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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON NY1 TO DISCUSS NYC  
FERRY'S NEW SOUNDVIEW SERVICE**

**Pat Kiernan:** Joining me now to talk more about the ferry's expansion is Mayor Bill de Blasio. He is in Soundview where he has been watching those boats on the move. Mayor de Blasio this has been a program that you have pushed for a few years now, must be satisfying to see another borough added to the map.

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Pat, it's a great, great feeling. First of all incredibly beautiful day here in the Bronx, but this is historic, this is the first time there's ferry service for the people of the Bronx since the 1930's. You have got to go back before World War II, the last time that people here were able to get out on the water and go where they needed to go. And I got to tell you, it's amazing – this ferry here in Soundview, for people in this surrounding community, it will cut their ride to Lower Manhattan in half. It will literally take a ride that has taken in many cases, up to 90 minutes and turn it into a 45 minute ride to where so many people work. That's exactly what we hope to do, to provide an opportunity to a neighborhood that too often had been ignored and neglected and to really make sure people in the Bronx had the same opportunities as everybody else.

**Kiernan:** Let's take a look at the route maps as we speak Mayor de Blasio because this has been a steady expansion. I was on the very first Rockaway ferry when we did a live broadcast the morning that service launched. It is increasingly up and down the East River, a network that gives people more transportation options, as you say options they didn't have before.

**Mayor:** And that's the bottom line Pat, absolutely. You know, look what's going on in our city. It's great that we have a booming economy and lots of tourists but the problem of course is our roads, our highways are jammed even more now. Our subways are jammed. We need these alternatives. Now since we started ferry service, the response has been unbelievable. We are already double the number the riders that we originally projected and it just keeps growing so to me this is part of a bigger solution for New York City to get back to the water. We are one of the great coastal cities in the world but we really don't use the water ways the way we could. So if we have ferry service that gives people a great, convenient option to driving or taking the subway or taking the bus and look, it's the same price as a subway fare. On a day like this you

can't beat it. It's the most beautiful way to get around and people love it, they just love the experience.

But the thing we have to be thinking about is not just today but going forward, this city is still growing. We have got to have more transportation options. And so far, you know, people are voting with their feet. They are choosing the ferry as a better option and we want to make sure that that is available to as many people as possible. And look here's a borough, again has not had ferry service in over 80 years. I mean that doesn't make any sense. Look we have a perfect location here, it's finally happening.

**Kiernan:** So I 100 percent agree with you that it's a pleasant way to commute. It brings service to areas that have been underserved but I want to put up a screen that shows that puts this into perspective. About 5 million people have ridden the NYC ferry service since May of 2017, compare that to annual ridership on MTA buses at 600 million, compare that to annual ridership on the subway of 1.7 billion – the ferry program is costly Mr. Mayor. Is it worthwhile compared to putting the same amount of money into the subways?

**Mayor:** It absolutely is because we are just not going to have the options we need if we go with the status quo and this is the bottom line Pat, this is such an important initiative right now for those millions of people who have experienced it and for whom it's changing their lives for the better. And it's helping everyone else by the way, everybody who gets on the ferry is not in a car, or not taking up a place in the subway that's so crowded so often so it's really helping to make those experiences better. Remember the more and more people get on the water, it will help unclog our highways, it will help to make our subways better. But more importantly is the future, there's tremendous potential here. And we've got to start exploring it now because we have to go to see how much this could work for more and more New Yorkers. That's why it's such a great investment. In terms of what it means right now, the people I've talked to in a lot of places that are very isolated, the Rockaways are a great example, Red Hook's a great example, Soundview is a great example – for them Pat, it's not like an abstract matter, they don't have the kind of transportation they need so to finally have it makes all the difference in the world. But it also points out the potential of this approach in a city that's still growing and desperately needs more and better options.

**Kiernan:** Mayor de Blasio I want to ask you about one other topic, you signed that for hire vehicle cap legislation yesterday. We saw the drivers outside Uber headquarters trying to scramble to get in before the deadline. Did you have some second thoughts when you saw the way drivers were trying to get in, realizing that those were important jobs to those people?

**Mayor:** Oh I do get that Pat and I care about every New Yorker and everyone who is trying to make a living but the bottom line is what's happened with the for hire vehicles has been bad for everyone. These big corporations like Uber have flooded the market with too many vehicles, too many drivers on purpose. What it's done is driven down wages for everyone, for the for hire vehicles, for the yellow cab drivers, now to the point that for most for hire vehicle drivers, it's below minimum wage and that's not right. We had to correct the situation. I commend this City Council. We had to create a rebalancing of supply and demand – by the way the congestion issues have been horrendous, 40 percent of these Uber vehicles drive around with no one in

them, no passenger. So it's time you know to create some balance here because it will bring those wages back up, it will mean good jobs for people doing the work, it will help to reduce congestion. This is a smart action. You know, let's face it before these companies just came in and decided they were going to do whatever they were going to do. Now we are creating some actual rules to protect the interest of every day New Yorkers and working people who deserve a decent wage.

**Kiernan:** Mr. Mayor I see some of the ferry riders back behind you, I'll let you go about the business of greeting some of them on the first day of service, thanks for joining us this morning.

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