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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. Well, I've been talking for weeks now about what you have achieved through your hard work, and I think it's time that New Yorkers see their hard work rewarded. Look, it's not easy to do any of the things that we've asked of all of you in a place like this, the most densely populated place in the country, a place or so used to being close together, a place where we live in tight quarters and a lot of families live particularly in their own apartments, in their own homes, in very tight quarters. We've asked you to do a lot. We've asked you now over the last two months to shelter in place to practice social distancing, to wear face coverings. It's a lot, and it hasn't been easy. It hasn't been easy for a single day. Everyone's been making huge adjustments and I've talked to so many New Yorkers who have told me it's been a struggle, but despite that you've done it. You've done it to a remarkable degree, and because you've done it so well, we're now actually in a position to start talking about opening things up step by step, phase by phase. And I've been cautious. I think anyone who's been watching these broadcasts knows that I take a very cautious conservative view based on a focus on health and safety of how and when we take each step to restart. But the fact is that you've proven it through your actions that we are getting to the point very, very soon where we can take the first step to restart in phase one. So, you have earned it. Everybody's thinking about it, everybody's talking about it, now we can really get ready for the real work, the tangible work of taking that big first step. So, I want to talk to you today about what that's going to look like and how the city of New York's going to help people into this first phase and through this first phase. And then if we keep doing things right, well beyond that to more and more reopening, and more and more steps towards a better situation for all of us.

So, first of all, it's important to remind everyone, we say restart, we do not mean rushing back to something that we used to think of as normal. We do not mean flicking a switch and suddenly everything's where it was again, of course not. We have to make sure this virus is in check. We've come a long way. We're not going to blow it now. We're going to constantly make sure we are holding back this disease, and we're going to make sure that we are putting the steps in place all the time to avoid it ever having a resurgence. That's not just now. That's at every point along the way. We don't get a memo from the disease telling us when it plans on resurging when it plans on a boomerang, we have to be fighting every day to make sure it doesn't happen. Now, we've talked in recent days about our test, trace, and take care effort. That is central to this, because that is the offensive. That's how you make sure you're pushing back the disease on top of everything all New Yorkers have done. Now a systematic effort based on examples from around the world, but bigger than anything we've ever seen in the history of this city or this country, a systematic effort to trace every single case, follow through, make sure people have the help they need to separate safely. This is a game changer, because it's going to be done on a vast scale and

it's going to keep constraining the disease. Doing that is part of how we restart smartly, and that test, trace, and take care initiative grows with every week ahead so it gets bigger and bigger, more and more impact reducing the spread of the disease.

But now, we should talk about what restart looks like on the ground and phase one, and I want to say, I really give a lot of credit to the state of New York for a clear articulation of what is, what are the industries that are part of phase one, and then how each industry should think about the practicalities of reopening. The fact is the State gives out this guidance, and anyone who hasn't seen it, I really want to encourage you to look at it. It's written in a very helpful, straightforward manner. And this is for all of the industries that will restart in phase one. As I said, based on what we know today, that will be in either the first or second week of June. Anyone looking for this information can go to the State website [ny.gov/industries-reopening-phase](https://www.ny.gov/industries-reopening-phase). And it lays out very practically what you need to do if you're a business owner, what you need to do to actually make it come together.

Now, I've spoken to a lot of business owners, small businesses, bars, restaurants, retail, and some of the owners of some of the biggest businesses in New York City. Everyone wants clarity. Everyone wants to be safe. I have not heard a single reckless person. I have not heard a single person say, oh no, I'm just going to open, you know, I don't care what happens or I don't want to follow all these rules. No, people understand the rules are for everyone's safety. The rules are to allow us to keep reopening. So, there's a lot of willingness to work with the rules. A lot of understanding. You know, Rome wasn't built in a day. It's going to take time to figure this out. But businesses want to reopen. The people work at their businesses want to come back. People are ready for this, but they need to know it will be safe. So, actually what I see, is a lot of people moving in the same direction, wanting to restart, wanting to do it the right way, but a course, the question is what does it really look like on the ground? So, these guidelines are a great starting point.

First of all, they tell us what we need to know about which industries. Construction, all the construction that's not going on now, that restarts. Manufacturing restarts, wholesale work restarts, and retail that hasn't been in that essential category. So, we know what essential has been, it has been pharmacies, grocery stores, supermarkets, but now we're talking about a whole range of other retail clothing stores, office supply stores, furniture stores, you name it, but restricted to curbside pickup or in store pickup. That means not wandering the aisles shopping or lingering or comparing things, but you know, placing an order and coming and getting it. So, it's a quick transaction with limited contact between people.

Okay now, that four whole parts of our economy, manufacturing, construction, wholesale, and the parts of retail that haven't been opened yet, again, with restrictions. Well, what does it mean in terms of the number of people who will be coming back to work in the five boroughs? We've been working on estimates of that, it's imperfect because no one knows for sure what each company will do. We're surveying companies constantly, but we don't know the final choices each will make until the time comes. Some are dealing with huge economic challenges obviously, but the vast majority say they're ready. They've been out of action now for a few months, but not forever. So, a lot of them are really ready to come back. Obviously, some workers are ready to come back, some are not for a variety of reasons. And of course, where

companies can continue to do their work remotely. There's a lot of advantages to that right now. But these sectors, as you can imagine, tend to be the sectors where you need people in person. But on top of that, they were chosen because they're the sectors where you can create a lot of physical separation, you can make sure that people are safe.

So, what does it mean? We think a minimum of 200,000 New Yorkers will be coming back to work, a maximum of 400,000. That's quite a range. A lot of other parts of the country that would be their entire city. But here, because we're in the great unknown, we've never been through a pandemic like this. Certainly not in the last hundred years. We can only give you a range to begin, but we're going to know really soon what the truth is. But even if you say 200,000 people, that's a lot of employees coming back to work. So, we want to make sure it's done the right way, and we want to emphasize safety throughout.

So now, let's talk about how we make it work, business by business. Every business has a set of rules that fit its reality, the nature of its business. And so, there are very specific, you know, nuts and bolts rules that people can follow and make sense of. Now, let's talk about some of them so you get a grounding of what it means, physical distance to begin with. The whole concept here is you have to keep that six-foot difference. Distance, I should say. Look, there may be moments where people have to come closer together. Sometimes it's just the nature of the job. Sometimes there's an immediate situation that people have to deal with, but the goal is as much as possible, keep people six feet apart. On top of that, keep the occupancy in each location. Think about a manufacturing plant, keep it to under 50 percent of its normal capacity so you have room for people to spread out. If there's tight spaces, elevators, an area around a cash register, keep it to one person at a time to the maximum extent possible. These are sort of common-sense rules, and that look, it's all about limiting contact, limiting the potential spread of the disease. Obviously, PPE's, some companies need more advanced PPE's, but the vast majority just need a simple face covering for their employees. Employees, I should say, but it's crucial that every company makes sure every employee has one. They need to provide them for free to their employees. They need to make sure they're wearing them. Hygiene, cleaning, regular cleaning of any shared surfaces. That's a crucial part of this. Just constantly over and over again going back on a schedule, cleaning those surfaces. Every day there has to be healthcare screening. Now, that can take different forms. The state guidance is clear. It might be a temperature check in the morning as people come to their place of work. It might be a questionnaire that people fill out each morning just talking about their situation. If there's anything that seems symptomatic in what they're feeling, but it's a constant every day check on how employees are doing. Stating the obvious, any employee that isn't feeling well should stay home. But the important thing is to set up some rigorous screening at each and every employer to test each employee coming in, in one form or another check to see how they're doing. Check to see if anyone shouldn't come into the workplace that day.

Now, absolutely crucial, as with everything in life communication, lots of information, putting up signage, constant updates, making sure that employees are reminded of the rules, making sure there's social distance markers around that they can see that remind them, you know, this is your workstation, stay six feet away from the next person. All of that, that constant showing people exactly how it works is part of what makes this work for everyday working people. We're all going to learn together that, you know look, our business community is extraordinary in this city

when you're talking a mom and pop store, bodega, right on up to the biggest businesses. One thing businesses do is they adapt, they create, they move with the times, they move with new conditions. That's the nature of business. Our small businesses know that better than anyone. So, I am convinced our business community will work it out, but now I think it's important that there are city government give them a helping hand. So, I want to talk about the ways that we're going to help, and also the ways that we have to make sure the rules are followed.

So, overwhelmingly we're talking about helping, clarifying, educating, providing, providing pointers. We will obviously do enforcement if we see problems. The first goal is always with a light touch to remind to point the right way. If we see any company that's persistently breaking the rules, we can take more aggressive action. But I don't think you're going to see a lot of that, we haven't been seeing that in this city, overwhelmingly across the board and you're talking about everyone's health and safety. So, any company that doesn't respect the health and safety of its employees, well the people who work there and management are putting themselves in danger too. I think there's a real not only the right thing to do here, but there's a self-interest in everyone's part within the same company and getting it right.

Okay. So, we're going to provide a lot of support, of course, all support we provide to businesses will be free and it will come from different city agencies for construction. The support will be primarily from our department of buildings for the other sectors, primarily from our small business services department and from our department of consumer and worker protection. So, what are we going to do? First, we're going to publish industry guides, we've got the guidance from the State that's really helpful. We're then going to add to it with simple, plain English examples of how people can do this work, how they can implement these rules. What you do in a clothing store is different than what you do on a construction site, we're going to try and make it plain and easy to use examples. We're going to get that out next week and provide it to every business, that's a part of phase one.

Second, we're going to start a business restart hotline and the restart hotline is going to be real human beings who know the rules and know how to facilitate and help businesses think through it, that starting next week as well. Any business that's trying to understand the rules can't quite figure out how to implement them is confused about how much is good enough. How many times a day do you have to clean? How do you create the right line for customers waiting to buy something? We will work with each and every business through this hotline. If there's something that they need resolved, it could maybe be done right over the phone, if we need to send out a city official to work with them to come up with a solution. For example, if they're trying to figure out how to do a line outside their store the right way and socially distanced and they're trying to figure out how much of the sidewalk they can take up, we'll work with them on that right there in person to sort it out. So, that hotline will start next week as well. In the meantime, as we've said, many times, any small business owner dealing with any problem we talked about those loan programs from the federal government or any other challenge of course can call 3-1-1 for help. We'll have a specific hotline though that'll be all about restart and how to navigate it.

Third, we're going to have a team of small business advocates and compliance advisors. So, we're going to send a team of city personnel out to businesses to check in to make sure they understand, to see what kind of help they need sorting out. So, we'll do some of over the phone,

but we want the ability to immediately, if people need in-person help send teams of city officials to do that, to work that through. We want this to work, and so if someone needs help in the business, we want to see businesses succeed, we want them to start and start safely. If they need someone to come through and literally do a walk through with them, we'll send out help to do that.

And then finally, our sector councils have been amazing. These advisory groups, we're going to keep that going through this phase one, but through all the phases and beyond, they're going to be crucial to us understanding what's working, what's not, what needs to be adjusted. We're going to be able to explain, you know, what's going on with the health situation and figure out if we have to make any adjustments. They're also going to help us figure out the long-term efforts to help small businesses and larger businesses come back strong. Again, no lack of confidence in our business community that they can take the skills they've always relied on and bring them to bear here and come back strong. But they need to know the city is going to be with them every step of the way and we will be.

Okay. So, I said the goal in each case is support, facilitate, educate, provide information, do those walkthroughs, but let's also talk about when that's not enough. If we see problems and they're not being addressed, we're going to go out more aggressively to resolve the problems. Now again, the goal here is not to find businesses, not to shut down businesses, but to educate and support businesses, but we got to get it right. If a business is having a consistent problem with health and safety, we're going to give them a chance to correct it, but we're not going to wait forever because it is about the health and safety of their employees and then ultimately all of us when it comes to stopping the spread of this disease department of buildings, they'll be out there for the construction industry. For other sectors, it will be our office of special enforcement and depending on the issue, sanitation department, department of consumer and worker protection, small business services, or it could rise up to something that involves the police department, Sheriff's office or the FDNY. So, what we will do is what we normally do, but modified for this crisis there'll be random inspections, there'll be agencies going out, checking on the businesses, looking for how things are going, but with a supportive attitude. I want to be clear about this. This is not gotcha, this is not something where we want to find a problem, we're not intending to give fines in the first instance. This is, hey, you got an issue here, let's fix this issue together and every employer who works with it, great, we will be supportive. If department buildings goes out to a construction site and workers are not wearing face coverings. They're going to say, let's get the face coverings on right now, and if they see it happening, there's no problem, we move on. If we don't see compliance, of course we reserve the right if we need to use fines, if we need to take even more aggressive actions we can. That's not what we want to do, we just want to solve problems. We just want to get these businesses up and running. We want to protect health and safety and we can do that together, the right way, that is absolutely the goal and I believe overwhelmingly that's going to be what will happen.

Okay, that's phase one. We're going to have a lot more to say on it, I assure you over the next days, because we're still not there yet. I believe all indicators suggest it'll be announced in the first or second week in June. All businesses are paying attention, they're hearing from the state, they're hearing from the city, they're seeing that this is all coming down to this, so they have time to get ready, but we're going to work very closely with them to make sure all the details get

worked out. But some of them will only get worked out once businesses are actually on the ground and open and that's okay. We know we'll work it through in practice, that's phase one.

Now, at the same time as we're getting ready to begin phase one, we're already looking ahead to the phases that will come thereafter. And one of the things I'm hearing the most from business leaders about is they're paying a lot of attention to what will happen with our schools because that will say so much to them about obviously how the city is doing in general, but also if their employees can depend on sending their kids back to school in September and that will tell them a lot about their business planning as well. We are doing work every single day and I've said it really clearly, it's going to be a plan A to reopen school as normal, but with lots of other alternative plans, depending on what the healthcare situation is, there'll be a plan B, C, D I assure you, we are adamant though we want to work with the hope that we can get as close to a normal school reopening as possible for September 10th. We had a great conversation last night with our education advisory council. Now this involves a lot of key stakeholders in our public schools, folks in the department education the unions who represent the people who do the work of education parent organizations, but also beyond our public schools, religious schools, private and independent schools. Higher education is represented by some of the leaders of the great higher education institutions in this city. We're all talking together about what it's going to take and many, many organizations as well that provides support for our kids and our youth in a variety of ways. Everyone thinking together, what do we got to do this summer to get kids ready? What we ought to do educationally, what do I do in terms of their health and their mental health, not just their physical health, their mental health. How do we hit the ground running in September? Incredibly good thinking going on and more scenarios than you could count that people are preparing for because we know it's the right thing to do for our kids to be ready and be ready to make quick moves depending on what happens with the healthcare situation. But I'm telling you, it's also going to be crucial to everything in restart everything in our economic recovery to get the school equation right. So that conversation keeps happening every day, and I'm so thankful to all the members of that advisory council are putting a lot of time and energy into helping us get it right and helping us figure out what will really work.

Okay, now we're thinking about where we move ahead or thinking about how we create a change for everyone in this city. And we're always thinking about the impact this crisis is having on the most vulnerable New Yorkers. So, we plan to help everyone, the planning is universal. At the same time, we know some people are bearing the brunt. We know some people are particularly vulnerable and certainly every day, but particularly in a crisis, homeless New Yorkers are vulnerable. So, let's talk about what we have learned about this new effort in the subway system, the nightly cleaning and the impact it has had on our ability to serve the homeless. We now have three full weeks of data, three full weeks of evidence, and it's pretty striking. So, I want to give you an update since the beginning of the nighttime cleaning shutdowns, we have had 1700 individuals except help 1,700 encounters that led to a homeless person accepting help. 506 unique individuals, so that means not multiple times, but people who specifically took help, 506 unique individuals, accepted placement and shelter for some period of time, 281 are still in shelter right now. Now again, for all of us who have worked on these issues for a long time, 281 people have come off the street and just the last three weeks and staying off the street is a remarkable number and that is a beginning of something much bigger as we seek to end permanent street homelessness in this city. Very importantly, another 432 accepted hospital care

to address medical situations, that's huge. So something in the midst of this crisis, in the midst of all the pain, all the challenges, something actually good has happened here where we're finding a new way to serve homeless New Yorkers and a lot of them are accepting the offer and hopefully are well on their way now to changing their lives and never living on the streets again.

Now, I talked about some of the most vulnerable among us, I'll tell you, and this is another issue I worked on for a long time. There's nothing more important to me than our children, this is what so much of the work of this administration has been about. And some kids deal with particularly tough circumstances, some kids have to deal with in their own homes, threats to them. And this is where our administration for children's services comes in and they do amazing work. And I want to highlight them today because they don't get enough attention, they don't get enough appreciation in any time. But I got to tell you how hard it has been for our ACS workers who go out there. Our child protective specialist, the folks who focus their lives on protecting the lives of kids and under very complex circumstances. Imagine what it takes to understand if a child is in danger in their own home and how to navigate that and how to protect that child. Very complex work, very trying, difficult work, and it's been made more difficult by the pandemic. People can't get out to homes the same way, and obviously home life has been disrupted and it's become very tense in many homes. We've got 3,000 child protective specialists at ACS, they do the Lord's work, they do amazing work. And thank you to all of you. Thank you to everyone at ACS because whatever your job is, ACS, it is about protecting and uplifting children. So, I want to thank everyone at the administration for children's services and a particular appreciation to those protective workers. This is an important time to take stock. May is national "Foster Care Month," it's a time to thank all of the folks who work in foster care as well; the caseworkers and the folks who choose to be foster care parents, really crucial role in our society. Everyone in this, everyone in this area is unsung. We don't talk about the incredibly important role that foster parents play in the lives they have saved and turned around. We don't talk about the workers who make it possible. We should more often because it's an area that really, really matters to a lot of kids who found themselves in a tough circumstance, but there are adults who are there to pick them up and help them move their lives forward. So, thank you to all.

Okay, it is time today to look at our indicators and thresholds and number one, the daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID- 19 - good number today – congratulations, New York City, we have to stay under 200 we're at only 59 today. So, we're showing some real consistency there. That means what you're doing is working. Daily, number two, daily number of people in our Health + Hospitals ICUs - so we want to get under 375 or 421. We're getting closer. You see that trend line, we are getting closer every day. We're very confident we can get to where we need to be, but we've got some more work to do. And then indicator number three, the percentage of the people tested citywide positive for COVID-19 the threshold is 15 percent. That we stay below 15 percent we can make it work, we can protect lives, we can keep the city moving. Here is a number that I am really happy to see – happens to be my personal favorite number – number six, and we have never been that low in these reports. This is a very good day, six percent positive and we're doing more and more testing. I told you about 27,000 tests per day and growing constantly. Here's the interesting thing a lot of folks have asked as you do more testing, do you expect the numbers to go up or down? To date as we do more and more and more testing basically the numbers are going down. The more New Yorkers we're reaching, the better picture we're getting at what's happening in the city; the fewer people were finding tests positive

as a percentage. That's a great sign for the future of the city. So, congratulations, really good news on that number – a very good day.

Okay, a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we turn to our colleagues in the media. Please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: We'll now begin our Q & A. As a reminder, we have also on the line Deputy Mayor Vicki Been, Dr. Barbot, Commissioner Steve Banks, President and CEO of the New York CDC, James Patchett and Commissioner Doris. First question today goes to Gloria from NY1.

Question: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Wanted to just ask if there is a specific date for this phase one that the city is looking at? I know you've said in the first, first or second week of June, but as businesses are looking at this and trying to prepare, is there a specific date that they should be planning on? My second question is about the budget. And about what you talked about yesterday in terms of the city's borrowing capability. And there from what I've reported on and my colleagues have reported on that's coming out of Albany, is that legislators are concerned about the idea of giving New York City what they describe as a blank check without any real oversight over how that money would be spent. What could you say at this moment you would be willing to do as a compromise? Is it a financial control board kind of situation so that there is some sort of oversight if you are indeed allowed this borrowing capability?

Mayor: Thank you, Gloria. So, let's just do the history first. In the days immediately after 9/11 the legislature convened, Mayor Giuliani at that point asked for a borrowing capacity to protect the city going forward and the legislature unanimously provided it straightforward with an understanding that the city was in crisis. The city needed that ability to keep providing basic services. There was no question about the importance of supporting New York City for the whole state and for all the people of this city. So that history is important because the city took that borrowing capacity, used it as needed, has successfully been repaying and obviously we've seen the city succeed coming out of that tragedy - succeed in an unprecedented manner. So what do we know about New York City pre coronavirus? We know that the city was at our all-time high unemployment. We know that we had driven down crime to a level we hadn't seen in since the 1950s. We know that New York City had become one of the great global economic capitals like never before; a great tech capital just in every way, shape or form New York City was on the right path. Much stronger fundamentals than even existed 20 years ago at the time of the tragedy of 9/11, but the city took that borrowing authority then, used it wisely, allowed it to come back strong. That's what I think can and should happen again now. Now that said, I always respect when there are concerns amongst legislators and I was a legislator myself so I've had good conversations yesterday with a Speaker Carl Heastie with Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and we're going to keep that dialogue going. I am very certain we'll come to something that makes sense for everyone, very, very positive productive conversations. So I'm not going to go into any details or projections. I'm going to tell you, I'm confident we will get to a good solution so that we have that option. Again, the other thing, Gloria, is we don't want to borrow.

We would only do it if we have to, but right now we have no guarantee of if, when, how there will be a federal stimulus to help cities and states. But we do have a guarantee; we have to pass the city budget by June 30 and I want to keep city services going. I want to speed this recovery. We need resources to do that. So I'm quite confident we will work something out.

On the restart, restart date – no – the answer is simply no, Gloria, we do not have a specific date. I think I've given people plenty of warning multiple times now for days and days you can expect it to be in the first or second week of June if the numbers continue to hold in most cases or progress. We've got one city, a threshold number we got to get below - I'm confident on that. We've got two numbers on the state indicators we got to get below - confident on that. We got to get there. Every business that's paying attention knows it's coming; get ready for it. And as I said, we're going to do all these types of outreach and provide a lot of support, but we're not going to tell people the day in advance. The day it happens is the day the numbers tell us we're there and then everyone would be authorized to move forward and we will all work together to get it done.

Moderator: The next is Juliet from 1010 Wins.

Question: Oh, hi. Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good morning all. So, so my question is this, regarding what you were just talking about, there are some small businesses that are planning to reopen today and some have already done so quietly. So, are the guidelines you're talking about today apply to them or is this the next phase and can you supply a timeline for small business?

Mayor: Yeah, look, Juliet, I know people are anxious. I know they're frustrated, but I really want to say I have been doing these briefings constantly; the Governor's been doing his briefings constantly. These guidelines really are clear from the state, the indicators, you know, we've got the state indicators, we've got the city indicators. I think it's been abundantly clear what's going on and the basic timeline we're working on. And no, businesses are not supposed to make up their own rules and jump the gun. It just, it's really clear. And I, you know what, if someone thinks that they are the people who get to make the rules for everyone else, I hate to inform them that's not how it works in a democracy. We are all in the middle of a pandemic; we're in the middle of a health crisis. The only way we have gotten things better is by all sticking together and following the rules and it's working as these numbers, excuse me, as these numbers show, it's working. So, no, I'm not into free agents. I'm not into people deciding that they get to make the rules and they can do something everyone else can't do. Any business that attempts to open that should not yet be open, we're going to go, we are going to tell them shut down right now; they shut down, they don't attempt to reopen -fine. If they attempt to stay open, if they ignore the instructions and we're talking about, you know, the city agencies could go out there I've talked about Small Business Services, Department Consumer Worker Protection, Buildings Department, but also obviously Sheriff's Office, Special Enforcement, and NYPD. If one of these agencies shows up and says, you need to shut down now, you're not working within the rules of the state and city and they ignore it, well that starts with a thousand dollar fine and we will keep escalating from there. You're just not allowed to be open unless you're allowed to be open. So, if you're an essential business, you're allowed to be open. When phase one is formally declared by the state and city, that's when the next group of businesses can open. It's abundantly clear who falls under those categories. Anyone who is not clear, pick up the phone call the state, or call the

city and we'll tell you. But it's pretty darn clear, I think looking at this information. So the bottom line is you don't get to jump the gun. And look, we're talking about phase one beginning in a week or two at this point. I don't think it's too much for people to be asked to wait until they get the all clear to do the thing that's safe, to do the thing that's healthy because these numbers, these are about human lives. These numbers tell us what will work and what won't. So, Juliet, that's the bottom line. If you follow the rules, you start in phase one; construction, manufacturing, wholesale and the kind of retail that's not been covered by essential, but again, with restrictions – pick up curbside pickup or in store pickup. Really straightforward – anyone who decides they're above the law, they will feel consequences.

Moderator: Next is Marcia from CBS.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. How are you doing today?

Mayor: Good morning, Marcia. How are you?

Question: I'm good. I'm good. I have actually two questions. The first one has to deal with childcare. Because of the COVID shutdowns, private daycare centers are in danger of closing for good. What kind of guidance and support has the city been giving these business owners so that they'll be able to open and help working families once a city reopens? And my second question has to do with your phase one reopening where you predict that there's going to be about 200,000 to 400,000 people now coming back to work. My question is, how will they get to work? Have you been working with the MTA to figure out a transportation plan or are you expecting them to take their own cars to get to work?

Mayor: Thank you, Marcia. Great questions. I want to say, in a pandemic, in a crisis, we're going to do what it takes to get through this immediate time in this city's history, these next few months as we restart, and that is not implication for what the future of the city it looks like. So, I say that for a reason. I know there's a lot of folks rightfully concerned about the future of mass transit in this city, we have to make the future of mass transit work. We are a mass transit city. We have to become more of a mass transit city in the future, but for the next few months, people are going to make their own choices. Some people are going to be comfortable mass transit, some are not. We just have to be honest and real about that. And you may see people use their cars more in the short term if they have a car or use for-hire vehicles for example. But that's a short-term reality. The long-term future of this city is with a devotion to more and more mass transit. The short-term reality is we are working with the MTA. To your question, Marcia, of course we'll work with the MTA. And it's really straightforward, the MTA's made great strides in terms of the cleaning of the trains and the buses – that's great. Now, we are seeing more and more frequency of service because they've gotten their personnel back – that's great. But we're still going to have to figure out how to limit the number of people in any specific subway car and any specific bus and we're working with them on what's it going to take to do that. So, that's the conversation happening right now as we anticipate phase one beginning. I think you're going to see a certain number of people who their only option is to take a subway or bus and they'll come back to it. But we still have to set the right limits to make sure that experience safe. We need social distancing. We need face coverings for folks in the subways and buses. We also, again, know there's some people who are just not going to be comfortable in the short-term. And I think

to some extent it will be a little bit of a natural sorting out a number of people will eventually come back to subways and buses, but they may not immediately. I think that's one of the things that will keep the ridership a little lower in the short term as we go through this transition. The second point about childcare, we absolutely need childcare to come back, it's necessary to a bigger restart. And yet, at the same time, we got to do this carefully because by its very definition, it's an activity where a lot of people come together. So, we're working on that right now. The City, obviously, directly subsidizes a whole range of childcare. We work very closely with the providers. We obviously [inaudible] right now support for essential workers in terms of childcare. We're going to be building out over time more and more childcare capacity, but that's going to be done with a health and safety focus. So, we'll have more to say on it as we go further. But in terms of childcare looking like it normally does, just like schools looking like they normally do, that's months away. But we are going to work with the childcare providers to make sure that they do make it through, because we're going to need them deeply as we go through the phases ahead.

Moderator: Next is Henry from Bloomberg.

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor. My question has to do with a bill that's going to be introduced in the Council today that would require the City to locate sites where restaurants could operate outside. So, this would require City workers to do all of this site scoping as opposed to the restaurateur coming to the City with an application that details of how they would operate and the City approving or denying the request. What is your view on this?

Mayor: I have not yet seen the legislation, Henry. Look, I think the City Council shares the same value I do. We're really interested in the notion of outdoors being part of the solution for restaurants and bars. I'm very hopeful – this is not a phase one thing. I'll say it as clear as a bell – phase one we talked about the four industries that are affected by phase one, it's not yet time for restaurants and bars. But we're going to be working constantly with that industry to see what makes sense and I'm hopeful the outdoors could be a big part of the solution. Whether it makes – to your question, which is a great one, whether it makes more sense for the City to delineate space or for the bar and restaurant owners to request space, that's one of the things we're talking through with the bar and restaurant owners. How do they want to do it? What do they need? And I've mentioned before, one of the things that keep coming up in the conversation is how much capacity they need to actually be viable. If you've got a socially distance and you need to run a business, you need a certain number of customers, how much space is that really going to take to get to a kind of break-even point or better? So, those are the conversations we're having right now. We'll certainly work with the Council to sort out what the right approach is. But I want to first and foremost hear what the restaurant and bar owners think will work for them.

Moderator: The next is Julia from the Post.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor, and to everyone else on the call. Two follow-up questions – the first on businesses reopening. We did two back-to-back stories about several businesses in Borough Park that opened. City Hall sent the sheriffs to shut them down. 12 hours later, they were back up and running again. So, just wondering what the situation is there. Have you been issued any fines? And then secondly, I'm wondering why you aren't encouraging

people to take mass transit more as you normally would. It seems to give the impression that there's a far greater risk when people go back to work during the pandemic.

Mayor: Well, look, on the second question, Julia. No, I don't agree with that. I don't think it gives that impression in the least. I think first I'm talking to people all day long about what they're experiencing, what they're thinking, and what's quite clear is some people are comfortable going back to mass transit and others are not and that's fine, that's normal. And we've heard from the essential workers even before this that they wanted to see improvements in mass transit. They want to see it cleaner, they wanted to see a more social distancing. They had seen some instances of crowding. We've been working with the MTA on all of this and I think the deep cleaning, the nighttime cleaning's a good example of a smart move. We've got to figure out now as you start to add more and more people to mass transit, how to ensure social distancing and face coverings, which become even more important as more people start to join the system again. Again, the good news is one absolute fixed piece of this equation is we are seeing more and more of the MTA workers come back and more and more service can be provided now. But one, I'm just listening to people and some are ready, some are not; two, I'm not telling people, you know, let's go rushing ahead with something if we don't have all the facts yet. I want to make sure that we have a plan with the MTA to guarantee what's the right number of people we can accommodate in the subway system, in the buses at this point as we go into a major new phase. So, that's something we're working on right now. But I have confidence it's going to sort out in the short term because, first of all, a lot of people are not yet going to come back to work, they'll work from home if they can, even in phase one. Second, you're going to see a certain number of people not yet ready to go on mass transit. I'm confident we can make the pieces fit, but no message is mass transit is our future. But I want to get it right in this first phase. How much ridership we can handle safely?

On the question of Borough Park. No, it's quite clear. We've got nine businesses – as my notes here say, I want to confirm this, but the sheriff department's been working on this – the sheriff's office. Nine businesses shut down in the last 48 hours. If there is repeat offenses – so, when I say shutdown, they were told they could not be open, they stopped operation. If any of them are found in operation again that begins with a \$1,000 daily fine. If they're found in violation, again, there's another fine and it keeps escalating from there. So, I don't have any examples of a business that was shut down by the City government and then attempted to reopen. If they do, they're going to get fined. And then if they keep doing it, worse. It is idiotic to try and open a business today that will be legally allowed to open in as little as a week or two. Hey, how about waiting till it's legal and safe and then you can do it the right way. If you don't, you're going to suffer this kind of consequences. It makes no sense.

Moderator: Next is Erin from Politico.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Two questions, first one is about the budget. I have not heard you call for taxes on millionaire, taxes on the rich, mansion tax like you have advocated in the past when you're talking about now borrowing and-or federal stimulus. Is that still something you support or do you think that the current situation, you know, has changed the dynamic and made it more of a concern about the possibility of rich people leaving? Second question, to follow up on Marcia's question, I understand you're talking to the MTA. I understand, you know, obviously

people are individuals, they make their own choices, but is there any kind of plan for how many people can safely be on the subway? Is there an estimate of that? You know, London puts it at 15 percent. Do we have any kind of number? And for those who can't safely be on the subway and don't have their own car, what is the guidance to them? What are they supposed to do? Is there any plan to use city streets to somehow make another transportation option?

Mayor: Yeah, Erin, great question. On that, we are working with MTA to determine what exactly is the right amount of capacity that can be handled safely. That is absolutely the crucial issue here. When you think about you want to maintain social distancing, what is that number? And, again, against the good backdrop of more and more service being available. So, what's that number? How do we help facilitate, keeping it to that number on any given a subway car, any given bus? What's it going to take to make sure that that happens consistently? That's the conversation going on right now. And we will keep working on that. There's a meeting this morning with Pat Foye to talk about how the MTA and the City can coordinate to achieve that goal. So, absolutely, we're thinking in that direction and trying to figure out the best way to put it into action.

On the question of taxes on the wealthy. Erin, this is not going to shock you, my basic view has never changed and will not change. Wealthy people in this country do not pay their fair share in taxes. I'll say it again, wealthy people in this country do not pay their fair share in taxes. You'll notice in all the discussion of stimulus, the thing that you might have thought the House and Senate would do first, which would be to rescind the giveaways to the wealthy and corporations in the 2017 tax bill. Obviously, they're not moving to do that. So, we've got to be honest. This crisis has brought up immense disparities, not just the health care disparities, not just the racial disparities, but the class disparities as well. The rich keep getting richer even in the midst of this crisis. So, I absolutely believe this is a fair time to talk about higher taxes on the wealthy. I don't see a context for getting it done immediately in Washington or in Albany, but I don't think this topic goes away because we're in the middle of a crisis.

Moderator: Next is Michael Garland from the Daily News.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, how are you doing?

Mayor: Good, Michael. How are you?

Question: I'm good. Couple of questions on the debt. What is the plan to pay back that additional debt the City's seeking? And have you had any conversations with the Cuomo administration about any restrictions they might want to put on that debt, if that happens?

Mayor: Michael, if you're talking about long term borrowing, and again, the history is really clear. We have an exact historical template to work from, almost 20 years ago Mayor Giuliani sought from Albany the approval of long-term borrowing. He got it, Mayor Bloomberg implemented it. And that debt was paid off steadily and is a good example of something that was fiscally responsible but helped us as a city to keep moving forward. And the proof is in the pudding. The City's recovery after 9/11, the City's strength in recent years, the strength of our economy before the coronavirus. There's not a doubt in my mind. And by the way, you know,

Giuliani, a Republican, Bloomberg and Independent for most of his time as mayor or Republican, and me as a Democrat, all three of us would agree that borrowing was a good idea after 9/11, it worked exactly as planned. It helped put the City on strong footing to go forward. Here we are again in a situation absolutely unprecedented, even broader in its impact, longer term, in its impact than the horror of 9/11. This can only be compared to the Great Depression in terms of economic impact.

Borrowing capacity makes sense as a last resort. It's long-term borrowing, so it is paid back carefully, slowly over time. We would only use that which we need. We've had again, very productive conversations with the Legislature. We've certainly been talking to the Governor's team, we'll keep talking to them. But I want to establish really clearly that in a world in which we cannot yet depend on a federal stimulus, we have no idea – again, I talked to Senator Schumer about this earlier in the week. There is no vote scheduled in the US Senate and I know he's not happy about that. I'm not happy about that. President Trump is not pushing the Senate. Leader McConnell is not acting. We have a budget deadline. We must have a new budget by law by June 30.

So, we have literally zero guarantee about if, how, when there will be a federal stimulus, how much it would be. We are in fact seeing our loss revenue grow now at \$9 billion between the current fiscal year and next and growing. What are we supposed to do with that kind of impact? If stimulus is far from guaranteed. State government has already made cuts, will likely make more, a lot more, if there's no stimulus. What do you do if you don't have the option of some amount of borrowing? You have to do massive cuts, massive cuts to all City agencies. That will undermine any possibility of the right kind of restart and recovery. So, borrowing the right way. It makes sense. I believe we will get there with all the stakeholders in Albany.

Moderator: The next is Sydney from the Staten Island Advance.

Question: Mr. Mayor, I wanted to know what is your message to Staten Island Republicans who are rallying around the idea of opening Staten Island before the rest of the city? And also calling to reopen specifically small businesses that might not be in phase one reopening industries? If Staten Island hospitals hit the State and City's reopening goals before the rest of the city, why would you not allow Staten Island or any borough that hit those metrics before the rest of the city to reopen before other parts of New York City?

Mayor: We are one city, Sydney. This is about health and safety and this is about a very careful plan, the State put together, the City put together to save lives. The results speak for themselves. We asked a lot of everyone. I was one of the first leaders in this country to call for shelter-in-place. I'm glad I did. Everything we've done with shelter-in-place, with social distancing, with face coverings, with the restrictions we put on business has helped us to get to the point where we can have a safe restart and sustain it. Anyone who wants to be reckless with this restart as some places in this country, unfortunately have done, will be paid back potentially and tragically if they see a resurgence of this disease. Which then will set us back much, much farther and endanger lives. So we're one city, we have our standards, the State is working with us. They see the wholeness of New York City. This is how we're doing it. These are democratically elected governments. People don't get to make their own laws. They just don't. So, this is the way it

happens, especially in a crisis. And we're not asking people to wait long for those in phase one. And then here's the other point -- the better we do at phase one, the smarter we are about sticking to the rules, the faster we get to phase two. Phase two does not need to be a long time away if we do this right. So people need to hang tough so we can protect lives and reopen the right way.

Moderator: We have time for two more today. The next is Kathleen from Patch.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor, thank you for taking my question today. My first question is about the subways. Are you talking about reserved seating on the subways? And is there any way to implement that in time for phase one? And my other question is about the situation in Central Park. There's been a lot of calls for legislation to make it a hate crime to call 9-1-1 on law abiding New Yorkers of color. I'm wondering what your stance is on that?

Mayor: I was just appalled by that video. It was literally an effort to criminalize being a black man in America. That's what I saw. It was appalling. When she called 9-1-1 and described an innocent man as if it was an indictment to call him an African American male. It was just, it was heartbreaking. And it just says how much more we got to do to fix things in this city, in this country, that anyone could even think that way. So, it was hateful. There's no question about that. We have very strong hate crimes laws now. I think we're in good, strong shape there. I think there's a very valid question about calling the police for any false claim of a crime. And I don't know the law on that, Kathleen, but that's the direction I would look at. Did she commit an offense by falsely accusing someone? That to me is the thing we need to better ascertain. But it was a disgusting incident. And I would say if the current laws cover that appropriately, great. If they don't cover it appropriately, then I think the notion of creating a new category would make sense.

On the question of reserved seating, look, we're going to talk to the MTA about what they think will make sense. It's their railroad, if you will. I respect greatly Pat Foye, worked with him over many years. The conversation today is going to be about what will work, what makes sense. It's health and safety first. Let's just be clear about that. Kathleen. It's health and safety first. We have got to figure a way to keep those cars, subway cars from being overcrowded. The buses from being overcrowded, what will work? They have to actually run the operation. We want to know what will work for them, how we can support it, how we can work together to get out one message and then make it stick. And if we need to do some enforcement to do that. But I don't want to speculate on something like reserved seating. I don't know if they believe that will work, but we need something. We need something that will limit the number of people that get into each car and into each bus. That's the bottom line.

Moderator: Last question for today, Jake Offenhartz from Gothamist.

Question: Hey, good morning Mr. Mayor. My question is about New York City's contact tracing program. We've heard from some workers who were initially hired remotely who are now being asked to go into the field, or told that their jobs have been put on hold. What accounts for the shift? And of these 1,700 contact tracers you've mentioned, how many are remote workers and how many –

Mayor: Jake? Wait, I couldn't hear part of your question. You said something about being put on hold? Could you please clarify?

Question: Yeah. So, some of the people who were onboarded and went through the training are now being told that their jobs are on hold. There seems to be a little bit of chaos in this hiring process. So, I'm wondering if you're aware of that? You know, was there a shift at some point where they realized more workers needed to be in the field then were hiring remotely?

Mayor: Jake, respectfully I don't like when someone talks to a one person or a couple of people, assumes that as the truth about a larger initiative and then says there seems to be chaos. I have no indication of anything like that. They've got 1,700 people ready to go for June 1st. That's absolutely remarkable. So, let's just be real about that. This has been an unprecedented effort to put together a huge, huge team, get them trained, with a great supportive of Johns Hopkins University and Bloomberg Philanthropies. Get them trained very quickly and get them out there to make an impact. I don't know if there's some individuals who were originally going to be hired and for some specific reason, they won't be. Or if there's any other individual matter that that points up. If you give the details, you don't have to give the name, but if you give the details to our team, we'll certainly get you an answer on the individual situation.

But what is clear is as we've been building this rapidly, trying to figure out what's going to be most effective. Some things can be done by phone. I talked about it the other day as did Ted Long when we were going through the details of how this worked. There's going to be work out in the field as well. There will be contact tracers who go out directly to homes to talk to people. So, it is going to be a mix of by phone and directly in person. That's what we are doing as we're seeing what's going to work. That's how the plan is being built. So, I am always keeping an eye on it. But what I'm seeing is something coming together really, really quickly and effectively that we are going to need to be the core of how we fight back this disease on top of everything we're asking people to do. Remember the number one way to fight back is all the basic hygiene, you know, the shelter-in-place, this social distancing, the face coverings and New Yorkers are doing that. But the X-factor here as we start to reopen is that strong test and trace effort. And it's going to hit the ground running in a very, very big way. And from everything I'm seeing, it's ready to make a huge impact in this city.

All right, everyone, look, I'll conclude with the simplest point, you have earned your way to the gateway to phase one. We're not there until the day we declare it, but we are damn close. And that's because of you. That's because of the work you've done. And then once phase one begins, as I said, several hundred thousand people come back to work, that's going to be very good for the people to see. That's going to be very good for those individuals and their families. And then let's make that successful. And you get to phase two and so on and so on. Everything is about doing what we've done the right way, sticking to it. But I want people to understand, you literally get to see the fruits of your labors. There's a lot of times in life where your work and your work and your work, and you don't see the result, and it's really painful. This ain't one of them. This is one where you've done the right thing and now you see things moving. And if we stick to it, you're going to get to see life start on its way back to a better reality real soon in this city. So, keep doing what you're doing. Thanks so much, everyone.

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