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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. Today is a very, very important day for this city – a very good day in so many ways, a historic day, as the nation's largest city, the nation's largest economy gets back on its feet. Phase two begins today, a huge step forward, the biggest step forward as we fight back from the coronavirus crisis and we once again become everything that New York City is and can be. So, hundreds of thousands of people will be going back to work today. And there's a real excitement out there at what it means for the city and what it means for our future. I want to talk about that and give you some updates and some details. But first, I've got talk about a few things that happened this weekend. I'll do it quickly.

The incident that occurred on the Rockaway Boardwalk, I think a lot of people who've seen – it's a very troubling video of an NYPD officer, apparently using a band chokehold, which is absolutely disturbing to watch and unacceptable. And so, what I saw here was something powerful and important in that the action of the NYPD to discipline this officer occurred very, very quickly. Within hours, this officer was suspended. Within hours, the body camera footage from the incident was published. Within hours the next steps in the disciplinary process were begun. I want to commend Commissioner Shea for his quick action, command the Internal Affairs Bureau for their quick action. The public needs to see that when something is done wrong, there are consequences and they are swift, and that's what happened here. This is the fastest I've ever seen the NYPD act in an instance like this, and this is what I want to see a lot more of in the future. I don't want to see the bad incidents. I don't want to see the inappropriate activity from police, but if it ever happens, I want to see swift accountability. That's what we saw yesterday. Also, I want to praise the other officer in the incident who clearly on the video intervenes to stop his partner from using that chokehold. Now, this is such an important thing to see police officers step up, say, wait a minute, that's not right, stop doing that. This is what we want to see so much more of from police, going forward. There are a lot of good people in policing. There's a lot of people in it for all the right reasons, but there have been too many times in the past where good officers stood the idly by while an officer did something wrong. That age has to be over. That part of our history has to be put behind us. We need every officer to take responsibility if they see another officer doing something wrong, and that's what the second officer did yesterday and I commend him for it.

Now, this weekend, we also saw real challenges out in our streets in terms of gun violence. And this is something we all have to focus on and I know the NYPD is focused on it. We have to address a troubling trend we've seen in terms of shootings over the last weeks. Eight shooting incidents, Friday; 18 on Saturday, which is particularly troubling; two yesterday, based on the information we have already. What's going on? Well, we know in the warmer months,

unfortunately, historically, there've been more shootings. That's not something we accept, but it's something we understand and we have to fight against. We know there's some impact from what's happened over the months and months with the coronavirus. We know that there's instances where there's retaliation between one gang and another. We understand these things, but the fact we understand it doesn't make us any less – give us any less sense of urgency in addressing it. Particular problems have been showing up in the Bronx and in Brooklyn North, we're going to be addressing them. NYPD is immediately using its capacity to go at these problems. A couple of different pieces. First of all, Summer All Out – this is an initiative we announced a few weeks back – hundreds more officers out on the streets, away from desk jobs, out to the streets so they can be on the front line, addressing gun violence. You'll see increased car patrols and foot patrols in areas that need them. And you'll see a moving of resources amongst precincts and commands to address where the problem is greatest. We're also going to lean in another crucial part of our strategy – we've talked about this in recent weeks – is leaning into the Cure Violence movement and the Crisis Management System. This is a powerful, powerful reality. Community-based leaders, community members who stop violence before it happens, who intervene, stop retaliations, mediate conflicts. Look, where Cure Violence is strong, where the movement is strong, you see the results. And one example that's powerful, the sites that are part of the Mayor's Action Plan, which has been up and running for years, did not see an increase in gun violence over the last week. This is part of why we put the additional \$10 million a couple of weeks back. We put \$10 million additionally into the Crisis Management System and the Cure Violence movement. It will now cover 20 key precincts in New York City, where most of the gun violence is, and we're going to keep expanding that work. This summer, you'll be seeing the Cure Violence movement and Crisis Management System hiring more and more community residents to do this anti-violence work. I think that'll be another crucial part of the strategy. So, the bottom line here is, we are not going to allow gun violence to continue to grow in this city. We're not going to go back to the days where there was so much violence pervading, our communities. We're going to use new strategies and approaches in policing, new strategies and approaches at the community level. We're going to do whatever it takes to fight back gun violence, but we're going to do it in a way that emphasizes fairness, that emphasizes the relationship between police and community, the partnership we need. We're not going back to the bad old days when there was so much violence in the city, nor are we going back to the bad old days where policing was done the wrong way and, in too many cases, police and community could never connect and find that mutual respect. In fact, that mutual respect is the way forward and that's what we will be achieving in the weeks and months and years ahead in this city.

Now, having said that, I want to go back to what this day means for the city as we take a huge step forward with the beginning of phase two of the restart of New York City. Look, it is so important to say up front it's happening because of you, it's happening because of all the hard work all of you did. But now you see on your screen, all of the types of stores, all of the parts of our lives that are now coming back to life. I know a lot of us are excited about seeing the stores in our neighborhoods we love reopening, barbershops and hair salons reopening, restaurants, of course, so much going on that really, really will help us come out of this crisis and move forward, get people back their livelihood. Look, phase one was a big deal. But phase two is really a giant step for this city. This is where most of our economy is. So, we believe that today you're going to see somewhere in the neighborhood of 150,000 to 300,000 people start to come back to work. And again, the guidance has been out there now from the City, from the State, how

to do it the right way. People – some people going to do it immediately – some businesses are going to open up immediately, some folks don't come back to work immediately. Others will take their time, some are going to watch and see how it goes. But what we know is, and we saw it in phase one, every passing day, more and more people say, hey, this is working, I want to be a part of it.

So, to keep moving forward, it can't be business as usual. If we're going to help these businesses come back, we have to be there for them. We have to give out the free face coverings – now, over 2 million face coverings that have been given out and we're doubling it and adding 2 million more for free for small businesses to help them move forward. Any business that needs guidance, they can reach out to the good people at the Department of Small Business Services. And I want to commend Commissioner Jonnel Doris, and his whole team. They've been doing a great job, supporting our small businesses. Sector guides available at nyc.gov/business to tell you how to restart, if there's any questions and, more importantly, a human being who can help you by calling 888-SBS-4NYC – any questions or concerns about how to reopen that's, where you can get live, help from a person who knows how to guide you. Now, I don't know about you, but I think the reopening of our restaurants is such an important part of this day, and this is so much the identity in New York City. And I am so proud of the restaurant owners, the bar owners, the cafe owners who fought their way through this and now are ready to come back strong and be a part of their communities. And we need them, they're so much a part of who we are as New Yorkers. So, this is a very exciting day to have them coming back. Outdoor dining, as part of our Open Restaurants initiative, you'll be seeing, popping up all over the city. The important thing, of course, is to do it the right way, do it safely. But I think from talking to a lot of restaurant owners, they know the right way to do it. They want to do it the right way. They want to honor the customers and the workers, but they're ready to come back. And here's some evidence. We put the application for the open restaurants so that restaurants could use sidewalk space, curb space to put in tables. We put that up on Friday morning, since then, 3,192 restaurants have applied. They have instantly qualified. They are self-certified. They are good to go today. And I want to commend everyone at the Department of Transportation and Small Business Services for moving that initiative so quickly. So, any restaurant that wants to take advantage of that space and open up more outdoor seating, go to nyc.gov/openrestaurants. Self-certify, it takes a few minutes and you are good to go. So, that says something about how easy it will be, thank God, for these key, key parts of our communities to come back.

But the question you might ask is, do we know if people are going to want to engage in phase two? Do we know if people are going to want to come back to work, go back to restaurants, go to barbershops? Do we think it's going to actually start up again? And here's what we know, because we've been watching some of the indicators that tell us how much people are re-engaging. Subway ridership – compared to the Thursday before phase one, just a few weeks ago, this past Thursday had subway ridership up 29 percent getting close to the point of a million subway riders per day. Bus ridership over the same period, 22 percent up. Staten Island Ferry ridership up 31 percent. You're seeing people come back to mass transit, and that is our future, that's crucial. You're also seeing more traffic on the bridges. East River Bridge is up 24 percent. Harlem River Bridge is up 10 percent. So, something's happening. And part of why I think people are engaging mass transit is because there's been a real effort to keep it safe, to create the markings, to show you where to stand, where to sit, the free face coverings, a lot of cleaning. I

want to thank the MTA for their efforts. I want to thank everyone at the Staten Island Ferry for their great work. People are seeing that safety and health are being taken seriously and they're responding to it. And that's what matters, people understand that they can come back in a safe and smart fashion.

Now, the other fact is that we've seen these weeks, some really good, consistent evidence, data, real, tangible, objective data, showing that we continue to move in the right direction health wise. And that's because of all your hard work, that's because the people opening up the businesses are doing it the right way. That's because we're educating businesses, workers telling people how to protect themselves, helping them do it. But it's also because we have a new, powerful element in this fight, and that's the Test and Trace Corps. This is a game-changer. Remember, we didn't use to have this on a massive scale, nor did other cities and states around the country. Now, we are doing the thing that has worked in so many other parts of the world, we're proactively reaching people who test positive or people who are symptomatic and need help. And we're making sure that they get the help they need so they can safely separate, and it will inhibit the spread of disease. So, really, really crucial new factor and a lot of great initial progress. Here to give you an update, I want to thank him and his whole team, the Executive Director of the Test and Trace Corps, Dr. Ted Long.

Executive Director Ted Long, Test and Trace Corps.: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. This is an unprecedented time. In our lifetimes, we have never seen a disease as widespread and deadly as the coronavirus. Therefore, we've never had to set up a contact trace and operation of this magnitude before in our history. Now, what we've done so far over the last three weeks is essentially created and built a new organization with thousands of employees, a complex training system, a complex management structure, and a complex IT infrastructure that ensures privacy and confidentiality at every turn. It is now up and running and I'm going to share with you some of the initial results today that take us through the first three weeks. I want to really focus in on three key points though, as I go into this. The first is that, for all cases, or people newly diagnosed with the coronavirus, we don't have phone numbers for all of them, but for those that we do, we've been able to reach 97 percent of them by phone. That's to be compared to Louisiana, that reached 48 percent of the people that they called and Boston that reached 60 percent of the people that they called. The fact that we've been able to reach 97 percent of people newly diagnosed with coronavirus that we have a phone number for shows the program is working.

Now, the next statistic I want to share with you is how we're doing getting contacts from our cases. Among our cases that complete our interview, meaning ones that we've asked about, whether they have contacts, 74 percent to-date have shared contacts with us. In the last week alone, week three, 86 percent of our cases, people newly diagnosed with coronavirus that got through our interview gave us contacts – 86 percent. Now, we believe in the Test and Trace Corps. that the reason that 86 percent of people in the past week, that when asked, gave us contacts, is because more than half of our tracers are people from our hardest hit communities across New York City. They understand our communities and our communities therefore trust them. And it's based on that, trust that 86 percent of the time cases, when asked for contacts, when they completed the interview gave contacts.

The third statistic I want to share with you today is that of the contacts, or people that were exposed to the coronavirus that we then called, there was a group of more than 650 of them, that by the time we called them, were actively symptomatic and likely contagious. This means that this group of 650 New Yorkers, if we did nothing, if the program did not exist, they may go out and infect three more New Yorkers each. Because in that moment, when we were speaking to them, we were able to intervene to get them to isolate, to quarantine, to keep their families and their neighbors safe and to give them all of the resources to do that, we've potentially already prevented in the first three weeks alone of the program, up to 2,000 new cases of the coronavirus to keep New York City safe.

I'm now going to go through the rest of the data. So, in the last three weeks, to date, we've identified more than 7,500 new cases of the coronavirus. Among those, 85 percent, we had a phone number for, and when we called them, we were able to get through or reach 97 percent of them. There was a group of 2,808 of those cases that gave us contacts. That group of 2,808 are the people that completed the interviews and represent 74 percent of the people that completed our interviews, where we gave them the chance to give us contacts. And I want to draw out the point here that this is better than it was in the first two weeks of the program. In the first two weeks of the program, 69 percent of cases that completed our interviews were giving us contacts. Now, in the last week alone, it jumped up to 86 percent of the cases we talked to, gave us contacts. What we think that means is that people are beginning to more and more trust the Test and Trace Corps because the corps is us. It is our own people from our own communities, calling our own communities. And again, the fact that 86 percent of cases are giving contacts to the people they're talking to on the phone, we think shows that there is that trust that's being built there.

In terms of contacts, we now have more than 6,600 contacts that we've generated. Of those, we have a phone number for 77 percent of them, which if you look back at the data we shared last week, is a substantial improvement. Of those, we've reached 89 percent of all of those contacts. And again, if you look back at the data from last week, that's also a substantial improvement. I talked to you about the number of, more than 650 New Yorkers were already symptomatic and contagious by the time we called them. We were able to intervene and help. To date, we've been monitoring 6,400 New Yorkers. Of those, 2,000 have told us that in order for them to stay home, to keep their families and their neighbors safe, they needed help. And we've been able to, 2,065 times, offer them that help, that help can come in the form of food delivery, help with getting their medications delivered, even help with eviction notices or with their jobs. Our resource navigators stand at the ready to help New Yorkers and this has been a key way that we've been able to help New Yorkers to stay at home, to prevent disease spread. In addition to that, 63 New Yorkers have stayed at our hotels to date as well. With that, I'll pass it back to the Mayor.

Mayor: Thank you, Ted – really appreciate the update. And again, thanks to you and all your colleagues for the hard work you're doing. Now, let's go over today's daily indicators. I'm going to add an interesting fact as I do it. First of all, indicator number one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19 – threshold is 200 – today's report, 56 patients. Let me just let you know, because several members of the media have asked a question, and I asked it myself internally, and I commend them for raising this point. But the question is what was the actual percentage of number of people who came into our hospitals with suspected

COVID-19 meaning they had pneumonia-like symptoms, respiratory symptoms when they actually were tested, even if it took a few days to get the results, what was the percentage that actually did have COVID? Well, very interesting. You go back to that horrible date that we used to talk about April 5th, a day that was really looking like this crisis was going to get even worse.

On April 5th, 80 percent of folks who were in our hospitals and were suspected COVID patients turned out to be actual COVID patients when the test results came back. The last read we have is from June 14th. At that point, it was only 14 percent. So, that's another very positive sign that not only is the number of patients low at this point, but when we actually find out who has COVID and who doesn't, it's a small percentage within the group that does. So that's indicator one.

Indicator two, daily number of people in Health + Hospitals ICUs – threshold of 375 – today's report 326. And the most important indicator, percentage of people tested citywide who were positive for COVID-19 – threshold of 15 percent – today's report, a very good one, two percent. That is a great way to start phase two. 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, we have Small Business Commissioner Doris and Executive Director of the Test and Trace Corps Dr. Long here in person. And on the phone, we have Deputy Mayor Been, Transportation Commissioner Trottenberg, and Senior Advisor Varma on the phone. With that, I will start with Andrew Siff from NBC.

Question: Morning, everybody. Welcome to phase two. Hope you're doing well.

Mayor: [Inaudible] how you doing, Andrew?

Question: Hanging in there. Thanks for asking. My first question has to do with the restaurants reopening. I saw in some neighborhoods, the hand printed signs that restaurants send out, 'please don't park here, this is for our curbside business'. How concerned are you? And maybe Commissioner Trottenberg has some evidence from it already this morning. How concerned are you that drivers might just rip those down and leave their cars parked there? And are you concerned that this might lead to some confrontations out there?

Mayor: You know, Andrew, I'll start and I'll turn to the Commissioner. Look, we understand New Yorkers are New Yorkers and parking is very, very precious to us, but I also think people understand this is about bringing back our city, bringing back our economy, bringing back people's jobs, bringing back part of the community that people love. We're giving people with a self-certification a notice they can put up, an official notice from the Department of Transportation, making clear that the space is delineated for the restaurant. And most of those spaces, of course, are places where there's a lot of turnover, where there's metered parking. So, I think it's an issue, but I believe that the vast majority of people will respect it and we'll certainly help restaurants. Commissioner, why don't you jump in?

Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, Department of Transportation: Exactly, Mr. Mayor. Hi, Andrew. We are actually in the process today going to be emailing to all the restaurants who applied for curb space a sort of somewhat official sign, which says 'don't park here, open dining' and between SBS and DOT's borough commissioner offices, we're going to be on the ground today helping to resolve those conflicts wherever we can. But it's probably going to take a little time to sort itself out. So, a little patience as we turn those parking spaces into restaurant space.

Mayor: Go ahead, Andrew.

Question: My second question, and I know this is going to sound like we're getting ahead of ourselves, but my second question has to do with phase three, all the upstate regions spent only two weeks in phase two and went on to phase three and the Governor has repeatedly said the metrics match for every region, no one gets an exception, but have you had any conversations with the Governor, or do you plan to, to essentially say slow your roll when it comes to phase three in the city, because you're talking about an entirely different density level?

Mayor: You know Andrew, the bottom line, first of all, is the data is what we all look to. The City, the State, we all are devoted to the data and today's an important day because seeing the numbers today, as good as they are after we have seen the whole experience of phase one is really, really important. We're getting more and more evidence. And I also believe New Yorkers are very devoted to getting it right. There's lots of hype when someone does something wrong, but the vast majority of people are taking this really seriously and being very conscientious. So, yeah, two weeks is the official minimum, but the State's always been clear, I've always been clear. We're going to judge by the data and we're going to look at the particular complexities of New York City, which are, you know, the most challenging dynamics anywhere in the state. So, I'll hold out hope that we can move through it quickly, but it's going to be based on the data and it's going to be, of course, a high bar because to do something here just affects so many millions of people, we have to get it right

Moderator: Next, we have Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I just wanted to ask, I know you addressed the police officer in the 100th Precinct. I wanted to know if you think he should be criminally charged or should there be further punishment. And then I have a second question.

Mayor: Thank you, Katie. Look, Katie, I don't get into the work of the DAs. I respect their judgment. What I focus on is the piece that we control, which is the NYPD disciplinary process. I've said, I want to see that process move quickly and transparently. And now we have the tremendous benefit of the 50-a law being gone and the ability to be transparent. The Commissioner acted very quickly yesterday. There will be a process over the next days to determine the next steps on discipline. That's what I think is important here, that the PD process moves rapidly, determine what else needs to happen as a consequence of that officer's action, and we move forward with that, and we act transparently to let you know what's happening with that. But the DAs will make their own decisions. Go ahead.

Question: And actually, I don't even have a second question. You can go to the next person. Thanks.

Mayor: Thank you.

Moderator: Next, we have Kevin from the Brooklyn Paper.

Question: Hey, Mr. Mayor, how are you doing?

Mayor: I'm doing good, Kevin. I'm feeling great nostalgia. The Brooklyn Paper was a very big part of my life when I was a school board member and a City Council member. So, good to hear from you.

Question: Thanks for taking my question. A DOT official told the community board last week that the agency's in talks with your office about possibly turning a car lane on the Brooklyn Bridge into a bike lane. I was wondering if you, you know, if you could contribute your take on this, give us more insight into these talks. And then I have another question as well.

Mayor: Kevin, I like to be transparent. I have not heard that previously. Commissioner Trottenberg can speak to it now. I mean, I would state the obvious that we're seeing a lot more traffic. In fact, I have been struck, as probably a lot of people, watching have been, that we've actually had – I've experienced some traffic jams lately. That was something we did not experience in the beginning of this crisis. In a funny way, it's reassuring to be in a traffic jam again. But again, the future has got to be not about automobiles, but about mass transit. But the Brooklyn Bridge is – that one's a sensitive one because it's such a crucial artery. So, I had not heard that. I'm not sure how workable that is, but Commissioner Trottenberg what do you say?

Commissioner Trottenberg: Yeah. And Kevin, I will just say somehow, I think between maybe what the staffer said and what was in that article, it wasn't quite accurate. It said that the DOT, we had completed our study of looking at whether the promenade on the bridge could accommodate more space for bikes. We haven't. So, just that – that part isn't true. You know, it has been sort of a long-standing question for the East River bridges, which are certainly particularly the Brooklyn and the Queensborough, you know, pinch points for cycling in and out of Manhattan, about whether we can take a look at traffic lanes. It's something the agencies look at – to be fair to the Mayor, I don't think the discussion has made it to his level yet.

Mayor: Okay. Do you have another question, Kevin?

Question: Yeah. Thanks for clarifying, Commissioner. I just used what your staffer said at the meeting. But to my other question I've heard from dog owners that they're upset that dog runs aren't reopening as part of phase two. With most parks reopening at this point, why aren't dog runs not reopening? Is that an oversight or is there some additional considerations for those parts of parks?

Mayor: There's additional considerations, Kevin. It's a great question. So, let's be clear. Parks have been open throughout. I want to just really get this right. Parks have been open.

Playgrounds, dog runs, sports facilities got shut down. What we've said now is that the playgrounds with the playground equipment for kids, particularly younger kids, that's reopening today. We have a whole host of other things that we're evaluating right now. We're evaluating them all together. Basketball courts, soccer fields, tennis courts, handball courts, dog runs, you name it, we're looking at all of them. And I think the fact is that they all tend to have a lot of people congregating in a small space and it tends to be not just kids, but adults, obviously, generally, and we want it – or older kids – we want to get it right. We're trying to figure out what's going to be necessary to make it right, make it workable. And that's what we're working on right now. We'll have more to say on that in the coming days.

Moderator: Next we have Michael from the Daily News.

Question: Hey, everybody. Can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes, Michael, how you doing?

Question: Good, good morning.

Mayor: Good morning.

Question: So, I just have one question. The Council Speaker last week talked about, at the end of this state of meeting, the Council putting out its own budget, separate and apart from the executive budget, from your budget. And I'm not sure about, you know, all the ins and outs of this, but you know, he talked about how this was its charter mandated authority, it could do this. I think this has happened at least once before, maybe in '99. But I was wondering if you could talk about, you know, the likelihood or the possibility of that happening and what the implications of that are and kind of – I mean, do you see it as a negotiating tactic or do you see it as something real that is in the offing at this point?

Mayor: Michael, I don't speculate on other people's words. Bottom line is we have a lot to work through. It's an incredibly difficult budget because we're in the middle of such a, you know, crisis wrapped in crisis, wrapped in crisis, including a huge fiscal crisis, but everyone's been working incessantly over the last few weeks. I know our budget teams are constantly speaking with each other. I think there's been real progress, but I think there's a lot to work through. So, the history says that we always managed to find common ground with the City Council. And that's what I'll assumed here. And you know, we continue to have negotiations, I think, in a spirit of goodwill.

Moderator: Michael, do you have a follow up?

Question: No, that's it. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you.

Moderator: Next, we have Rich from WCBS 880.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Hey, Rich. How you doing?

Question: I'm doing okay. So, I just wondered, do you plan to dine outdoors tonight? And if so, where?

Mayor: One, absolutely. Two, we're deciding the location. We'll let you know later on, but the world of New York restaurants is very, very personally important to me. And I just, I'm very excited that this day has come. I'm very excited for these folks who have put their whole lives into their restaurants. It's just so much a part of life of this city, but it's something that gives me a tremendous amount of joy. So, Chirlane and I will be out there, but we're working out where. Do you have a follow up?

Question: I do. Not a follow up, but another question. Have you ever stood and taken a look at the Theodore Roosevelt statue out in front, on Central Park West there? And if so, what went through your mind and how do you feel about its removal?

Mayor: Yeah, I have looked at it Rich and I think Roosevelt himself is another one of these complex figures in American history. He did some extraordinarily progressive things that we feel to this day, and he did some things that I think are deeply troubling. But I think there's a separate question between him, the person and the actual statute. The statue has representations that clearly do not represent today's values. The statue clearly presents a white man as superior to people of color. And that's just not acceptable in this day and age, and it never should have been acceptable. So, I know the museum feels it's best to take it down. I support that decision. I think, you know, they felt that's what was right for them as a museum. And I understand why they're doing it and I respect it

Moderator: Next we have Marcia from CBS.

Question: Mr. Mayor, you talked at the beginning of your remarks about the increase in shootings, which was astounding over the last several days. But there's been basically an increase in shootings since January. And I wonder if you can tell us what role this increase in shootings will play in your thinking about budget cuts to the NYPD?

Mayor: Yeah, Marcia, it's a very important question. So, you're right, Marcia., In the beginning of the year, we saw an uptick in crime and shootings. We saw some leveling off for a few months in the beginning of the coronavirus crisis. Now we've seen something very troubling in recent weeks. To me, I am feeling this distinctly. I'm very, very concerned about how many shootings we're seeing. And I'm feeling it from the perspective our communities. This means that we know when there are shootings, they beget more shootings. We understand retaliation, we understand gang dynamics. And I've heard from a lot of community leaders that they're increasingly concerned. So, as we try to make sense of all the important issues that have to be addressed in this budget, I think Marcia, it's really important to remember, you know, job one is always to keep people safe. And we can do that while creating reform and creating a better NYPD and a fairer NYPD and a different relationship between NYPD and community. But job one is always to keep people safe.

Question: My follow up question also has to do with the police. The department seems to be concerned about not canceling the police cadet class coming in the new class, because they say that they're expecting an increase in attrition for various reasons. And that the new police class would be bringing in more police officers who would be from the community, minorities and people who would represent the communities of New York City. And they're anxious to make sure that they increase that number of people in the NYPD but also to make up for the loss through attrition. I wonder what your thoughts are about that?

Mayor: Marcia, another very important question. I thank you for it. Look, we had to delay a class of our recruits because of the coronavirus. It's a really important question what we want to do next and need to do next as a city. This is absolutely a part of the discussion with the City Council as we prepare the budget. You're absolutely right Marcia. The NYPD today, and I think a lot of people don't know this. Today's NYPD is majority people of color. Today's NYPD is increasingly New York City residents. I think a lot of people who have hoped for a different and better kind of policing have wanted to see more representation from communities in the NYPD, have wanted to see more people actually live in the same borough or the same general part of the borough, patrolling the streets and having that sense of investment and connection to the people. That's actually been happening more and more in recent years. So you're absolutely right that any time we don't bring in a new recruit class, we're actually slowing down that progress. But we have to look at all of the factors here Marcia.

We have to figure out again, safety first. And then how do we deal with these extraordinarily difficult fiscal dynamics that are going to affect every single agency? I want to emphasize that if we do not get borrowing authority from Albany in the coming days, if we do not get a stimulus from Washington, which unfortunately looks like a foregone conclusion that we won't – every single City agency will experience some kind of cut here. And so it's going to affect everyone, but in the case of the NYPD, as we sort that out, as we also try and figure out the right reforms to make, to address the need for more fairness and justice, we have to start from the position of what will keep people safe. And that's a complex decision. That's what we have to work out over the course of the next week or so.

Moderator: Last two for today. Next, we have Sydney from the Staten Island Advance.

Question: Hey Mr. Mayor. So, an assistant principal on Staten Island from New Dorp High School is under investigation for allegedly citing racist stereotypes about people living in public housing and on government assistance. I'm wondering if you've seen her remarks and if you think she should be removed? And I have a second question.

Mayor: Sure. Sydney, I have not seen the remarks. I'm very concerned when I hear anything like that, because no one in a position of authority should use racially insensitive language, especially someone who's an educator and kids look up to. But I don't know the facts and so I can't comment on the specifics. But go ahead with your next question.

Question: Yeah, I wanted to know who's in charge of enforcing the rules of your Open Restaurants plan? Is it DOT or the Sheriff's Office? And is there a new tip line to report

restaurants not following the rules? And can restaurants open for outdoor dining on both sides of the restaurant or only in front or and can they open on the street? On Staten Island we've seen corner restaurants set up outdoor dining on the front and sides of their restaurants and put up barricades on the street to block off traffic. So, wondering what's allowed and who's in charge of enforcing the rules?

Mayor: Sure. Excellent question. So, Sydney, I'll start very broadly and I'm going to pass to Commissioner Trottenberg and Commissioner Doris. Okay, so first of all, remember, we're in a crisis. We need to get our economy back. We need to get people's livelihood back. We are trusting people very much with this approach. We're trusting the restaurant owners to self-certify, we're trusting the people of the city to do the right thing to keep each other safe. And overwhelmingly that trust has been rewarded time and time again in this crisis. People are doing the right thing. They'll always be some people who take advantage and we'll deal with that. But it is to begin with, based on the positive, not the negative. In terms of the frontage you can use, and in terms of how to address any problems, the commissioners will speak to that. Obviously, anybody who thinks they see something dangerous or unhealthy can always call 3-1-1 because we want those reports, we want to act on right away. But we're starting from the perspective of, we do not anticipate a lot of enforcement. We do not anticipate a lot of need to go in aggressively because we think most people are going to do this the right way. Commissioner Trottenberg, Commissioner Doris you want to add?

Commissioner Trottenberg: I'll jump in. You're right, Mr. Mayor, the primary source for complaints is going to be 3-1-1. And we've been – the different agents I've worked with 3-1-1 and the complaints will be routed to whichever agency, it makes the most sense. If it's an issue you raise about, you know, how much space are restaurants allowed to have on the street or the sidewalk that would be DOT. Other types of enforcement could go to PD. But we are very much hoping as the Mayor said to use education and really work with restaurants, the Hospitality Association, local businesses and SBS is at the forefront of that educational process.

Commissioner Jonnel Doris, Small Business Services: I'll just add, as Commissioner Trottenberg said we are ensuring that we reach out to our restaurants and small businesses. Our hotline is the best way to get some clarity on some of these matters, but also to proactively ask questions to help you navigate the process. Again, it's 8-8-8-7-2-7-4-6-9-2. And we also have webinars and training for our restaurant owners. I was out in Jackson Heights this weekend, speaking with the Latino Restaurant Association. And many of those restaurants, as we talked to them, wanted this clarification and was utilizing our services and was also extremely happy with the five to ten minutes it took for them to actually sign up for this. So a lot of that was because of the education and we will continue to do that. Our hope is that we have a complaint driven process in which we're not going out and driving you know, violations and complaints and so forth from these businesses. But we want to make sure that we train them and let them know what's happening. And so, we're here for you. If you're a small business out there, restaurant, you still need help. Please reach out to our hotline. We'll be happy to assist.

Mayor: And again, the more memorable version of the hotline, 888-SBS-4NYC, 888-SBS-4NYC. Okay, go ahead.

Moderator: Last question for today, we have Jen Peltz from AP.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

Mayor: Good, Jen, how you doing?

Question: Thanks. I have a couple of questions. One is concerning the reopening, as I'm sure you know, that a lot of the big employers and offices are not yet planning to bring back their workforces or even a small number of them. What do you think that that means for the overall health of the city's business climate since a lot smaller businesses depend on their big office neighbors?

Mayor: Yeah. Jen, it's a great question. I think what you're going to see is evolution. I've talked to a lot of business owners, big and small. And what people are saying is even though remote offers certain advantages or continuity, it's not the same thing. It's not as good in many ways. And the fact is right now, as we're making sure we go through each phase safely, a lot of folks still want to be remote. That's fine. But as we get toward the fall, I'm certainly going to be encouraging people to start coming back more in person. The fact is, yeah, you're right. A lot of small businesses, a lot of restaurants, so many different parts of our economy depend on people coming back to those office jobs.

So, I think it'll be like this – there'll be some hesitation at first. There'll be some watchful waiting, people wanting to make sure it really works. People want to make sure they're comfortable with it. The economy will start to come back. And the more that people see it's working, the more that people will want to come back. I also think a lot of businesses will say, Hey, we just cannot get done this work as well if people don't spend more time together. And you'll see more and more businesses saying, Hey, it's time to come back or at least come back more often. So, it'll be stages. I think the summer will be slower. I think the fall is when you're going to see much more ramp up.

Question: Thanks. And my second question has to do with the events in the Rockaway over the weekend.

Mayor: Say it again, Jen? I'm sorry.

Question: My second question has to do with the incident in the Rockaway Boardwalk over the weekend, the arrest. I did hear you on the importance of the disciplinary action that was taken and quickly. But considering that this all came about just days after legislation on chokeholds which are already banned by the department. What do you think this says about the bigger issue of eradicating the problem, not just disciplining when it happens?

Mayor: Jen, I think, look – we've got understand in my view, that changing our society, changing our workforce, you know, this is incessant work. Chokeholds have been banned for a generation and when someone uses it, that's unacceptable. And what we now see is very, very fast action to address it. Two things happened in this incident we did not see enough in the past. Very fast, immediate disciplinary action, the suspension within hours and the beginning of the

larger disciplinary process. And we saw another officer intervene. And that represents the best of our police. Not letting something like that happen. I have no idea why that officer engaged in what appeared to be a chokehold after everyone in the world knows chokeholds are banned. I have no idea why, it's not acceptable. But the other officer did something to stop it quickly. And that's important because the way forward is for people now to step up, the vast majority of good police officers to say, hey, that's not right. Don't do that. And so, I understand how frustrating it is after all the dialogue, all the focus on how could this possibly happen again. But I also choose to focus on the things that make clear what the future will bring. The future will be officers stepping forward and stopping the bad things from happening and standing up and living up to their oath. And I have a lot of faith that our officers will do that. And the department acting swiftly and transparently to discipline any officer who does the wrong thing. And I think that will really help to start change the culture that we need to change in the NYPD.

With that everyone this again, a very important day, a historic day. I'll finish with a simple thought. So, it is June 22nd. We never could have gotten to phase two without you. We could never have gotten here if people had not done so much hard work so consistently. And it took immense discipline and strength for New Yorkers to get us here. There were many a day where it looked like it might not be possible, but you achieved this victory. The simple message is this – if it ain't broke, don't fix it. You're doing the right thing. Stick with it. All of the precautions you're taking, all of the hard work, it's going to get us to the next phase and the next phase. It's going to get us back to being the city that we need to be. So, thank you to all the New Yorkers who made this possible. And now let's go take the next big step. Thank you.

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