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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON CNN'S THE SITUATION
ROOM WITH WOLF BLITZER**

Wolf Blitzer: Turning now to the nation's coronavirus epicenter. We're talking about New York City, the site of more than 135,000 coronavirus cases, and more than 13,000 deaths. Both totals, by the way, higher than those from all but a handful of countries outside the United States. The New York State governor, Andrew Cuomo, declared that the state will not reopen until testing is ramped up and the federal government steps in with more funding. And the New York City mayor, Bill de Blasio, has echoed that, adding that major cities around the United States are simply running out of money right now. Mayor de Blasio is joining us right now. Mayor, thanks so much for joining us and an incredibly busy weekend. As you know, the President of push back just a little while ago on calls for a national testing plan. He says, some states just don't know how to use the tests. Can you reopen your city, the great City of New York, without federal help on testing?

Mayor Bill de Blasio: No. Wolf, the answer is no. 8.6 million people here, the epicenter of the crisis, we have been asking for testing from the beginning. And Donald Trump blew it in January, in February, in March – he did not get us testing. If he had, it could have changed the entire course of this crisis. I can't tell you how many thousands of lives. I mean, we'll never know, but I know it would have been thousands and thousands of lives that could have been saved. And now, he's in denial. Now he's trying to blame people who – we can't make testing appear out of thin air. The federal government is supposed to marshal the resources of this country. He's never used the Defense Production Act to the fullest. He's never really taken charge of this situation. And so, I've spoken to him repeatedly, Wolf, I've appealed to him to understand that if all he wants to talk about is restarting the economy – I want to restart the economy too, but if New York City and cities all over the country don't have testing we cannot restart. If we're going broke and we can't provide basic services for our people, we can't restart. You won't have an economic recovery if this president doesn't step up. So, he blew it the first time. He's got one last chance, literally, one last chance. History will judge him, Wolf – did he do something at this moment in April of 2020? Did he actually take responsibility? Did he actually provide that testing? Did he actually provide that money that cities need to get back on their feet in this stimulus bill that's being talked about right this minute in Washington? Did he raise his voice and push the U.S. Senate to act? Or, did he remain silent and deny that he had any responsibility? If he fails this time, history will have its final judgment that he is the reason why this crisis got so bad and what he had a chance to do something about it he was silent.

Blitzer: Your city's a first community testing sites, I understand, opened up on Friday. Tell us about those and how residents should be using them.

Mayor: Wolf, we have seen in this crisis another crisis, which is the disparity crisis. We have seen that this horrible disease hit harder in communities that already lacked health care, that were poor, that had had so many disadvantages already. Communities of color, immigrant communities, that's who's borne the brunt. So, we're doing testing now in the hardest hit communities for people who are older and have those preexisting conditions that really endanger them. We want to make sure the testing is focused on their needs, and, of course, as always, on our first responders and our health care workers. But we're doing it with a very limited supply. We don't have much testing. We don't have enough PPEs – personal protective equipment. We had just now had a little more personnel to work with, but only now. It has been hand to mouth for weeks and weeks, Wolf. And the reality is that the federal government never took charge of this crisis. Donald Trump was never really hand on the wheel addressing what we needed to. So, cities and states are trying as best we can to come up with something we can do to protect our people. But we didn't create an international pandemic and our nation has left us, in so many ways, defenseless. But we're trying, we're trying to reach the people who are being hit the hardest.

Blitzer: The President keeps referring to the beds that the federal government helped put into place at the Javits Convention Center, The USNS Comfort, the US Navy hospital ship that's in New York right now. He says a lot of ventilators went there. What do you say to him when he makes those points?

Mayor: Wolf, I will always give credit where credit is due. I had numerous conversations with the President where I asked for those very same things and I'm very appreciative, as a New Yorker, that that helped arrived. It was very important to us. But, Wolf, it's not like the crisis is, you know, convenient, it ends really easily just when, you know, one shipment comes in and it's over, we can all say we're done here. No, this is something we're going to be dealing with for months and months until we're finally safe, until our people are safe. So, I talked to the President several times in the last few days and I said, look, thank you for what you sent, but we don't get the testing, we can't get back to normal. If we don't have a stimulus that makes us whole, we will literally go broke. I said to him, I know he appreciates the New York City Police Department, our firefighters, our first responders. I said, Mr. President, we're not going to be able to provide those services if we don't have any money. Wolf, I announced my annual budget. We are predicting over \$7 billion in lost revenue. I spoke to the Mayor of Miami who told me about the vast amount of money they have lost. The Mayor of Denver told me the same. The Mayor of Carmel, Indiana told me the same. I'm talking to Democrats, I'm talking to Republicans – they're all saying the same thing. We can't restart if our local government can't even provide basic services so you can have a functioning economy. Business leaders, labor leaders, they're all saying the same thing. If our cities aren't working, they're the economic engine for this country, for every region of the country – if we can't provide the basics, how on earth are you going to have an economy that functions. And we can't – where am I going to find \$7 billion in the middle of a pandemic and a global economic crisis? The only place that can come from is the federal government. And, you know what, they're talking about it right now in Washington. Speaker Pelosi, Senator Schumer have said this should be part of the package right now – stimulus 3.5. I said to the President directly, if you would just say the word, the Republican Senate would jump, Mitch McConnell would jump. All you have to say is it's the right thing to

do. And he's been silent and that's on him. If our cities fail, if our economy fails because he refused to act, then Donald Trump not only blew it the first time, he blew it the second time, and that will be on him for the rest of history.

Blitzer: So much of all the major cities, whether New York, Miami, or LA, depends on hotels, restaurants, tourism coming in. And none of that has happened at all. I just want thank you, Mayor de Blasio for coming in. Good luck. Let's see what the Congress does, the House and the Senate – what the President does as well. I know you're desperate for some cash coming in from the federal government. Appreciate your joining us.

Mayor: Thank you, Wolf.

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