon everyone to participate in the judicial process and the discipline process. It's not a choice for anyone – everyone has to participate and I think any court would immediately say that too. We're all dealing with an unprecedented reality. So, I'm going to assume that issue is getting resolved because it's self-evident that everyone has to participate. You can't separate yourself from the justice process.

Question: Thank you, and at the beginning of today's press conference, you said that accountability needs to be applied equally to NYPD, but also to elected officials and I'm wondering if the NYPD took any action against the elected officials that, that broke that lock in a park in Brooklyn. Were they issued summonses? Will they have to pay for the lock? Were they arrested? Was it – was any enforcement action taken, and, if not, why not?

Mayor: I don't know the answer, Yoav. I've said they shouldn't have done that. It's inappropriate and I don't know what has happened so far, but they should be treated like anyone else. But we'll get you an update on what PD did in that case.

Moderator: The next is Kathleen from Patch.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Congratulations on testing negative for COVID.

Mayor: Thank you, Kathleen. Have you been tested Kathleen?

Question: No, I haven't yet, but I'm hoping to in the days ahead.

Mayor: It's very, it's very easy.

Question: I wondered if you could talk to me a little bit about what kind of test that you got and how did you get your results back so quickly? I'm hearing a lot of people saying it's taking 5 to 10 days. Is New York City ever going to expand on its rapid testing program like I've been seeing in other States?

Mayor: Yeah, we have to – we have to make it much faster and we need a lot more cooperation from the labs to do that. I think they're working hard, but we've got to get to a much faster turnaround. The bottom line is you want people to know as quickly as possible so that there can

be appropriate action and that certainly fits everything we're doing with test and trace. My specific case, Kathleen, I took the test, they use the smaller kind of Q-tip thing where they swirl around your nose, not the long painful thing that we've seen some graphic demonstration of. More and more what I want our testing program to use is that smaller, easier Q-tip so people realize it's not uncomfortable, it's not difficult, it's very fast and I did that. They took the results and then I got the notification this morning. I'm not actually familiar with the details of how it all happens, but I think in light of the concern, obviously, about everyone I've come in contact with and the need to get an answer speedy in this particular case, they got me results in a quick manner.

Do you have a follow-up?

Question: I do have another question, but I'm changing the topic. I know you've been hesitant to set the date for phase two, but I wondered if you could talk to us a little bit about the data that you're looking at. You know, the, the tracking numbers you're providing everyday are providing New Yorkers, a lot of context for your decision on phase one. Is there a place we can be looking to say, okay, when I see these numbers, I'll know that Mayor de Blasio thinks New York City is ready for this next step?

Mayor: Yeah. Kathleen, look, I feel very good today. The earliest date we could go is Monday. It's a decision we're going to make very closely with the state. We're all mindful that we had a very unusual situation with the protests and we're going to see, we believe the fuller impact, if any, of the protests, in terms of our health indicators around this weekend, maybe into the first few days of next week - that's an important factor here. Also seeing the impact of phase one itself, obviously, which is much bigger than the protests in the sense of, you know, several hundred thousand people each day, going back to work every day for the full workday. We are watching to see how these things are affecting the reality. If you're judging by today's numbers, we're in great shape and I've been impressed that they've been very steady now for many days. But what we're looking for going into the weekend is do we see any variation there? I know the state's concerned about that as well. So, it's a day to day discussion; we want to come to a decision with the state as quickly as possible. Remember if we see new data at any point, we might have to shift gears. We'll keep saying that because it's important for people to understand; there's always the danger that things go the wrong direction. We'd have to change what we're doing, but so far so good is the answer and as soon as we get to 100% clarity with the state, we'll announce it.

Moderator: The next is Julia from the Post.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. My first question, there's a new report out by Comptroller Stringer that says both the city and the state severely underfunded, a federally mandated ombudsman program, leading to the disproportionate deaths of the elderly and others in long-term care facilities from COVID and in fact, your administration contributed nothing in the last five-year funding cycle to the program. I'm wondering why a program that's meant to prevent neglect was itself neglected by your administration?

Mayor: Julia, I'm just not familiar with the details. I have not seen what the Comptroller put out. I'm obviously concerned to know what's going on and if the facts bear out his conclusion. So, let's get a chance to look at and then we'll have a response for you.

Question: Okay, great. I'll look forward to that. And then secondly, on a different topic, you're taking fire from many sides over your lack of a detailed plan for re-opening, from everything, from transit to outdoor dining and the summer. Speaker Johnson said, "your utter lack of foresight and vision," has been a defining feature of your response to the pandemic. Gale Brewer said, "We need a plan fast for open spaces for kids," and Councilman Brandon said it seems like "City Hall forgot to plan for the summer". What's your response to those critics?

Mayor: Politicians do what politicians do. Every step of the way, I've been communicating with the people. We have been talking about what we're doing now, what we're planning next. We've been fighting back this disease. I think every-day New Yorkers understand job one is to fight back this disease and the numbers were going on over every day show that we're doing that effectively. We've been bringing the economy back now the smart way and I'm very sorry other places did something very rash and unproductive, and now are seeing real upticks in the amount of coronavirus. We're not letting that happen here. We are addressing with each phase what people need to get ready for, and you can see that businesses are reopening; they have the guidance, they have the support, we're sending out the inspections, we're sending out the free face coverings. I think that in fact, things are moving consistently in this city and when each thing is ready to go, we move on it.

Moderator: The next is Erin from Politico.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. First, just a question about your announcement, the database that you're referring to, all the officers being online with their disciplinary history, believe you used the word long-term project. Is there an estimate on when that's going to happen?

Mayor: The database information, so we're going to move over the coming weeks into July to get out as much as we can, but we'll get you a constant update on the timing. Erin, the point is that I want, you know, everything we have to be put online as rapidly as it can and obviously starting with the current cases, which is the most important issue. That's something we'll do in July and then working from there to get out everything retroactive.

Question: Okay. And then my second question is just sort of a broader question about as we're reopening, you're talking about, you know, being worried about a resurgence. I'm wondering, you know, given the field hospitals have been closed down, the volunteer medical workers have gone home, et cetera., you know, if there were to be a resurgence, are we in a significantly better position to deal with it now than we were the first time around? And related to that do you have numbers of how much is in that PPE stockpile, you've talked about creating?

Mayor: Yeah. Erin, we'll get you an update on the stockpile. I mean, we've had finally a steady supply of PPEs so that, you know, it used to be we were worried about each day, then it was, we were only being able to plan a week ahead. Now we're dealing with thank God month by month. So we'd been secure for the month of June in terms of PPEs, still at the crisis standard. The

strategic reserve we intend to build up over the coming months. But we have to first have enough consistency with the PPEs that we know all immediate demand is needed. So we'll get you an update on where we stand on that, but it's certainly a lot better, Erin, than it was, you know, a month or two ago, certainly.

The resurgence yeah, unquestionably, we will be better positioned and I hope we don't have to prove it, but the fact is unquestionably, we have now very, very detailed plans of how we would expand hospital capacity, how we would add staffing, how we would use PPEs. We obviously have a whole different reality in terms of incubator supply – not incubator, I'm sorry, ventilator, my apology, ventilator supply. So we're in a much, much different situation and we're watching indicators that will tell us, you know, well in advance, if we start to see a negative pattern and I just think the amount of education, the amount of information people have though, the fact that testing traces up fully. I mean, there's so many different factors that we could use to address any resurgence night and day from where we were in March and April.

Moderator: The next is Louis from [inaudible].

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. With the Staten Island Ferry getting increased ridership, I'm wondering about Governor's Island. I'm guessing the decision to reopen as a coordinated one between the city and the National Park Service. So considering how the ferry to Governor's Island is under 10 minutes and the one to Staten Island is 25. What can you share about the possibility of it opening sooner rather than later?

Mayor: It's a good question, Louis and one, we got to get on the agenda. I mean, obviously when I think of Governor's Island summer, I think of large people, large numbers of people gathering and, you know, we've been very cautious about anything with large numbers of people gathering, and we're trying to really keep limits on that as we work through Phase One into Phase Two and then determine a long-term plan for the city. So we'll make a decision on that pretty soon, but I want to just be clear that my concern there will be, if we are to reopen that we do it in a way that really avoids too much crowding and we don't have that plan locked down yet.

Question: Thank you. Last week you stated that talks with the City Council about the summer youth program would take place in the weeks to come. That would place us – put us in the first week of July or beyond. Would that mean that any related program for youth would last maybe just three or four or five weeks? Not that there's anything wrong with that, something's better than nothing, but can you share some insight regarding that?

Mayor: Yeah, that's a great question. The least the first of all, we're all grappling still with the issue of what is a youth program look like when we're still dealing with this disease. We're still in Phase One, obviously, if all goes, well, we'll be in Phase Two around the time we're making this final decision, but there's still a lot of questions about what does it look like? How much of it is online versus you know, kids doing things at a physical location. These are all very big and unanswered questions. Anything online could start immediately. Remembering that typically summer youth programs don't start until July anyway, because kids are in school up until almost the very end of June. So, you know, anything online that can move very quickly. If we get to the point of anything being more physical location oriented, that'll take more time, but I still think

we'll figure things out and we'll be able to do something that will cover a substantial amount of the summer, and certainly it'd be better than what we feared. I mean, at the time in April, when we made the decision, we feared, we weren't going to be able to do anything this summer because it looked like the disease we're going to keep growing and growing steadily. But I think whatever we do, we'll be able to get a substantial piece of the summer in.

Moderator: The next is Matt Chayes from Newsday.

Question: Hey, good morning. All first question for our health colleagues, what's the window period of coronavirus. In other words, in terms of days, what's the soonest and latest one can test positive upon infectious exposure. Then I have a follow up.

Mayor: Jay, you want to take that? Jay, get closer to the microphone.

Senior Advisor Jay Varma: Hopefully you can hear me. Okay. If you're exposed to the virus on let's say today is day zero, we think that the earliest that you could test positive would be three days after that, but [inaudible] you'll have a positive test increases over time. So a test drawn on day three may not be as sensitive as a test that's drawn on say day seven and nine or ten, and then we know also what's called the incubation period. If you're exposed to the virus then you can be up to 14 days until you're considered free from having that effect.

Question: Okay, and on another topic, Mr. Mayor, right now, cops can watch body cam footage ahead of time. Jimmy O'Neill told us a couple of years ago and that's because he said something to the effect of, we don't want to "play gotcha" with cops. Newer cops subject to discipline for failing to turn on their body cameras. So to what extent are you planning to change those policies? And also since my question Friday was unanswered by today, I'd like to see if you knew the total number of internal affairs cases and how many were initiated on the NYPD's own, rather than because of an outside source because of like a viral video showing apparent undue brutality?

Mayor: All right. That we're – I'm handed a note by Friday. We're going to get you that answer, and I think, I don't know the details of that, but we will get to that answer on your first part. We got also understand as we're changing the approach here what it means for what Commissioner O'Neill spoke about. This has not been one of the topics that I've discussed with Commissioner Shea and others as we've planned for the announcements that we've made this week. So we'll be happy to get you an answer on that as well.

Moderator: The next is Debralee from the Manhattan Times.

Question: Okay, good morning everyone. Can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes. Debralee, how you doing?

Question: I'm well, thanks. Mr. Mayor just wanted to touch base with you on something that Commissioner Shea spoke about this morning in a separate media interview. He acknowledged that reform, as you have in the past, really needs to also come from within the department itself. I

wonder if you can speak to the fact that he's absent today from this announcement, is this a lack of full-throated support for these reforms on his part? And I know you've spoken about the resistance from police unions, but you're going to have to essentially convince them as well to go along. What kind of conversations are you planning if you haven't had them already?

Mayor: Well, Debralee, I respect again the labor movement and I've been very blunt about the fact that some police unions, unfortunately, instead of working to move our society forward, improve the relationship between police and community, try to be constructive – they've often been regressive parts of our society. Not all, not everybody, but some have worked overtime to hold us back. That's not just true in New York City. It's true. All over the country. I remember vividly a Republican mayor told me in my first year that his experience had been that police unions had fought every reform that he tried to make in policing and had done it in a very divisive, angry, negative way, and that's just out of step with where the city's going, where this country is going, and I hope a generation of police union leaders are going to come along and understand that the path forward is actually to work with communities and respect the fact that change is coming, you can still represent your members' interests like any good union leader without being a force of division or trying to take our society backwards. We're just not going back anymore. There's going to be a lot more transparency. There's going to be faster discipline. This is the way forward. So I don't actually agree with your construct there. I think changes are happening because it's a democratically elected government. We're making the decisions. The police unions are not making decisions. They will have to deal with the decisions. We'll always try and be in dialogue with people about how to do things effectively. But I think a lot of police unions thought they got to call the shots in New York City, in New York state. They don't get to call the shots anymore. Those days are over.

So, in terms of the Commissioner, he and I have talked constantly about the changes that we are making. He announces some, I announce some. We're absolutely focused on making a series of reforms to address the real valid concerns that've come up and we're going to do things the way we think are effective. So, you know, he announced the decision the other day on ending the anti-crime unit. I've announced the decision on the body worn cameras and the decision on the disciplinary process. We're absolutely unified that this is the way forward for the city.

Question: And separately. Then I wanted to follow up on something that we've spoken about over the course of the last few months. Mr. Mayor, do you foresee an instance going forward in which immunity certificates will be issued New York City residents?

Mayor: I don't know what that is, Debralee. I'm sorry. I don't know that phrase.

Question: Well, there's specifically, they've been used in other instances where folks who have tested positive and show that they've have antibodies in place received some sort of certification.

Mayor: Yeah, when you shifted gears, I thought you were talking about some kind of police thing. I apologize. You mean certificates that say what someone's testing status is, is that what you're saying?

Question: Essentially, they've been using the paths to be able to guarantee employment and return to employment, something that's beyond someone saying, yeah, I got it and I'm fine now, allows for them – some – a clearer pathway to return to work, return to school, et cetera.

Mayor: It's a very good question, Jay Varma was on the phone when one of your colleagues asked something similar a few weeks ago. There has been a lot deal with, and this one is a very complex matter and I don't think we've been able to get to a satisfactory answer. That it would be wonderful to figure out how to have a record that was universally recognized, but also be very respectful of people's privacy. But Jay, you'll correct me if you know, something, I don't know. I don't think we have yet gotten to a point that we feel is a policy that makes sense, and we want to get there, but it's a real thorny and complex one. Jay, you want to comment?

Senior Advisor Varma: Correct, I concur exactly with what you said and I would also add that the same concern that came up in a previous press conference applies now. I think we in public health feel quite comfortable with the concept of records of vaccination. But in certificates of vaccination, they're used all over the world, for example, for yellow fever or other diseases, but in this condition there's a number of complex issues about whether or not you might create perverse incentives for people to be infected when you'd be discriminating against people who may not have been infected yet. So there are the science problems that the Mayor's highlighted as well as some practical considerations that we still have to work out.

Moderator: We have time for two more for today. The next is Steve Kastenbaum from Westwood One.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I hope you can hear me well and am glad you feel better today.

Mayor: Thank you very much. How you doing?

Question: I have a couple of questions. I'll start with one about restaurants and the next phase of the reopening. You know in some neighborhoods in Boston where they have narrow sidewalks and narrow streets, so that city closed streets to traffic and allowing restaurants to set up outdoor seating so they can reopen and serve more customers outdoors. A similar thing going on in Red Bank, New Jersey, three days out of the week over the weekend. I'm wondering, you know, the city has this successful program in the past where they've transformed some parking spots into outdoor seating with there's a dearth of outdoor seating, restaurant owners I'm speaking with, they're just dying to be able to serve more people outdoors, where they don't have the space. Is this being considered? Creating, you know, since we've closed so many streets for outdoor recreation is this a possibility that the city is taking into consideration, transforming some parking spots on commercial avenues into outdoor seating for restaurants?

Mayor: Yeah, Steve, it's a great question. We have to find ways to help our restaurants at this moment, and there's a lot of different options on the table. And we intend to put out a policy very, very soon. Everything's being looked at, we need to maximize – look, let's face it, not only for the fact that the folks who work in the restaurants, you know, a huge part of our economy. So many people need their livelihood back. We're worried about restaurants being able to survive.

We got to get them up and running. But we also know that a lot of people who want to patronize restaurants aren't going to be comfortable inside. Outside is going to be the big hope, we have to maximize it. So we're looking at a variety of options, but again, the announcement will be very, very soon because obviously people are preparing for a Phase Two and we need to get that out immediately, we're just fine tuning it, but very, very soon.

Question: Thank you very much. And then the other question I want to get back to the issue of the playgrounds in New York City, the elected officials who, along with an activist, who'd been up severing the locks on certain playgrounds. What exactly at this point in the coronavirus pandemic is the concern considering that we already now have children out in open parks versus playgrounds, and we're seeing a much greater number of children playing together outdoors now that the parents feel a little bit safer? So if they're already in parks, they're already at the beach, even though they're not swimming, what is the specific concern with playgrounds, with skateboard parks with – I can even see soccer fields, you know, still padlocked in some parts of the city?

Mayor: Yeah, Steve, I think what is being missed a bit in the discussion is a lot of attention has gone on to things that are very, very visible, but also temporary, and that we don't belittle any of them. There's legitimate concerns about the protests and what the impact might have been on health. There's legitimate concerns, people getting together around bars on a Friday or Saturday night, those things are very real and we have to address each situation the best possible. But when you talk about the things that are all day, every day, like people going back to work in Phase One, like playgrounds, which the second we open up playgrounds, I think it's a safe bet they'll be filled, you know, 10 hours or more a day, every day. The number of people, and remember how many hundreds upon hundreds of playgrounds we're talking about all over New York City, talking about a huge number of people concentrated every single day.

What we've said is we're going to make that decision consistent with Phase Two. If the indicators get us to phase two and we are paying special attention to what the results of Phase One have been in terms of healthcare, what the results of the protests have been. We get to the point working with the state where we say, we're all clear for Phase Two, that's a natural time to start acting on playgrounds. We're going to look at each piece differently. A playground for little kids is different than a soccer field, for example. The ways that people interact and what we've seen about the trajectory of the disease is different with adults and kids. So we're going to have to make each decision carefully, but we're going to make these decisions in the context of Phase Two. But first we have to be 100 percent secure we're getting to Phase Two. So we're working all the time on what those different scenarios are going to look like. But I think we still need a few more days to confirm that we're ready to go to Phase Two.

Moderator: Last question for today goes to Jeff Mays from the New York Times.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor, I just have two questions for you. Just walking around the city, it's easy to see that they're just widespread violations of social distancing, the mask wearing rules, you know, businesses are open that are not supposed to be open according to your order and the Governor's order. I just want to know what is the city doing about these

widespread violations? And do you plan to take any additional actions this week to address the ongoing violations?

Mayor: Yeah, Jeff, I appreciate again, I think it's natural for folks in the media to see where there are problems, but I also see a whole lot of adherence I've always seen. The vast majority of people are still adhering to social distancing, face coverings, spending as much in time in doors as possible. Businesses overwhelmingly are adhering to the rules, both the ones who have started and the ones that are not yet supposed to start have not. Of course, there are going to be exceptions. Where there's exceptions, the first thing we're going to go do is send civilian authorities over to educate and where we need to do enforcement, we'll do enforcement. Obviously our hope is that we're just in a few days going to be able to make a decision on Phase Two, and that will change the whole reality, but we're trying – we understand people – I get why people are frustrated and I get that people are, you know, it's been so long, they'd been through so much, but there's a reason we've structured the rules. There's a reason the State has structured the rules the way we have, which is to fight back to the disease and keep it out of our lives.

And Jeff, I really believe in the end, that's what people are going to judge us all by, again looking at the real painful reality and a lot of other states in this country where the resurgence is now intensely happening, and a lot of people are sick and a lot of people are dying. Question here is, are we managing this carefully and cautiously, even though it's frustrating, does it get us where we need to go? Which is to beat back this disease, use our test and trace capacity, make sure we open smartly in each phase, and ultimately get us where we need to go over the next few months. And I'm convinced that that's what we're doing, that's what the state's doing. The results you can see every day. What's your other question?

Question: But it just, it just seems that these violations are allowed to go on. So have you ordered officials to kind of take a hands off approach to dealing with these violations? You know, are summonses being issued, for example, is this a official stance from the city that you're going to take a more relaxed view of these violations at this point?

Mayor: I didn't say that. And please be careful not to accidentally put words in my mouth. It's the same thing we've said from the beginning. We said from the very beginning that if people are not abiding by the rules, we're going to go and educate, and we're going to fix the problem, when we find the problem with all our agencies, the Sheriff's Office, the Buildings Department, you name it. And if the problem can be resolved, that's what we want. We're not looking to fine small businesses at this point, especially after everything they've been through, but if we have to, we will. So the goal is to go and address issues. There's going to be plenty of inspectors out and plenty of civilian educational folks out. If they can't resolve an issue, then the folks who give fines will come in, but there's been a lot going on in the last few weeks, and obviously we've had to put resources into a whole lot of different things, but going into this week and this weekend, there'll be plenty of folks out, both doing the education work and if needed doing the enforcement work.

Everybody look the key here as we – I want to go back to what I started with, which is the issue of how we move the city forward. Hearing the voices of the people, building a deep and trustful relationship between police and community. I know a lot has happened, and I've certainly seen

the impact of neighborhood policing, and I've heard from so many community members all over the city, what it's like to actually build a human relationship with the officers who serve them, what it's like to no longer see each other as people from different worlds, but actually people working in the same community for the same cause. We want a lot more of that. We want people to be on a first name basis. We want people to say good morning to each other, to know each other, to respect each other, trust each other, to do that, we have to have accountability. We have to have a feeling, a deep, deep seated feeling that there's one standard for everyone. We have to know that if something's done right, it'll be recognized, if something is done wrong, it will be acted on, and that will be transparent and open. When people know that, that's what helps them have greater faith. And when everyone has faith, that's what helps us move forward as a city. So today we announced a series of changes that again would have been impossible in the past for legal reasons alone, but now the world is changing and changing rapidly. And in New York City, we're going to show the power of transparency and accountability to move us forward. Thank you very much.

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