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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning, everybody. We're at a moment in history in this city, in this nation, where change is not optional, change must come. There are a lot of people, I understand anyone who feels cynical, anyone who feels that they can't believe that things will happen or happen quickly. But my message today is, I don't think we, any one of us, have the option of assuming what can't happen. We have to make things happen, and that's what this city is capable of, that's what we have shown time and again. It is a moment that demands change. It is required of us. We have it within our grasp. Look, there's a lot of pain. There's a lot of anguish. There's a lot of fear. There's a lot of confusion. I understand that all those things may make people feel hopeless, but I've also seen all of those feelings, all of those challenges turn into action. I've seen it. I've seen it happen in our time in this city, and now it is happening again.

Yesterday, a very powerful announcement by the NYPD. Yesterday, an announcement that the decision to end the work of the plain clothes unit and change to a more modern community-based approach. Yesterday, a decision that said we keep learning lessons. We keep hearing voices of the community. We keep hearing voices from the young people who are our future, like those young people I've met in Southeast Queens on Saturday who understand their value, and they want the world around them to see their value too. They want to be respected. They want to be heard. Everyone needs safety. That is a foundation for all of us, but safety has to be done with the people of our neighborhoods. So, the decision, really crucial decision to disband that unit and move us forward. Deepening neighborhood policing, deepening the connection and the communication between our police and the people of our communities. That is a signature day for the city, that change can happen.

When I was in Southeast Queens, I heard those voices of young people. I saw the powerful work of the Crisis Management System. I saw what people were doing in the Cure Violence movement. Community people solving community problems, people stopping violence before it happened, uplifting young people, rather than denigrating them. I heard from young people how often they felt they were not seen by our society by our government, by our police. They weren't given their value. I heard the trauma that they lived with. It was very painful, but I also heard strong voices, strong voices filled with potential. And I realized that there are so many things that we can do to reach an uplift these young people, whether it's the kind of approach we've announced continuing to deepen our commitment, the Crisis Management System and the Cure Violence movement, or whether it's changing the way we police to engage communities more deeply and recognize that true safety comes from working from the grassroots up. Look, I believe in change because I've seen it with my own eyes. So, to everyone out there who doubts it, I tell you over and over again, I have seen the difference of neighborhood policing versus what

we had before, which was aggressive and punitive and arrest oriented. I've seen the difference of not choosing to arrest. What it means that 180,000 fewer people were arrested in 2019 compared to 2013. I've seen the difference of ending broken policies like stop and frisk and engaging people instead in a real dialogue, I've seen what it means to decarcerate, to have now the lowest jail population since World War II in the city of New York. The lowest rates of incarceration of any big city in America. All of these things are example of real change that the people demanded and that was achieved. What we've seen just in the last week, the extraordinary actions by the State Legislature to end the 50-a law that withheld the kind of transparency we needed to give people trust in policing the actions. We have taken that commitment to shift funding, and we're going to do that in the next two weeks in our budget, shifting funding from the NYPD to youth services, to social services, to the things that actually go at the root cause of so many of the problems. The fact that we're going to change the reality of some of the roles we give the NYPD. We said, we're going to get the NYPD out of enforcement of street running. We're going to find other ways to modify the work and other new approaches such as ending the work of that anti-crime unit and focusing the attentions elsewhere. And, of course, the commitment to the Cure Violence movement, the Crisis Management System, the grassroots solutions.

Look, government is used to telling people what to do. Government is used to top-down. Government is used to thinking that the answers reside in office buildings in Manhattan, rather than the streets of Southeast Queens. I'm here to tell you the actual answers reside among the people, and that's where we will put our energy, and that's where we will put our resources. And change must come in everything we do, and today I announce another step forward. Another step for transparency. Another step that will help to build trust between the people and the NYPD. Another step toward a more accountable system. Look, we recognize the power of body worn cameras, but body worn cameras are only as powerful as the transparency that comes with them. After we retrained all our police officers early on in this administration, after we focused on neighborhood policing and de-escalation, we then focused on the power of transparency with body worn cameras. We've spread them out, 24,000 now in our police force. By far the biggest body worn camera initiative in the country, but it only works if people see accountability, see results from the presence of those cameras. We have to get to the day where people see the police officer there to protect them and have faith. The faith has to be mutual. It has to be that everyone understands there is a responsibility to each other, but accountability and transparency are what bond that together. It may seem utopian, but as I was there in Southeast Queens on Saturday, listening to those young people, I thought we can get to a day where a young man, like the good young man you saw pictured in the image earlier, can talk to me about being respected by police officers and understood, not feeling fearful or devalued. That is a day we can reach. That is a day that's in all of our interests. That's a day when everyone in the society counts, and to do that, we need more transparency and more accountability.

So, today, we announced a new policy related to the disclosure of body worn camera footage. Previously disclosure had been solely at the discretion of the commissioner and for very narrow purposes, the new policy effective immediately, all video and audio footage of incidents must be released within 30 days. If they meet one of the three criteria I'll name now. When an officer discharges their firearm that hit someone or could hit someone. When an officer discharged the taser in a way that results in the death or of an individual or substantial bodily harm. And when an officer's use of force results in death or great bodily harm. In those cases, the obligation will

be for the NYPD to release all pertinent video and audio footage within 30 days. And I want everyone to understand that this is a good thing for everyone involved. We hope to never have these kinds of incidents to have to release this footage on obviously, or very, very rarely in the case of when an officer needs to use their weapon. And gun discharges have gone down steadily. And that's important to recognize, even as there's anger and pain, that retraining and de-escalation a different approach to neighborhood policing has correlated with a great decrease in gun discharges and adversarial situations, and we want to see that constantly go down. But when one of these three criteria is met. It is crucial that the information comes out promptly and that people have faith it will come out, and will come out objectively. That creates trust. That creates accountability. That says to the many, many good officers that they know the whole truth will come out from what they saw from their literal perspective. And it says to any officer who doesn't yet fully understand their responsibilities, that they will be held accountable and there will be consequences. The footage will be made available online for the public. First will be shown to family members involved, but ultimately to the public as a whole. And when people see this kind of transparency, it will build trust, and it's one step it's another step. Yesterday, it was a step, today is another step, there is much more to come in the weeks ahead.

Now, I don't think we've ever had a time like this in our city's history where so many things were being confronted simultaneously of such intense importance. But the answer in every case is to believe in this city and our people and what we can achieve together. So, just like we are making change right now, and we'll make more change when it comes to policing, we will hear the voices of people who demand that change, we will act on it, we are, and we will more. We also recognize that the fight against the coronavirus depends on every single New Yorker. We are deep, deep in this battle, and I've said many times, my deep appreciation to all of you for what you've done to help move us forward and we continue to move forward. But the fact that we've come so far should never allow us to become complacent or to feel for a moment that can't be a resurgence because we know there can be, we have seen such troubling reality in other cities and States that somehow took their guard down or move too quickly, we have that very much in our mind. And so, we're going to stay focused, we're going to stay focused on social distancing on face coverings on all of the things that have worked. And we now have a whole new reality with our Test and Trace Corp – this is something we talked about back in April – we said it would be built in May and in June it has come alive and come alive on a huge, huge scale. In a moment you're going to hear from Dr. Ted Long and his team at Test and Trace are doing an amazing job building out this capacity rapidly in a way we've never seen before in this city's history. Testing has finally starting to reach the kind of numbers we want to see, not our perfect numbers, but a hell of a lot more than we had before. The City of New York alone is now sponsoring about 20,000 tests a day, when you add in all the other providers were over 30,000, we now can predict that we will be at 50,000 tests per day by early July and just a month. Way ahead of schedule, and that's such powerful news. 50,000 people per day will be tested by the beginning of July, that is a third of a million people a week. It's an extraordinary step forward. Our tracer core now tracking approximately 4,300 cases just in the last days that they've been up and running. In this summer, they will be building out to the potential to monitor a quarter million New Yorkers. That is the level we're going to reach, a quarter million people who will need help and support to help them through this disease, to keep all the rest of us safe as well.

Now, to remind everyone that anyone who needs a test or anyone who is symptomatic and needs help, or anyone who needs to get that opportunity to safely separate, whether it's hotel or staying at home with a lot of support, there's a number you can call if you need that help and support. And it's 844-4NYC, 844-4NYC. That number has received over a hundred thousand calls from New Yorkers, seeking health advice from a clinician, it's been a huge success. That's the number to call when you need to figure out what to do, if you've tested positive or you're symptomatic, and you want to make sure you don't spread the disease to your family or anyone else call that number and help will be available to you immediately.

So, with these new tools, I have confidence in our ability to keep fighting back this virus. We're all in it together to say the least, but we have now what we need to keep this fight going and here to tell you more of the details, the executive director of Test and Trace Corps, Dr. Ted Long.

**Executive Director Dr. Ted Long, Test and Trace Corps:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor, the mission of the Test and Trace Corp, is to prevent the spread of the coronavirus across New York City. Now, this starts with identifying cases or people newly diagnosed with coronavirus. We then ask them to identify contacts or people that cases may have exposed to the coronavirus since starting the Test and Trace corp. program on June 1st, just two weeks ago, we've identified more than 5,000 cases or people newly diagnosed with the coronavirus. Of those 15 percent, we had challenge, we didn't have a phone number for them. However, for everybody that we did have a phone number for all of those cases, we have now reached 94 percent of them of that 94 percent that we've reached more than 1,800 of these cases have shared with us contacts or people they may have exposed to the coronavirus. That's yielded us a list of more than 4,000 contacts across New York City. Now we had the same challenge with that list of 4,000 contacts where 36 percent of them, we didn't have a phone number for yet. However, for those that we did have a phone number for we've reached more than 80 percent of them. And of that more than 80 percent, there was a subset more than 300 people that when we were talking to them on the phone, they shared with us that they were actively symptomatic and likely contagious with the coronavirus. In that moment, we were able to get them to isolate or quarantine to keep their families and their neighbors safe, and we were able to get them all of the resources that they needed to get through this. To date, since the program went live on June 1st, as the mayor said, we've monitored more than 4,200 New Yorkers, that's 65 percent of all of our cases and contacts put together. Of that, 65 percent of our cases in contact, more than a thousand of them, when we were talking to them on the phone, told us they needed help. That help was in the form of food delivery, help with their medications. And for each of them, we've paired them up with a resource navigator and we've given them the help that they need to get their families and their neighbors through this. In addition to that, 40 New Yorkers have arrived at our hotels after telling us that they couldn't safely separate home and they needed even more help. And we with open arms have brought them to our hotels.

Now, how are we going to close the gap for getting the phone numbers and contact information for the for the cases and contacts where we don't currently have it three key ways. First, we're using databases like the Thomson Reuters database that collect phone numbers now, we've already started to do that, it's effective. Second, our team is calling the doctor's offices that ordered the test because they have their patient's phone numbers. And then we're calling our cases in contacts, based on those phone numbers. Third, yesterday, we went live with training, a

new type of tracer, this is a community engagement specialist, and these tracers are the ones that go into our communities, track people down, knock on doors and enroll them in the program. So, I'm going to say one more thing today, and this is very important. One of the key reasons why our program has been so successful so early on is that more than half of all of our tracers, all of our 3000 working tracers are people from our hardest hit communities across New York City, making this a local effort with New Yorkers in our communities, serving our communities. I'm pleased to announce today that we're awarding \$4 million to community-based organizations to join us in the fight against the coronavirus and to drive this work forward together. Thank you.

**Mayor:** Thank you so much, Ted. And congratulations to you and your team, really extraordinary work. And everyone, this work has been done about two weeks, the last two weeks of getting this effort up and running on a vast scale, connecting with all those people, building out constantly, absolutely impressive work, and a lot more to come, as you heard. Let me talk about the daily indicator's indicator, number one, daily numbers, admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19 that threshold is 200 patients and today's report 52. Indicator number two daily number of people in health and hospitals, ICU threshold of 375, today's report 334 and indicator number three, number of people tested citywide or positive for COVID-19 threshold of 15 percent today, an excellent number – two percent. That is the kind of number of we are so proud of, cause that all indicates what you have done and what hard work every New Yorker has put themselves to, to get to this point. So again, congratulations, these are the kind of indicators we want to see more and more of as we get closer and closer to phase two, these are the kind of results that are going to get us there, and beyond

A few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

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

**Moderator:** Hi, all just a reminder that we have Executive Director of the Test and Trace Corp, Dr. Long here in person and on the phone, we have Small Business Commissioner Doris and Senior Advisor Dr. Varma. With that, I will start with Rich Lamb from WCBS 880.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, good morning.

**Mayor:** Hey Rich, how are you doing?

**Question:** Okay, Mr. Mayor, the disbanding of the anti-crime unit in the NYPD is that something that's a permanent thing or would it be reversed if you saw any change that, that would make you do that? Is it changeable or is that it?

**Mayor:** It's permanent, Rich. It's a decision – look, Commissioner Shea and I have talked for a long time, literally for six and a half years about all the changes needed in this department and we've been steadily implementing them and what we find is that these reforms work, they help us fight crime in a better way and they bring community and police closer together. So, this is a

permanent change. The personnel will be using new and different ways to fight crime more effectively and in a way that creates a better relationship with the community and that's the way forward for this city and for the NYPD.

Do you have a follow-up?

**Question:** I don't, but so – I'm good, actually.

**Mayor:** Okay, thanks Rich.

**Moderator:** Next we have Dana from the New York Times.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor two questions for you. First, one of my colleagues recently submitted a FOIL request to the Department of Health and was told in response that it may neither be physically nor technologically possible to comply with FOIL law at this time. Are some of your agencies effectively suspending FOIL law right now thanks to coronavirus?

**Mayor:** I have never heard that Dana, and that doesn't make sense to me. It would not shock me if there were some delays just because of so much going on and so much complexity of what people are facing in each agency, but no, of course we have to abide by the law. If you'll get the details to our team here at City Hall, we'll follow up and we'll get that rectified.

**Question:** Thank you, and my second question, you made two sort of major NYPD-related announcements today, but Commissioner Shea wasn't here and I don't think he's appeared with you since all of those rumors about him stepping down. How would you describe the state of your relationship?

**Mayor:** Our relationship is fine. It's been a great relationship from the beginning and this is someone I know very, very well. I'm trying to constantly give people an understanding of what it means to serve shoulder to shoulder with someone for six and a half years. From the very beginning of my time as mayor I've been working closely with Dermot Shea. The announcement he made yesterday is a very, very meaningful one and that is an announcement made by someone who truly believes in reform and truly believes we have to do things differently. What he has said about re-orienting the NYPD towards youth is profoundly important. I don't think it's gotten the attention it deserved and we're going to put it into action. I also commend him for the action yesterday releasing a video that was not in the public domain and acting on that video with a decision to suspend an officer who did something that didn't conform with our values. So, I have a lot of respect him, a lot of faith in him, and, you know, I'm very convinced that Commissioner Shea is going to keep moving an aggressive agenda of reform and help move the city forward.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Gloria from NY1.

**Question:** Hi, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I kind of wanted to follow up on Dana's question. You have made two pretty significant announcements regarding police and in the last couple of days. I had asked you this a couple of days ago, and I want to see where you are at because as this conversation moves around the country, several other departments have already announced that

they are taking certain enforcement duties out of the hands of police officers. I'm talking about responding to calls regarding someone who might be intoxicated or mental distress, a homeless person; I know that that's been in the discussion here in the City for years, but it's never really moved anywhere. Are you any closer to making a decision on that?

**Mayor:** Gloria, we're looking at the whole picture honestly and the announcements that you've seen in recent days; the decision to take resources of the NYPD and move it to youth and social services, the decision to take the NYPD out of vendor enforcement, the decision to disband the Street Crime Unit, the decision now – today – to publish proactively body camera footage, this is all a part of a series of changes you're going to see.

Now, the issue of the right focus for the NYPD going forward, obviously you can see changes already just in the decision on vendors and decision on the Anti-crime Unit. We're going to be in a real conversation with the City Council on a number of these options and ultimately I am working with NYPD to determine what that balance point is that keeps us safe and moves reform at the same time and that is what we'll address over the next two weeks. There'll be very much connected to the budget discussions. So, we'll have more to say over the next two weeks.

**Question:** Yes, I have a second question on a different topic. We have several reports yesterday and this morning where parents have shown up to playgrounds to cut the locks on them. These are specifically in Williamsburg and in other areas of Brooklyn. You've gotten questions about this in the past where there's some frustration that playgrounds are not opening up yet; they say they they're going against your orders and, and cutting these locks open. So your reaction to that, and is the city just going to show up and close them again? Are you going to have to clean them up? What's the process here?

**Mayor:** Yeah, we're not going to allow people to take the law into their own hands - it just doesn't work. So, people are not allowed to open up a playground that's not yet available to the public - it's for a reason. Look, I was very sympathetic in the beginning to every parent - as a parent myself - why people wanted to be on those playgrounds. We tried to make it work; it wasn't working effectively. Right now, we're not going to make a change with the playgrounds until we get to phase two. Now, phase two as everyone knows, could be as early as June 22nd. I've said, I think it's going to take a little longer than that just to make sure we're absolutely certain, but until the order is given the playgrounds are open; people need to stay off the playgrounds, it's not appropriate to take their own action. We're doing this so that we can get to phase two and beyond. So, I understand people's frustrations, but if folks act prematurely and that causes the disease to start spreading again, then that's the kind of thing that will undermine our ability to get to phase two and stay in phase two. So, I know it's not easy, but people have to understand there's a reason for these rules; it's to help us move forward.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Henry from Bloomberg.

**Question:** Hello, Mr. Mayor, how are you feeling today?

**Mayor:** Thank you, Henry. Feeling better.

**Question:** That's good. I wanted to get back to this, some of these issues raised by police in the last few days. Last night, there was an allegation that some police officers were poisoned at a Shake Shack. They – the unions broadcast this on Twitter all night, turned out to be untrue and false. So, they basically defamed this restaurant chain and acted irresponsibly and I'm just wondering whether there are consequences for that? What does this say about the responsibility of union leadership to be doing this on top of that today the SBA is re-tweeting a John Sessions remark in favor of Confederate, you know, preserving Confederate monuments. At what point do you feel that there's a real conflict between your values, your goals, and the union that's representing the rank and file?

**Mayor:** Look, the SBA leadership has engaged in racist activities so many times I can't even count it and anyone who is tweeting in favor of Confederate monuments is supporting the structural racist history of this country. I'm just sick of it. I've been sick of it for years. I've been fighting with these unions from day-one. I am fighting with them today. And I don't like to be fighting with any labor union, Henry. I believe in the labor movement, but what I've seen from the SBA in particular, and too often from the PBA, is efforts to divide us, to hold us back, to create all sorts of negativity to, to push back progress, to undermine efforts at unity, it's there. Absolutely, it's literally anti-social what these union leaders do. They try to undermine efforts to bond police and community. They try to undermine progress.

They, for years, were able to do that in this City. For decades, they stopped the creation of the Civilian Complaint Review Board. Very proud to say I was in this building in 1992 when Mayor Dinkins and the City Council overcame that opposition and created this Civilian Complaint Review Board. The reality in Albany, for decades they stopped change to any of the laws that would give us transparency, like the changes we just received finally from the legislature on 50-a. These police union leaders, not all of them, but too many of them stand in the way of progress. So, to your question, Henry, I think it's time for a full review of when their actions reach beyond freedom of speech or the right to represent one's members, which are absolutely appropriate activities, and do things that are counterproductive to the safety of New Yorkers. And in the end, this example last night is a good one. I would think the unions would trust the NYPD to find the truth, and I thank Chief Harrison for so rapidly getting the truth out. But these union leaders don't want the truth. They just want to sow division and we have to figure out what the limits are on their right to do that.

**Moderator:** Henry, do you have a follow-up?

**Question:** Well, I do have a follow up and it's sort of on the other side of this, which is the disbandment of the anti-crime units. You know, these are units that are sort of ingrained in the culture of the NYPD and a lot of cops aspire to be in these units. So, a lot of these cops have made a lot of collars, they're heroes in the department, and their – do you worry that somehow you are separating yourself so far from the traditions and culture of the police department that you may have a lot of difficulty in leading it in the direction that you want to go?

**Mayor:** No. It's a great question, Henry, I don't want to underestimate the question. The NYPD has to change. The NYPD has changed a lot. It has to change a lot more. I've chosen leaders in the NYPD who I believed could foster change, who had the absolute legitimacy among the men



and of the NYPD to be agents of change, who had the ability to keep us safe, but also move a reform agenda. And I think all three of my Commissioners have done that. They have shown the people of this city that their obligation was first to the people to foster change, and they've shown the men and women who work in a tradition that has some very, very noble aspects and some very troubling aspects that change had to come and it could come, it would come and it would still result in a safer city.

So, no, the anti-crime unit does not make sense in today's day and age and I think Commissioner Shea said powerfully that this is about being in the 21st century, both in the fact that we have better ways of policing. We have better ways of precisely going at where criminals are and not causing so many problems for innocent people, and that was what we learned, of course, with getting rid of the stop and frisk, that we have technology we've never had, we have strategies we never have, but we also have an understanding we never had. The history of American policing is deeply troubled and that history has to be overcome. It's not going to be overcome by sticking to traditions that didn't work. So I'm very confident that this new approach will keep us safe, but take a major step away from the division that was caused by overly aggressive policing in the past.

**Moderator:** Next we have Juliet from 1010 WINS.

**Question:** Hi, good morning, Mr. Mayor, how are you today?

**Mayor:** I'm good, Juliet. How are you?

**Question:** Great, I'm fine. Thank you. So, my first question is actually an email from a listener. I'm going to read it to you. It says, I'm a commercial landlord and three of my largest tenants are daycare centers. They've been closed for three months and have been given no indication of when they'll be allowed to open. They have no income, can't pay rent and have burned through their security deposits. None of my expenses, mortgage, property taxes, insurance maintenance have been paused and I cannot give my tenants anymore rent breaks. I've been collecting about 10 to 20 percent of my rent because I don't have any money left to pay bills. So, Mr. Mayor, the question is other than waiting for federal stimulus money, what are you doing for people like this listener?

**Mayor:** Yeah, Juliet such an important question. I want to just broaden it for a second, that we need daycare centers up and running as soon as they can be safely for all the people of this city. As we go into Phase Two, more and more people are going to be going back to work, and obviously folks who can work from home, that's great, but a lot of people will be going back to work and will need childcare and that's going to be even more true in the fall. So, we have to figure out how to get to the point where daycare centers can get up running and to help them do so. I don't have that answer for you perfectly today. I just don't. But as we've been working through the pieces, this one's very much on our mind. Yeah, people need childcare. They really need it for their kids, in every sense. The folks who work in childcare need their jobs back. Yes, the landlords of those buildings need to get their rent, we have to move on all these fronts, but we don't have that plan today, but we will have it very shortly.

**Question:** Okay. I do have a second question.

**Mayor:** Go ahead.

**Question:** Okay, thank you. How do you explain the disparity between protests allowed to go forward with no social distancing yet those gathering outside bars or restaurants cannot do that?

**Mayor:** Juliet, I understand when people ask that and I think we just have to keep it in perspective history. We're seeing a social movement growing before our very eyes that's addressing 400 years of oppressive reality in this country, 400 years of structural racism, and demanding a change in the reality of how we police and how we in our whole society address equality and get rid of all of the things that are part of structural inequality. And this movement has developed organically. It's huge. It's urgent. You have to recognize the historical moment and allows some space. And now we see that people have made their voices heard, change is happening, it's happened in Albany, it's happening here in this city, I think a lot of people are seeing it and are acting accordingly and respecting the fact that their voices were heard.

So that's a very, very different reality than people going to a bar or restaurant to pick up a drink or pick up food and knowing that from months and months the rule has been get your food and go home. So, we're going to keep educating people at bars and restaurants that they need to recognize the rules. They need to follow those rules. And hopefully very soon we'll be in Phase Two where outdoor donut dining will be a reality and that's got to help. But I just think we have to be honest about these are just apples and oranges, and sometimes things don't fit within clean lines. You got to recognize the historical moment and its meaning when you see it.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Marcia from CBS.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, it's sort of a complex question. You've announced a number of changes for the police department over the last several days, but it's coming as the City Council is looking for change and also you have budget negotiations with the City Council. And I wonder where you're willing to draw the line in the sand with the demands for cuts that the City Council is making and your strategy, where it seems to be a strategy, of saying that it's not the cuts that are going to bring the change, it's the change in policy that you're enacting?

**Mayor:** Marcia, it's a very important question. I appreciate the question. The fact is you hit the nail on the head. A lot of the most important things we can do are about how we approach policing. We need to change the reality of policing much more deeply, connected more deeply to the people of the neighborhoods, provide a lot more transparency and accountability. These are the most important foundations to the bigger changes we have to make. We have to actually focus on community solutions with community people like Cure Violence. So it's not just about dollar figures or which part of the police apparatus goes in which agency, it's something I think is more foundational than that. And Marcia to me the bottom line is safety. We have to be a safe city. Everywhere, I've gone for six and a half years, people have talked to me about their need for safety. They want it to be fair. They want it to be just. They want it to be respectful. But they need to be safe. So, as we look at each and everything that the NYPD does, and we look at what

his future should be, we start from the present perspective of what will keep us safe, but will also lead to greater fairness and equality.

**Moderator:** Marcia, did you have a follow-up?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor – yes, I do. So I'm wondering what other changes do you think you'll be able to enact that will make the City Council feel that there's been a change at the NYPD that will reform the system and at the same time I guess stave off some of the cuts that they're threatening that you think are not possible?

**Mayor:** You know, Marcia, I give the City Council a lot of credit for understanding communities and we really get deep into the conversation. I think that the balance is going to be struck. Remember a few years ago, the City Council very rightly said they were worried about crime and a lot of their communities, that their communities were asking for more police presence to keep people safe. That's when we added 2,000 officers on patrol, that was just a few years ago, and that was a priority of the City Council. Today, the council is saying, I think very fairly, how do we make policing more fair, more respectful? What are the right things for the police to be focusing on? What are other things that they don't need to focus on? And civilian agencies can. Perfectly valid, real conversation and we're going to have it and we're going to get somewhere because we always do.

But I'll tell you, I've talked a lot of Council Members, Marcia, they are not forgetting that the first obligation to their constituents is safety. They aren't, they understand the totality. They want to address this very legitimate moment where people are calling for change, but they also want to make sure their constituents are safe. So, as we work through all the pieces, I think we can strike that balance together. I've been very, struck time and again, by how many times we get to the right place with the City Council and they've driven some great reforms in this city and some great reforms in policing. But we do this collegially. It helps that I was a Council Member for eight years. It helps that I know what it's like to listen to the voices of people in a community and knock on the doors and go to the community meetings. Every Council Member understands that. So I feel very confident over the next two weeks that we will strike that balance.

**Moderator:** Next we have Andrew from NBC.

**Question:** Good morning, everybody. Mr. Mayor, I apologize if I missed this at the top of the call, but did you explain your reasoning for not getting a coronavirus test?

**Mayor:** No, Andrew, I did not. Did not come out at the top. I intend to get one because I've asked all New Yorkers to get one. I feel fine today, and, you know, I think I just had a 24-hour kind of thing. But the fact is that I think I've said to people, regardless of whatever their health situation, we said days ago, all New Yorkers now should get the test. It's available very widely. It's free. So, I'll follow my own guidance and I'll make sure to get one too.

**Question:** My second question has to do with Phase Two. At this point, correct me if I'm wrong, but if New York City does not enter Phase Two on Monday, it's not because of the health data, it's because the city isn't ready in terms of the restaurant regulations, the guidelines, the

playgrounds, etcetera, because all of the health numbers you've been providing suggests that just like all the other regions in the state, New York City is ready for Phase Two.

**Mayor:** I don't know how to say politely you're wrong, but I'll – you're a good guy. I've known you a long time. I'll say it very nicely – you're wrong. That's not what's going on. What's going on is we are watching a reality here in New York City, that's by far the most complex in the entire state, we are talking constantly to the state government. We're all comparing notes. We certainly saw an aberrant reality with the protest activity. We want to know what that has resulted in, in terms of the spread of the disease, or maybe it hasn't. We don't know that answer yet because not enough time has passed. Clearly those protests were outdoors, largely with people with face coverings. We need more information. So, we're going to decide with the state, are we ready to go on June 22nd or do we need some more time to keep evaluating?

I've tried to keep expectations low and say, think about beginning of July, just so people are not disappointed, and that presumes that the data keeps coming back the right way, but Andrew, it is about data, but also knowing that you have complete enough data and that may not be all done by June 21st, we may want and need a few more days to get more data. But no, in terms of everything that needs to be in place, the state guidance is there for Phase Two, city guidance will be coming more and more over the next few days, we will be ready for next week, if the indicators and the discussions with the state tell us that we're ready to go next week.

**Moderator:** Next we have Shant from the Daily News.

**Question:** Good morning, everyone. My first question is a quick one. Can you say if the new body cam policy will apply retroactively to cases for which the footage has not yet come out? And my second question is about comments from Governor Cuomo over the weekend, who said he would reverse the reopening in Manhattan and the Hamptons if local leaders, presumably you, do not take action to curb crowds that have been seen around town. What is your comment on that? Thank you.

**Mayor:** We continue to take action. The Sheriff's Office, the Nightlife Office, a number of civilian agencies, and when the NYPD is needed, the NYPD will come into play. Clearly any place that's reported as a place where we're seeing crowding is going to be addressed. If enforcement is needed, there'll be enforcement. I don't have any doubt in the world that our city agencies can take care of this issue effectively.

On the question of the body cameras. This is a going-forward policy, Shant. We want to make sure that it is clear and consistent that everything happens within 30 days. That certainly does not stop the NYPD from releasing a specific data from previous incidents as deemed appropriate, but this policy takes effect immediately for everything that happens from today on.

**Moderator:** Last two for today. Oh, I'm sorry, Shant, you had a follow up.

**Mayor:** Now, he did two.

**Moderator:** Oh, alright. Sorry, last two for today. We have Katie from News 12. Apologies, we're going to go to Katie Honan from the Wall Street Journal.

**Question:** It's a "twofer" of Katie's for today. Mr. de Blasio, I have two questions for you. The first is looking forward towards the 4th of July. I wanted to know if you had any more updates on the official fireworks plan, and then if you had an update on the number of lifeguards who have so far completed their required test that could potentially at some point be staffed on the City's 14 miles of beaches.

**Mayor:** Yeah. Katie on the first on the fireworks, a very good plan has come together with a Macy's. We're perfecting that plan, but we'll be announcing it shortly. The – right now, so that again, I like what I have seen of that plan. I'm waiting for a final briefing, but I think they've come up with a smart plan that fits both the moment of having to make sure that people are safe and the fact that we're moving forward and that we want to celebrate this moment in a positive spirit.

On the lifeguards, we've got 600 who are going through training now, and so that process is moving very, very rapidly, and again, it's still premature to say what we'll be able to do in terms of any reopening of beaches or pools – we're working on that plan right now. But the training is moving aggressively so that we'll have those options ready.

**Moderator:** Next we, sorry, last for today, we have Todd from AM New York.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I'm glad you're feeling better.

**Mayor:** Thank you, Todd. How you doing?

**Question:** I'm doing just fine. Last night there were five people shot, a couple of people stabbed. Obviously, there are a lot of things going on in the city still in the interest of transparency, in the interest of transparency, a lot of that would probably not have been known if the Police Department was able to move forward with encrypting their radios. There's \$80 million right now in the capital budget for the Police Department for this plan that would bring in new radios and enable them to encrypt their radios. If that were to happen, most of these things that are going on the city would not be known unless they decided to tell the media. I've asked you about this once before, and you said you would be speaking to the Commissioner about it. Do you have something that you'd like to say about that?

**Mayor:** I appreciate the question, Todd. I don't – I've started to pursue it before, but honestly, didn't get a final answer on it and I want to get you a final answer. I appreciate the question. So, let me double back and we'll make sure the team gets you an update hopefully as early as today. Did you have a follow-up?

**Question:** Sure. you know we I've been at some of these protests by the groups in Williamsburg and in Midwood where they have wanted to open up the parks, the playgrounds. They make the claim that their children are out there on the streets, anyhow, playing in dangerous conditions, and they make the claim that if they were in the parks, at least they would be out of out of

danger, out of the traffic out of – and in better places because the children themselves are not social distancing and they're doing what they want anyways. So how do we respond to these, to this?

**Mayor:** So, Todd, look, I, again, I understand I'm a parent. I understand when parents say, Hey, what are we supposed to do? You know, kids have been cooped up. It's very difficult, especially for large families. I truly am sympathetic to that. I would say the fact is if a family has, you know, their children playing like in front of their house, for example, and sticking to their own family group and not connecting to other kids around them, that's one of the things a family can do as best they can in a very, very difficult crisis, or obviously keep their own kids indoors to the maximum extent possible. When we get to Phase Two, we will sort out, you know, as we lead into Phase Two, the whole playground issue, and I'm hopeful we'll be able to open things up, but we're not there yet.

So, the minute you say, okay, well, let's open playgrounds. Then you're talking about a lot of kids come in contact with a lot of other kids and adults coming in contact with other adults, and then the disease starts spreading, and that's what we don't want. This is again, the thing that will take us backwards. So, I'm sorry. I do understand their argument. What I'd say to every parent out there is don't let your kids play with kids from other families until we get to a safer point because you're risking the whole situation for your family and everyone else, and it's not easy. I really do empathize with parents, but we're going to do this one step at a time to get it right.

Okay, everybody, as we conclude today, again, we've just talked about young people. I want to bring it right back to young people to conclude. I want to go back to these extraordinarily powerful conversations I had in Southeast Queens on Saturday, and I want to make sure every New Yorker feels this and understands this, that here we are in a city, almost two-thirds, people of color, and we see teenagers around us, young men and women of color, and particularly young men, and I'd say young African-American men who have been singled out by this society for generations, more negatively than any other group. But those young men are our future, period. It's not a platitude. It is a literal fact, they're our future, the leaders of the future, the people who will make each neighborhood work, the people we will depend on, and I don't understand a society that allows the denigration of those who will be our future. We have to do things differently. So as we change the NYPD, it will be with a reminder to each and every one of those young people deserves respect and deserves to be given their value, seen for the good in them, and that's why I celebrate movements like Cure Violence and the Crisis Management System because they start from the grassroots up. They recognize the power of hearing community voices and having community people solve community problems. That's going to be the future of this city, and the future will be an NYPD that knows how to hear those community voices and respect and understand the role of community people in solving their own problems. That there are things a community can do that no one in uniform or no one from government can do, and that's how we move forward. It's a painful time. It's a difficult time, but it's a time, I think, also filled with hope because as we see more and understand more, we can do more and we can move forward as a city. Thank you very much.

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