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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. This story is going to be told for generations. The story of a hundred days and the history of New York City. When New Yorkers were faced with a literally, almost unbelievable challenge, something we could not conceive of happening in this city. And when it did, New Yorkers found a way to fight back. It was asking so much of the people of this city, to change their lives fundamentally and change them quickly, and yet you did it. In a matter of days, we went from being one of the most social, vibrant, active cities on the earth, to being a place where people somehow learn to adapt to shelter in place, to socially distance, to put on those face coverings, all the things that we now do, and we see as part of our daily routine. It took a lot to learn them, and to do them, and yet you did it. So, for a hundred days, we fought back this disease, and in the middle of that, it looked like it might surge beyond anything we could possibly imagine. And yet, because of what you did, the disease was stopped and then pushed back. Got a long way to go in this city, and we have to be very, very careful of the danger of this disease resurging. The danger of the boomerang, the danger we're seeing playing out right now in States in this country that tragically, I think moved too fast without the right precautions. And we're seeing people suffer, and we're seeing people die because of that. Here in this city, we have resolved to do this, the smart way, the careful way. The results each day, speak for themselves, what you have achieved and how we're going to sustain it. And now, another mission to restart the city, to bring people's livelihoods back, to help folks who don't have money right now for food or rent or medicine to get their jobs back, so we can all move forward and be the greatest city in the world.

So, we now start phase one and it's not easy. It's also the great unknown. And yet, the news I have for you today is overwhelmingly good news about how New Yorkers have found a way to make phase one work. It's initial, we know a lot of people are still watching and waiting. Certainly not everyone who could have come back to work has come back to work. Not every business that could have been opened by now is, but we're seeing more and more businesses reopening, more and more people coming back to work, more and more people deciding that they can make it work and make it work safely. One of the ways that we judge what's going on is by the heartbeat of this city and that's mass transit, our subways, our buses. This is the greatest mass transit city in America. One of the great mass transit cities in the world. And we know that mass transit has struggled in the middle of this crisis, and people have been concerned, they've been worried, and understandably so. And there's a lot that has been done, and a lot more that needs to be done to give people faith that they can come back to mass transit safely. But, as per usual, New Yorkers are voting with their feet. New Yorkers are making their own decision and showing the strength and resiliency that we know is so much a part of the core and the life of this city.

So, subway ridership. Now, this Wednesday, two days go up 25 percent compared to Wednesday the week before. Bus ridership up 23 percent, two days ago, Wednesday compared to the week before. Staten Island Ferry ridership up 31 percent. That's mass transit. Now, people are obviously also coming into the city with trucks, with cars, and we've talked about the fact we understand that will happen in the short term. We look forward to though continuing intensely our efforts to reorient the entire city to mass transit. And the announcement I made a few days ago about more bus service and busways is going to be a big part of how we move forward in the future. But you do need to look at traffic coming into Manhattan as a measure of people's willingness to come back to work and to reopen businesses. East River bridges, an increase of 17% over the course of a week. Harlem river bridges an increase of 14 percent. Working people are coming back to work. Most importantly, we must make sure it's done safely. We must protect their health. The social distancing standards are crucial. So, on our own fairies, Staten Island ferry, you're going to see that social distancing. You're going to see it marked, to show people where to sit, where not to sit. The face coverings, being given out for free at the fairies, at the subways, the buses. We're working closely, whether it's our own efforts to make sure people are safe in the transportation run by the city of New York or with the MTA run by the state. We're working closely together to keep these really foundational concepts moving that we have to constantly give out those face coverings constantly educate people, constantly help show people the safe way to do things. I ask every New Yorker, because this has always been a participatory reality. We got safer and healthier because of what you did, keep doing it when you're out in public, observe those standards and help others too, as well.

Now, our job is to help working people get back to work. Our job is to keep working people safe and healthy. Our job is to help businesses back on their feet. And we know that's particularly true with small businesses. They've borne the brunt of this crisis. They are the heart and soul of our neighborhoods. We have to do special things to help small businesses. Small businesses, mom and pop stores. Multigenerational stores make New York, New York. They are who we are, and we have to protect them and help them. Here to tell you about our efforts, as we begin phase one of this restart, our commissioner for small business services, Jonnel Doris.

Commissioner Jonnel Doris, Small Business Services: Thank you, sir. The Department of Small Business Services helps unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and build and thrive in neighborhoods across the five boroughs. Aside from supporting the small business community, with access to finance and technical assistance programs and training, we also oversee the city's 18 workforce one centers. Annually, we serve over a thousand New Yorkers, connecting them to train in high quality jobs and careers, a hundred thousand New Yorkers. We are currently working with over 300 employers to source 4,000 essential workers during this crisis. We've partnered with the foods czar team to establish a workforce development program that is specifically targeted toward essential businesses, including grocers. We are working with hospitals and nursing homes to provide support in filling urgent staffing needs. The last week, the mayor announced the emergency grant program in which we established for those who've been vandalized or alluded doing the last few weeks, the grant focused on M/WBEs and mom and pop shops with less than 1.5 million in annual revenue. This fund had initial 500,000 investment from Somos Care Organization and the Mayor's Fund to provide grants up to 10,000

per eligible business. Today, we are announcing a new partner in this effort. Signature bank has contributed another 750,000 to help 75 businesses bring our total now to 1.25 million for grants, this will help at least 125 impacted businesses in all five boroughs with recovery, including repairs, security systems locks and more. Thank you, Signature Bank, and thanks to the Mayor's Fund for your commitment to small businesses.

Throughout the pandemic, and since phase one, reopening, I have visited businesses in every borough. I was in Staten Island yesterday, and I'm heading out to the Bronx again today. We know that New York City means business, and our small businesses are tough, resilient, and are looking forward to coming back. I've heard firsthand, there is real optimism out there, a real sense of it. Yet, we understand that the challenges of reopening for some of our small businesses are real. SBS has rolled out resources to help small businesses during this time to recover, and to reopen. From the onset of the pandemic, we quickly launched several resources to help reopen small businesses and provide the necessary guidance and support they need. Our first job was to educate and help our small businesses understand the reopening process, and get them ready to come back. As of today, we've launched educational webinars and trainings. We have connected small businesses to over \$65 million in financial assistance. Our hotline has received over 6,000 calls so far for reopening guidance, financial assistance and PPE. 334,000 guidance documents have been distributed to businesses. We are translating that into also 10 languages. 1.84 million face coverings distributed to small businesses with our 72 partners across the city, and we will hit the 2 million Mark and keep going. If you are a business and need support, please visit us at nyc.gov/business or our hotline at 888-SBS-4NYC, (888) 727-4692, or call 311. Thank you, sir.

Mayor: Thank you so much Jonnel. I want to say Jonnel to you and everyone at Small Business Services, you were all doing such important work before the pandemic, but now is a time when everyone at Small Business Services is doing absolutely crucial work for this city. Small Businesses needed the help before the pandemic. We talked about it in the state of the city address, how small businesses are our heart and soul in this city, but they have suffered a lot in the realities of today's economy. We needed to help them then, we need to help them even more now. And Commissioner Jonnel Doris, and everyone at Small Business Services is really stepping up. So, thank you very, very much for the extraordinary efforts. And I want to thank all of the city agencies that are doing the work this week to help businesses back on their feet, help them get the answers they need, help them move forward. There's been a huge amount of work done by the Buildings Department, Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. So many agencies are playing a role in this restart. And I want to give you a fact, I think is quite striking. You know, we said a few days ago, the goal would be for city agencies to go out and educate, help make sure small businesses knew, and all businesses knew what they needed to get started. Help make sure it was safe and healthy. Get them those free face coverings, but obviously to make sure that the rules are being followed. And we've had a huge amount of activity in terms of inspections just these first days of the restart. Total inspections now 15,755 work sites have been inspected. I want to give you the good news, over 15,000 of those, so the vast, vast majority, 100 percent on track doing exactly what we need them to do for the health and safety of their workers. Moving forward, three percent only needed a warning or some education on something they needed to fix, and that is being fixed. And again, our goal is not to give fines in the first instance, our goal is, as everyone's learning together, how to do this, help them move forward, help them get it right down the line if we need tougher enforcement, that's always an option. But

we hope to never need that, we hope to help everyone get to the right place for the health and safety of all, and so the restart can keep building.

Now, the restart is heating up, but something else is heating up and that is the weather, and we can all feel that hot summer ahead. We've talked about the fact that we have to get ahead of the hot weather and protect New Yorkers, particularly those most vulnerable from what mother nature may have in store for us. And we have to particularly focus on our seniors, our seniors have borne the brunt in the coronavirus crisis and particularly seniors who have not had enough healthcare in their life because health care, again, tragically is distributed in this country, according to income, not according to need. Another reminder, why we need universal healthcare in this country, so many seniors have gone a lifetime without all the healthcare they deserve, so many seniors who are lower income are suffering right now. We need to make sure they are protected against the heat ahead. So, we have a program we launched weeks ago called get cool NYC, and the idea of get cool NYC is to focus on those who are most vulnerable, make sure they are safe, make sure they're kept cool. Even with some of the challenges of the coronavirus, even when some of the adjustments we've had to make some new approaches, make sure our seniors are safe.

So, first of all, most important immediate piece of this is giving out 74,000 free air conditioning units to low income seniors and a focus, particularly on low income seniors in public housing, about a third of those air conditioners will go to low income seniors who live in NYCHA. Right now, there has been outreach to approximately 180,000 seniors to find out who needs these air conditioners, 25,000 have met the standards and we're moving to install those air conditioners and then keep going from there. So, 4,000 units installed already more going each day, the goal is to be able to install 1500 air conditioners each day and have all 74,000 installed by the end of July, we are confident we can meet that goal. Now the public service commission, I'm sorry, I started July, I misspoke, my apologies started July end of June started July my apology. The public service commission and the state public service commission, we reached out to them, we sent a particular request to them asking help with low income, New Yorkers who have to pay their energy bills over the summer as the hot weather's coming we want people to be able to afford that air conditioning. It's one thing to have the air condition unit, you have to be able to afford it as well. The state public service commission has come through and I want to thank them, that's a big deal, they're going to double the current commitment for subsidizing the energy bills of low income, New Yorkers. So almost 440,000 New York City families will benefit because of this decision by the state public service commission. And the average savings per customer will be about \$140 this summer, that's for a lot of families in this city, a lot of money. So, a big step forward, thanks to the PSC for this really important helping hand.

Alright, I want to turn to a different topic that is very much relevant to what we've done. All of us fighting the coronavirus and a reminder as we restart, we're going to make sure that the parts of our lives that really determine our future are protected, and that means voting. You know, it's been a tough, complicated time, but one thing we know in a democracy is it so important to keep the democratic process strong and moving no matter what's thrown at us, that's been the history of this city and this country. So, I want to remind people how important it is to keep voting, in fact, in a time of crisis, it's more important to keep voting. Okay, you have five days left to request an absentee ballot and remember any eligible voter can vote by mail now, it's not like it

used to be with absentee ballots where you have to prove you're going to be out of town, or you could not get out of your apartment or something like that. Anyone, everyone is welcome to send in an application for an absentee ballot to basically vote by mail as is done in many parts of the country already. So, you have until next Tuesday to submit that request, to get an application, you go to NYCabsentee.com or call 866-VOTE-NYC, 866-VOTE-NYC, June 23rd is the primary election day. And if you need any more information, go to vote.nyc and you can get all the information you need, and the most important thing is to make pure voice heard.

Okay, we will now wrap up with our healthcare indicators and I want to just frame this by saying, we all understand that the restart means more and more people in close proximity. Phase one means a lot, phase two means even more, the central concern that I have, I know that the Governor has, the state has as well as to watch every day to make sure that as we have more activity, there is not a resurgence of this disease. This is what we think about every single day, and we watch these indicators constantly to see if we see any evidence of a challenge or problem. If we do, we're going to talk about out loud, we're going to remind people about what we need to do to fight it back. There's three indicators, we go over each day, two are particularly sensitive in the sense of, they will show us most quickly what's going on out there, and if we have to make adjustments. Of course, hospital admissions for those respiratory symptoms, that is a very clear immediate indicator, and most obviously the percentage of people testing positive for COVID-19 citywide, that's the most universal of all measures. So, we're watching, we have three indicators, but two are particularly sensitive and tell us in real time what's going on. What we're happy to say is over this last period of time, as we've been ready for the restart and now begun to restart, we've seen actually steady progress on our indicators, but the big test comes later in the month, as we start to see the impact of so many people being closer together, remember it takes time for this disease to be spread, it takes time for it to manifest. We're not going to see it instantly, if there is a resurgence, we would see it in the second half of the month. So, we're watching every day, but here's today's report, and this is another good news report today, and again, thanks to all of you. Indicator, number one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected, COVID-19 again, threshold of 200 today's report 70 patients. And I'm going to note, and we'll talk about this further, that the more research we do, the more we're finding a lot of those patients, thank God are not COVID patients, even if they present with COVID like symptoms. So, we'll keep giving more and more information on that going forward, but overall that number 70, well within our threshold. Number two, daily number of people in health and hospitals, ICU at threshold 375, the number today 339, and then the percentage of people tested positive for COVID-19 citywide three percent again, we've been around that number for many days and that's a very good sign.

A few words in Spanish, as we wrap up.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that we turned 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 Small Business Commissioner Doris, here in person. And on the phone, we have Deputy Mayor Been, President and CEO of Health and

Hospitals, Dr. Katz, Emergency Management Commissioner Criswell, Senior Advisor, Dr. Varma, Deputy Commissioner for Traffic Management and Planning Beaton, and Senior Advisor and General Counsel for DemocracyNYC Wood. With that, I will start with Samantha from 1010 WINS.

Samantha, are you there?

Mayor: Samantha? Can you hear us?

Moderator: Samantha, we'll circle back.

Mayor: Try one more time. Samantha, can you hear us?

I wanted just to encourage to all our colleagues in the media, please, if you can call from a hard line, please do, or you can make sure you're in good cell range, it really, really helps all of us. But Samantha, one more time, can you hear us? Alright, we'll come back to Samantha.

Moderator: Alright. Next we'll go to Yoav from the city.

Question: Hi everyone. I wanted to ask about the selection of James Johnson to lead the independent review. [inaudible] Potential NYPD [inaudible] responding to the protest. In his role as Corp counsel, if there are lawsuits filed against the NYPD, he would be the official to lead Corp counsel, the law department in defending the city against those lawsuits. So how can we possibly do an independent review without a conflict of interest, you know, why, why would he point to potential misconduct that he then in his role as court counsel— would have to dependent defend the NYPD against?

Mayor: Yeah, I appreciate the question. Obviously, in making the selection, I was familiar with the role the law department plays, but I'm also familiar with Jim Johnson and his history. He has done independent reviews related to civil rights and law enforcement. And previously he has worked within law enforcement, he has worked monitoring government, he's done a lot of different things that make him powerfully suited to this role. I have no doubt he can maintain his independence and set whatever appropriate boundaries, but constantly remember that it is also the Department of Investigation and Commissioner Margaret Garnett, and it will be doing their review, and I have no doubt about the independence of that review as well. So, I think we are bringing in capacity from two leaders who as individuals bring so much to the table, two departments that bring a lot to the table. I want the whole truth, Yoav, I've, I've made very clear to both of them go wherever the facts lead, I am not worried about any question liability. I want the truth and they both understand that, and I'm convinced that they are well suited to get us the truth.

Question: Thanks. Just to follow up, you, you addressed kind of the independence aspect of it, but not the, the inherent conflict of interest there. Why, why would as an investigator, why would he point to potential failings of an agency that he then is responsible for protecting in court? And just to add a little bit to that is, is the OIG, NYPD also involved in this investigation?

Mayor: Yeah. You can talk to Department of Investigation about how they are going to structure it, but absolutely the IG for the NYPD will be involved. And again, I'm just convinced knowing Jim Johnson, knowing his history, understanding what he brings to the table; it's so important for my point of view for the people of this city, for him to be involved in finding out what the truth is. Again, the, the conflict exists, if there's any desire, not to portray the truth and act on it and again, we want the whole truth and we are not concerned about the liability issues. We want to figure out what exactly happened and what to do about it. And Jim has so much history acting on that very question in other settings, and he's been very, very effective doing it. And again, DOI, right there always providing another element to the equation and a clearly effective, independent element. I think it's a good combination that will get us where we need to go.

Moderator: Next we have Julia from the Post.

Question: Hey, happy Friday, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Happy Friday.

Question: Two questions for you. The first one, you praise Chief of Department Terence Monahan for taking a knee with protesters. Now, we have NYPD Lieutenant Robert Cattani who wrote that he regrets his “horrible decision to give into a crowd of protest or demands and perform the symbolic pose.” At the same time, he said, he'd still condemn the actions of the former Minneapolis cop accused of killing George Floyd. Just wondering what your response is to his retraction?

Mayor: I don't know him. I appreciate that he condemned the killing of George Floyd. I think every police officer in America should condemn the murder of George Floyd because it represents something has nothing to do with the oath that police officers take. I don't know the Lieutenant, but what I do know is the Chief of Department Terry Monahan did something really important, not just for New York City, for the whole nation. I mean, let's be clear, Terry Monahan is the highest-ranking uniform officer in the largest, most prestigious police force in the United States of America. He chose to take a knee after making a very powerful speech and anyone who hasn't heard it should listen to it; talk about how we New Yorkers are all in this together. We need to solve our problems together, and there's no police who should ever accept the kind of thing that happened in Minnesota. He took the knee to show people that he respected and heard their voices and the crowd responded in kind at that point and dispersed what was a tense situation. So, I want to give a lot of respect to Terry Monahan for what he did. I don't know the Lieutenant, I don't know what he feels, but I want to go back to the beginning of your question. The person who is the highest-ranking member of this department did something I think very important for this city and I commend him for it.

Question: Great, thanks and then my second question is on a different topic. One of my colleagues asked last week, whether you'd seen any uptick in coronavirus cases or hospitalizations since the protest started and now, I believe, it's been over two weeks. You said it would take a few more days to determine that. Now that it's been several days, have you seen any evidence of a spike? I know one publication mentioned a three day rise in hospitalizations, and if you haven't seen any, why do you think that is?

Mayor: Yeah, I don't know. I'll see if Dr. Varma or Dr. Katz want to add. I have not – the fact is, I mean, you just heard the indicators they've been stable and in very much in the range we want them to be. Again, I don't think it's all exactly linear Julia, how the disease spreads, you know, it doesn't always fit a specific timeframe, but the only thing I can offer as a layman is the fact that everything occurred outdoors is important. We know for a fact, you know, exposure is more limited outdoors than indoors and from what I saw a whole lot of people were wearing face coverings. And I, as you know, I went very close to a lot of the protests to see them myself; a lot of people wearing face coverings – that's real important. Those are only two things I can offer.

Dr. Varma, Dr. Katz, you want to add anything?

Senior Advisor Jay Varma: Yeah. This is Jay Varma. I would say that we have to continue to be cautious. The dynamics of the disease can vary depending on, on many different factors and we think of this as having an incubation period of as long as 14 days. And in public health, we generally try to wait even as long as two full incubation periods – so that would be even 28 days before we can be comfortable saying that a certain event, whether it's a protest or any other type of gathering might cause an increase. I think we're reassured that we haven't seen anything yet, but I don't think we can change our levels.

Mayor: Thank you. Okay.

Moderator: We're going to circle back to Samantha now. Samantha from 1010 Wins.

Question: Yes. Hi, good morning there. Can you hear me now?

Mayor: Yeah. Samantha, how you doing?

Question: Good. How are you?

Mayor: Good, good.

Question: So, I have two questions, one is I don't know if you've seen this new video that came out in the arrest of Jahmel Leach so I wanted to get your reaction to seeing it. And my second question is about learning in the fall, the UFT sent out a, a letter about hybrid possibly in the fall and some teachers are against it because they don't feel safe going back while parents say that they're, you know, they don't know how to coordinate childcare or drop-off, pick -up. And also there's concern about children in special education and getting their needs met. Would you, would you consider maybe just having the children in special education come in or, you know, some plans to help them because they're the ones that are really falling behind?

Mayor: Thank you very much, Samantha, very important questions. First, on Jahmel Leach. I have met him, I've met his family – I'm very concerned about this situation, a young man, a teenager, obviously going through a lot of pain right now in every sense. We need to understand exactly what happened and need to get the truth to this family and to the public. And there needs to be appropriate follow through depending on what we find, obviously. So I am, have not seen

the video; I will make it a point to, to see it, but I more importantly have met this young man and I feel for him. I want to see what the truth is and what it tells us we need to do next.

On your second question, a very important question. Special-ed, look for I've been working on special-ed issues for decades. Kids with special needs we owe it to them to always go the extra mile, their parents and I say this as a parent myself, they've been through so much in non-pandemic times – special-ed parents deal with a lot. And for many years, I think the city was profoundly unfair to them and tried to keep them from the services that they needed for strictly budgetary reasons. We have been trying to end that madness and provide special-ed support, wherever whenever needed and it costs, you know, many billions of dollars, but it has been the right thing to do. The special-ed needs our kids this summer, this fall, we're working right now to figure out how to address that, right. The, the thing that's hard for us all to remember, Samantha its June 12th, normally this time of year, we'd be about two weeks from school ending in a normal school year and then the summer activities would pick up, you know, a week or two after that. So, we have to quickly in the month of June, determine what the summer looks like in terms of special-ed. And obviously as we figure out what's happening with the coronavirus, which is far from certain, as you can see. But in terms of the fall I've had this conversation in great detail with our Chancellor Richard Carranza and our First Deputy Mayor, Dean Fuleihan and a lot of other members of our team. The goal is to get the maximum number of kids back into our school buildings, where they can learn best, but that goal is wholly contingent upon the health dynamics. We have three months until school reopens. So, three months to see whether we beat back this disease more, or whether we are dealing with unfortunately, a resurgence. We're going to make decisions based on health and safety first. If the health conditions allow and we can keep our kids safe, our family's safe, our educators safe, our staff safe, we want the maximum number of kids come back to school, but we expect that to be with social distancing requirements, face coverings, and therefore there'll be real capacity issues. We also know a lot of parents and kids won't be ready to come back right away. So, we are going to have the option of remote for anyone who needs it and we may have to do more or less remote depending on what's happening with the disease. So, we'll have different opportunities available, different plans ready, but the goal remains three months before school begins; the goal remains to get the maximum number of kids back who are ready to come back because it is the best way to educate them. If we can keep them safe, it's the healthiest best option for them in terms of their whole growth and development. And as you said, there's some parents who are absolutely asking us now to re-open school so they have that option for their kids as they return to work. So, we're going to be ready depending on the health and safety dynamics; we're unquestionably going to be ready.

Moderator: Next we have Alice from CBS.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Good morning.

Mayor: Good morning. How are you doing?

Question: Good, thank you. Okay, so, Camden, New Jersey removed its Columbus statue last night. When asked yesterday, Governor Cuomo says he supported the statue here in New York. I was wondering your thoughts on it. I know the commission established in 2017 ruled keeping it in place. Do you think we need to revisit this?

Mayor: Alice, the commission did really careful, extensive work, really good devoted people who care about understanding all of history and they care about social justice and they came up with a vision for how to address this. And, you know, we should, I think, just stick to what was achieved by that commission.

Alice, do you have follow-up?

Question: Yes, are there any concerns that people will take matters into their own hands? I know security was stepped up around the statue.

Mayor: Again, the important point is just, we need as a city to just keep moving forward on so many fronts. I'm concerned, I'll tell you why I'm concerned about, I'm concerned about the here and now issues that we need to address. Right now, I'm concerned about everything that we do we have to do to keep people safe in the city, to get people back their livelihood, to address the crucial issues of reform that we are talking about this week; better, clearer police discipline, shifting resources from NYPD to youth services and social services. That's where my concern is.

Moderator: Next we have Ben from Fox News.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Thanks for taking my question. First question is, I'd like to get your reactions to a lawsuit filed by the New York City Detectives Endowment Association – it's against a looting suspect accused of attacking one of its members. And their warning of other such suits. And I'll give you my second question after that.

Mayor: Yeah. Thank you, Ben. I have not seen what the lawsuit is about. I can only, say not knowing the details of the case, just a broad statement, we need peace in this city. We need to move forward in this city. And, you know, I want to see – anything involving the police and their actions, as we've talked about earlier in this press conference, there are multiple investigations going on, but I also want to remind people how important it is to never do violence towards anyone, including towards police officers. It's just not acceptable in a democratic society to do violence towards our police. So, I don't know the details of this, but that's what I believe broadly. What's your second question, Ben?

Question: Thank you, Mayor. And just the second question being, we're several days now out of the riot situation and the violence we saw – when all is said and done, what grade would you give to the NYPD? You know, considering that only very few, a small number have been put on the investigation, the overall force seems to have done a pretty, pretty good job. What's your assessment of the NYPD's handling of the protests and the riots?

Mayor: Yeah. Ben, I would say very important to recognize overwhelmingly peaceful protest – a small number of people who aim to do violence at those protests, but a very small number. And they were increasingly driven off by the peaceful protestors. And some very unfortunate and criminal acts of attack attacks on property that had nothing to do with the protests. So, you use a word, I don't think is the right word, because I've seen here in this city all over the country what it looks like when there's something that's much deeper going on. What I saw over those 10 days

or so, or two weeks, was overwhelmingly peaceful protest. I saw some specific acts of violence by people motivated to do violence against our police, which is unacceptable. I saw some people who I think were acting as criminals, and criminals only, with no political motivation, attacking property and for their own gain. But if you look at the overwhelming number of people who are engaged over those days, they were peaceful protesters. And if you look at the overwhelming number of police officers who were involved in those days, they did their job and they did it with restraint. And we have some officers who did something wrong, and that is now being fully investigated by multiple levels of government. Clearly, some officers are already experiencing the consequences and I think that process is working and it needs to be fast and transparent. And because of the law passed in Albany, now we'll be able to do a lot more. But, overall, look, I don't give grades. I've never given grades. I will say something about the City of New York and the NYPD and the protesters – we went through an extraordinarily difficult time, but the city held, the peaceful protesters came to the fore, the vast majority of NYPD officers did their job and did it with restraint. We had no one lose our lives, Thank God. We had some major injuries, but they were few, thank God. We had a few really bad days in terms of property damage and then it was stopped cold. We did not bring in the National Guard. We did not use some of the more, I think, oppressive tactics that were used in other cities. That doesn't mean everything was perfect. There's a lot that needs to be assessed and improved. But this city held, this city came through, and now we are turned to the work of reform and renewal, and that's where we need to be.

Moderator: Next we have Michael from the Daily News.

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

Mayor: Good, Michael. How are you doing, man?

Question: I'm doing all right. Couple of questions – back to Yoav's question about the Law Department. You said that you're not concerned about the liability. Can you elaborate on that? You know, with the kind of fiscal issues that city's facing now, how can you not be concerned about that at this point?

Mayor: Michael, what it means is, the truth is the truth. And, obviously, I want to protect the City's finances always, but what I'm trying to say is, some people might put money ahead of truth – I don't. I want to know exactly what happened. I want us to address the issue structurally. If something done was done wrong with any individual, we have to do right. If somebody requires discipline or consequences – anybody – by the way, this review is going to look at people on the NYPD, people who were protesting, and particularly those, as I've said, who chose to use violence. We're going to look at the whole picture. So, what I'm trying to say is that any concern that somehow, you know, the financial dynamics are more important than the truth – no, it's the other way around. We've got to get to the truth. We've got to go wherever the facts lead us so we can address these much bigger issues.

Question: One more question, if you would. You know, I wanted to ask you about the letters that have been going around from current and former staffers and some of the things – you know, I don't know if I'd call them former allies, or allies – people like Jumanne and Donovan,

Richards have said – does this – do you feel betrayed by some of these things? And how does it, if at all, affect your ability to govern?

Mayor: It doesn't. I respect everyone's opinion. When you're mayor of a city of over 8 million people, you better be able to handle different opinions, strong opinions, criticism, passion, emotion. There are critics who are wrong. There are critics who have real insights in the political world. Sometimes people act like your friend and they're not. Sometimes people surprise you in terms of really being an ally when you didn't expect it. There's all sorts of things that happen, Michael. But, to me, the bottom line is, it's been a very difficult few weeks, a lot of passions, a lot of deep feeling, a lot of strong views. I don't take any of it lightly. I value and respect people's views, but I think anyone who questions the ability of this city government to do what we're here to do and my ability as mayor to use all the tools of City government, even in a time of crisis, doesn't really understand the reality of New York City. We have kept going. The City has gone through so much over the years. This city has stayed strong during this crisis – the coronavirus, over a hundred days, we had a really difficult few weeks, but we fared a lot better than many cities in this country. We're the epicenter of the virus – so, I want to remind you, Michael – I'm not saying this because you don't know, I was saying it to make the point clear – other cities went through the challenges the last few weeks in terms of protest and addressing these horrible age-old issues and structural racism. And a lot of them used much harsher tactics, a lot of them saw much more violence. This city that was already the epicenter of the coronavirus in his country also went through that, and not withstanding some very painful moments and some things we need to do better, this city came through very strong, and we are poised to now make profound changes and reforms. I'm really pleased at what the Legislature has done. We're going to do a lot of great work with the City Council. We're going to do a lot of great work immediately in our budget. So, I'm quite clear, quite confident about what I can over the next year and a half, what the City government can achieve. And folks who misunderstand the power of the mayoralty and the strength of the City government in New York City really need to get a little more informed. This is the strongest mayoralty in the country in every sense and the strongest city in the country in every sense, and we can persevere through all sorts of challenges, and we will. So, I'm quite confident in what we can do in the next year and a half.

Moderator: Next we have Matt Chayes from Newsday. Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have two questions.

Mayor: Hey, Matt.

Question: Hey, sir. Will you vet the restaurant recipients of the grants that you announced yesterday for Health Department inspection and wage complaints? And I'll ask my second question after.

Mayor: I will start. It's a good question, Matt. Appreciate it. I will start and I'll turn to Commissioner Jonnel Doris, but just starting to say this, the crucial thing in everything we do is, of course, absolutely want fairness for working people, absolutely want health standards complied with, and we also have to recognize at the same time that we are talking about community-based small businesses that really must survive for the good of their communities. And there's such fear – and I've talked to a lot of elected officials about this – there's such fear

about communities losing their art and soul, which are these mom and pop stores, these multigenerational businesses, these restaurants that are gathering places. And, you know, we're not talking about gentrification a whole lot now – and I don't blame anyone after the last a hundred days – but came up last night, we had a really powerful – I did a conference call with faith leaders and one of the leaders from Central Brooklyn – and I want to shout her out, because I found her words, profound – Sister Majida Salaam, talked about the impact of gentrification on Central Brooklyn and how long before the protests or the coronavirus there were profound senses of injustice as people saw gentrifiers come in and seemingly be favored over people who had been the neighborhood for generations and had struggled through the tough times.

So, I want to put this in perspective that those community-based restaurants are part of the heart and soul and identity, and people are so fearful they're going to be wiped away by gentrification to begin with, and then coronavirus, economic crisis, and we've got to help them back on their feet. I don't think there's a contradiction between that and making sure, of course, that they are safe and they treat their workers well. And particularly in the initiative we talked about yesterday, that was laid out by the First Lady and by Toya Williford, the Executive Director of the Mayor's Fund, there are specific guarantees about wage levels in that initiative. Commissioner Doris, do you want to add?

Commissioner Doris: Sure, just to reiterate, the Restaurant Revitalization Program, \$3 million for this opportunity, 27 hardest hit communities, \$30,000 grants and \$20 per hour at least for six weeks for supporting 1,000 workers. All that to say that, look, we want to make sure that about 27,000 restaurants in the city, particularly those in the hardest hit communities, that they have the support they need. And I think that program does it. What we're doing also at the Department of Small Business Services is assist and help those businesses get back on their feet. But we do want to make sure that we are getting to those who need the support the most. And, again, that program is representative of that as well.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, Matt.

Question: How many internal affairs inquiries have been generated stemming from the protests and how many of those were initiated because the NYPD initiated that inquiry on its own, meaning the PD flagged behavior because they saw a bystander – excuse me, because they saw a police officer doing something wrong rather than because of a video caught a cop in the act?

Mayor: Do not know the answer is the truth. IAB initiates its own investigations, for sure. I have seen that for a long time. It also initiates investigations because civilians make complaints or they're brought by the media, they're brought by elected officials, they're brought by other agencies in the City government. So, in terms of the breakout of these last days, I don't know that yet, but we'll get that to you. Also, I don't think it's all done yet, meaning I think information is still coming in. Anytime we receive a new report, you know, we want to make sure IAB is following up and I think that's still happening, but we'll get you whatever we can on the state of play up to now.

Moderator: Next we have Sophia from WNYC.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Hey Sophia, how are you?

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor, can you hear me? Hi, can you hear me?

Mayor: Yeah, can you hear me?

Question: Yes. Last week, China Williams, a 27-year-old parolee was trapped by NYPD before curfew [inaudible] of hundreds of other peaceful protesters. He said NYPD officers didn't care when he told them he was an essential worker who had just finished his shift as a janitor at an HRA office. And as a result, he spent the last week in jail on a technical parole violation based allegedly on violating your own curfew. How much responsibility do you feel you bear for implementing a curfew that has resulted in peaceful protesters and essential workers being jailed?

Mayor: Yeah. Sophia, could you say the name again? Make sure we're speaking about the same person please.

Question: China Williams, 27.

Mayor: Yeah, I have – I think we're talking about the same situation, but not the same name, at least from what I have. I'm looking at Freddi Goldstein for a moment.

Press Secretary Freddi Goldstein: It's not the same name –

Mayor: It's not the same name but it sounds like the same case. But we'll confirm. Sophia, in the interest of making sure I'm accurate, let me have us come back to you. I was briefed on one particular case where it was someone who was on parole and we're trying to understand what happened in that case, why the fact that someone, as I understand it – it was someone who had been in state prison, came out, was on parole, and what the interrelationship of being on parole and that arrest was. And I'm still trying to get the facts about that. But let me be clear, we said from the very beginning that essential workers were exempted from the curfew. No essential worker who was going about their business as an essential worker, should have ever been arrested by the NYPD. Now, I don't know if that's what happened here. This is absolutely, Sophia, part of the investigation. This particular instance needs to be looked at – the State AG, the independent investigation by the Department of Investigation and Corp Counsel, IAB – everyone needs to look at what happened here.

The curfew, to your question, was the – I'm convinced was the right thing to do, because it was part of how we overcame both the violence that we were seeing, but more importantly and specifically, the attacks on property that really were causing horrible damage in the city. And I went up to the Bronx. I saw a working-class community deeply, deeply hurt by the attacks on property. I saw immigrant small business people, their lifetime's work destroyed. It was the right thing to put the curfew in place to stop that. The second we saw that that was not happening and we were convinced it would not happen again, pulled off the curfew, but that doesn't mean that

everything that a police officer did during that time was right. And we're going to do review across the board to make sure things were done properly. And if they weren't done properly, there needed to be consequences.

Moderator: Sophia, do you have a follow up?

Question: I do. And this is about day camps. The State has cleared day camps to open on June 29th, but many camps here in New York City that need permits from the Parks Department say they haven't gotten them yet. Will the Parks Department issue permits to camps and when can we expect that?

Mayor: It's an important question, Sophia. I got to get an update on that. Again, our conditions here in the city are the most complex in the whole state. And I have to see what the executive order says specifically, what conditions it sets, what amount of local discretion it sets. So, it's a very important issue. I know a lot of people want to see them get up and running, but we have to do it safely. So, this is one that I can come back to you on, or our team will come back to you on later on today.

Moderator: Last two for today. Next, we have Debralee from Manhattan Times and Bronx Free Press.

Question: Hey, good morning, everyone.

Mayor: Can you hear us, Debralee?

Question: Can you hear me?

Mayor: Debralee?

Question: I can, can you hear me?

Mayor: Yup. You're good.

Question: Good morning to all. Terrific. Mr. Mayor, I wanted to ask you about some concerns that advocates and undocumented immigrants are having as the city continues to move deeper into its reopening. A lot of them are feeling like they're being left behind, and I wanted you to speak specifically to whether the race equity forum and the panel has been actually, you know, developing specific policies and measures that speak to their concerns. You've got rent, the moratorium coming up. You've got a lot of issues, particularly with restaurant workers that you mentioned yesterday, that affect undocumented immigrants. And many of them are not hearing that there – the City is planning for their return to, you know, the regular structures of life.

Mayor: Well, Debralee, it's a very, very important question. And I know you were up in the Bronx when I was there seeing the damage done to immigrant small businesses and small businesses where many immigrants work. And I think it gets back to the previous question as well, that ending the violence so we could move forward as a city was particularly crucial to

folks who are the most vulnerable and in the economy. And that means immigrants across the board and particularly undocumented immigrants. So, we've got to understand how all these pieces interplay, restoring peace, so we could move forward with the restart, so that we could get people back to work, particularly those who needed the work the most is how I see the way the pieces come together. We have, as a city, committed for undocumented folks, not only fairness and respect and never asking documentation status, all of our efforts to help people, our food program is for everyone regardless of documentation status, our guaranteed health care program is for everyone regardless of documentation status, obviously public schools, you name it, a whole range of services.

And what I've been trying to do to make sure that there are not evictions helps everyone, including undocumented folks. We also worked with Open Society Institute on specific funding from the outside, from the philanthropic world to help undocumented folks who have lost their income. Going forward, the Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity, three co-chairs, one executive director of the three co-chairs. One is an immigrant himself, Deputy Mayor Raul Perea-Henze. One is a child of immigrants, Grace Bonilla, and the Executive Director. I know they are deeply, deeply sensitive to what immigrant New Yorkers go through. I think there's no question that task force is looking at the needs of immigrants and specifically undocumented immigrants to see everything we can do. But I would say – again, I think the first question is how to help the businesses that are most likely to support immigrant communities and employ immigrant New Yorkers? I think what Commissioner Doris talked about, a lot of that initiative – those initiatives that he's talked about are specifically helping immigrant businesses. Obviously the money helping the stores recover in the Bronx. The restaurant initiative that the First Lady talked about yesterday, I think they're all focused on helping immigrant businesses in so many ways. So a lot more to do, but I at least want to give you some frame of how much of a focus this is.

Moderator: Debralee you have a follow up?

Question: I do. It's [inaudible] separate question. Mr. Mayor, you've been really open about what you feel are some of your gaps in terms of understanding and privilege as a white man. And I wonder given the unrest and the kinds of police actions that we've seen in the last weeks, do you think with all due respect to Commissioner Shea, that it was incumbent upon you since you were looking to be a transformative mayor, to have appointed a commissioner of color, a police commissioner of color as many advocates had wanted to have happened long before?

Mayor: I appreciate the question, Debralee and it's a very thoughtful, important question. I obviously asked myself in everything I do, how to balance all of the factors. I want to see maximum inclusion and representation. When you think about this administration by far the most representative administration in the history of the city, well over 50 percent of the senior leadership roles are women. There's greater representation from all communities than we've seen in any City government before. But we want to do more and we want to do more in the next year and a half and want to see future administrations do more.

I think the question of police commissioner – it combines so many – it's one of the toughest jobs in America to be the commissioner of the NYPD. And it combines so many different factors that

I think the most important thing for me was, who did I think when you composite everything, I mean, there's literally a thousand different things that a police commissioner needs to think about. When you composite everything, who was in the best position to move us forward across the board? That meant the constant reform of the NYPD, continue to drive down crime, fight terrorism, which we're not thinking about a lot right now, but we did have to think a lot about before, continue to develop the extraordinary talent in the organization, and bring forward leaders of tomorrow. There's so many pieces to the equation. And I, I don't think it's one thing or another Deborah Lee. I don't think it's – I absolutely understand your question. I appreciate your question. But to me it was who could move us forward most effectively when you thought about all of the things we had to achieve with the NYPD and its future?

And look, I think when you actually drill down on what Commissioner Shea is doing, he's been dealt a very tough hand, just new on the job. Some of the challenges that we have been dealing with, including the pandemic. I've seen a very, very coherent strategy to move the department forward. His focus on youth is now going to come to the fore again. What he said the other day about the fact that if his department was going to be – see its budget cut, the place he would most want it to go was Youth Services. That was a profound statement. The fact that he was talking about a reorientation of the NYPD to youth months and months ago before all of this. Ge feels that deeply. And the fact that he has been moving the disciplinary process faster than we've ever seen before, and it needs to go faster still, but I think he's proving by his actions his ability to help us move forward as a city.

Moderator: Last question for today. We have Joe from Politico.

Question: Good morning Mr. Mayor. I wanted to ask you again about the COVID stats? I'm curious if you could tell us a little bit about, you know, if we continue to see a lack of a spike from these protests, how that's going to impact your decision making on other types of outdoor activities? And maybe when they can resume? Then I'll ask my second question after.

Mayor: Yeah, Joe, I think the protests were, you know, a very intense, concentrated time. But again, outdoors, people broadly wearing face coverings. And we don't see a lot of evidence yet, but we might. I don't want to, for a moment, belittle that we might. The curfew also kept a lot of people indoors. So there may have been some balancing factor there. But the big question really is what's going to be the impact of phase one. Because you're talking about hundreds of thousands of people coming in contact with each other each day, all day, every day. Protests, I'm not belittling the impact, but protests tended to be for brief periods of time and smaller numbers of people. Phase one is hundreds of thousands, when you talk about the workers, the customers, and it's all day it's seven days a week. I mean, this is the thing to watch. What does phase one do? So my view is when you get to the last week of June, you're going to have a much better sense of how all of this is adding up. And if we can move forward effectively into phase two, and it's going to be a constant conversation with the State.

I think the question about other types of activities directly relates to how successful phase one is. We're obviously talking about things like beaches, pools. Then there are things I think are the hardest things, which are really big gatherings, which are probably the last thing that gets dealt with. But I think the thing for everyone to remember is we're watching these daily indicators,

because they're going to tell us step-by-step are we making the right move and is it holding? Or do we need to pause for more information? Or do we ever need to in fact, take a step back to keep things safe. It's just going to be an everyday thing. But I like what I see so far. All of that qualification notwithstanding Joe. I really like what I see so far, I'm knocking on wood, as I say it. Go ahead. What's your next question?

Question: And then I wanted to go back to the idea of the Corp Counsel as the independent investigator. I'm wondering if you could tell me a little bit about the thought process where you know, despite your confidence in Jim, that there's – an even the appearance of a conflict which I think is baked into the structure of this arrangement and, you know, were you concerned in making this decision that it could undermine the results? And people won't accept them and you'll generate a whole other round of outrage in conflict?

Mayor: No. I really am not Joe. Of course, you know, I understand the role of Corp Counsel. But I don't blame anyone in the media who asked these questions. And I think it is inherent to the media persona and the character of people in the media to ask that kind of question. I respectfully submit that I don't think it's how everyday New Yorkers think. I think every day New Yorkers, when they – to the extent anyone stops to look at the work that is done in this review, they're going to look at who is Jim Johnson? What has he done? What is he about? What has his life been about? Is he an honest broker? There's not a question in my mind that he is literally perfectly suited to help figure out what happened and what needs to change. And Margaret Garnett as well has an extraordinary history and everyone understands the independence of DOI. So I have not a question in my mind that they're going to get to the truth. They're going to fearlessly, honestly, get to the truth. And it's not about whether the truth is convenient or not. We need the full truth and we need to figure out what we have to do about it. And I don't project negativity or defeat. I see the positive opportunity to have two highly, highly effective and respected public servants tell us what is there to know so we can act on it.

And I think people want to move forward. Another thing I always find about the people of this city is not only are they resilient, they want to move forward. They want to address the issues. But most importantly, like investigate, learn, act, move forward. And that's what we're going to do.

So, I'll conclude now with just a quick thought. And it's just a take your mind back to those weeks in March, where the disease was surging. Remember that shock of how fast it was moving. Remember I told you about Sunday, April 5th, I kept talking about in the days leading up, that we literally believed those next days after we're going to be a horrible time of the growth of the disease and that our hospital system would be threatened. And yet New Yorkers did the right thing just in time. Our hospitals held, we managed to fight the disease back at the most critical moment. It's a really heroic story. And you're the protagonist of this story. You made it happen. Now we have an opportunity to do something on a grand scale to bring this city back, to get people back their livelihoods, to give people hope through action. But it remains the responsibility, remains the responsibility of all of us to stick to the things that have worked. And I want to tell you every time you put on that face covering and when it's hot, that's really not a fun thing to do. I know. And every time you stay indoors when you'd rather be outside and every time you're trying to work on staying six feet away from someone, it actually adds up. Which is

why we are now in phase one. And why phase one is working. Let's keep it going, because that's how we get to phase two and everything thereafter, and a much better time for this city.

Thank you, everybody.

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