



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** January 25, 2018  
**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS ON HOT 97'S EBRO IN THE MORNING**

**Ebro Darden:** Mayor – can you guys – the Mayor is on the phone. He's in his second term. He's a second term New York City Mayor. He's standing up for things. He's fighting for things. You got to have some respect in this room – with Ebro in the Morning.

**Laura Stylez:** Yes, Mayor de Blasio.

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning. Wow, this is my morning affirmation. I feel good about this.

[Laughter]

**Darden:** There you go.

**Peter Rosenberg:** The Mayor spoke literally outside of apartment the other day. Did he knock on the door and have a bagel?

**Darden:** It's not about you, man. It was about the people at the time. It was the Women's March.

**Rosenberg:** Mayor, I woke up to your voice yelling outside of my apartment it was very interesting.

**Mayor:** I was saying, you know, we need fairness and rights for women and good morning Rosenberg. Did you hear that?

[Laughter]

**Rosenberg:** I did. I loved it.

**Darden:** Now, Mayor, you were out at the Women's March. Can you talk about midterm elections and what you're seeing locally here in New York City, New York State, and even nationally, what's going to happen with this Power to the Polls and this women's movement.

**Mayor:** Yeah, I got to tell you Ebro, I have said very strongly, I see the beginning of a progressive era and I think it's bigger than just is there going to be a Democratic wave in 2018. I see something much bigger happening. The Women's March this year was huge. Something is happening here that is at the foundations, at the grassroots. And we know a huge number of women, now, are stepping forward to run for office and becoming activists.

Clearly the Bernie Sanders movement has had a very big impact as well and these things are so much bigger than what happened with the election of Donald Trump. Donald Trump, you know, lost by three million votes, still got to become President because of something broken in our Constitution.

A whole new generational thing is happening too also. The reality of millennials and people coming behind them taking over the political process and not accepting the ground rules they were handed. That's what I see happening.

**Darden:** Got it. Now, let's jump to NYCHA, Mr. Mayor. You're still standing by your – I guess your Executive Shola who was on trial and they're saying that there were some lying taking place due to lead paint inspections being done, not being done. What's the full story?

**Mayor:** Yeah, so the Chair of NYCHA is Shola Olatoye. She has been an outstanding leader for an agency when we came in, it was very, very troubled. She is someone who truly cares about the residents. She's been out there in the developments all over the city. Shola has a real personal connection to the people she is serving.

Here's the bottom line, she came in, the organization was almost bankrupt, she fixed that, she put it on a firm footing. A lot of developments were very unsafe. Working with NYPD, she has made them a lot safer. She got a huge amount of money in to fix a lot of things that had never happened before.

And look there's kind of a very unfair rush to judgement going on because it's become convenient for a lot of people to attack her and call for head when in fact she's one of the people who's making change. And I'm standing by her because I see what's she's doing. I see the work that's happening.

**Darden:** Mayor de Blasio and other mayors – I guess there was a planned Wednesday meeting with President Trump in Washington. After the Justice Department threatened action against cities that protect undocumented immigrants – de Blaz, he's trying to shake you guys down, what's going on?

**Mayor:** The federal government keeps threatening New York City's money and keeps threatening funding that goes to fight terrorism and to fight crime –

**Darden:** Wow.

**Mayor:** This is where it gets absolutely surreal. The money in question comes from a federal grant program. It's called a Byrne Grant. So, what happened yesterday is Trump issues an invite to mayors for the first time in his administration. He invites America's mayors to come talk and

specifically about infrastructure – bipartisan group. Okay, we're willing to talk because it's an important issue for our cities.

The same morning they put out a big press release saying they're going to come and threaten this money again, and if we don't comply they'll subpoena, and all these threats. It was clear that at the very same time they were saying they wanted a dialogue, they resumed their attacks on America's cities. And a lot of mayors including my colleagues from Chicago, L.A., New Orleans said look, we're not going to go to a meeting under false pretenses.

Either you're interested in an actual dialogue or if it's just a stunt or photo-op, we're not doing this. The only time he has asked for a meeting with the mayors of America, there's an annual mayor's conference in D.C. It's the only time that Donald Trump has issued an invitation to mayors to meet with him and that's the same morning the Justice Department does another one of its attack, press efforts to say they are going to come take our money.

It's incredibly – it's either carefully times and I suspect it is because right now, what Trump wants to say is that somehow, you know, democrats are coddling, you know, immigrants and I think it is a very cynical strategy.

**Darden:** Now let's jump to Big Pharmaceuticals –

**Mayor:** I'm ready.

**Darden:** Big Pharmaceutical, you are leveling a law suit at eight companies, suing them for the damage their pills, have done to our communities and families. And I'm assuming it's under the guise of tax payers have to pay for these addicts, tax payers have to pay for all of this, you know rehabilitation, so Big Pharmaceutical owes us some money.

**Mayor:** Oh, to say the least Ebro. Right now we are talking about an epidemic, it's everywhere in the country, it's hitting New York City hard as well. More New Yorkers died from opioid overdoses than died from murder and traffic fatalities combined in 2017. And this was a crisis that was created by companies seeking profit, created.

Look we always had the problem of heroin for decades. You'll notice by the way, our society, our media didn't focus on that problem – again that was largely a problem afflicting black and brown people. It did not get a lot of attention. When the opioid crisis became more and more about prescription drugs and more and more about white people and more middle class people, it suddenly became front page news.

This crisis that has now become out of control was exacerbated by companies that were pushing – they were drug pushers of a different type, they were drug pushers in suits, who were pushing prescription medicines and trying to get everyone to want more and more and more pain killers in bigger and bigger doses. And they try to convince the medical industry to use the painkillers in all sorts of new ways far beyond what they originally intended. The human impact is horrendous.

The financial impact on New York City – New York City government is paying have a billion a year for the treatment we need to deal with the overdoses, to deal with ongoing treatment, what the police are trying to stop the big suppliers – I mean this having a huge impact. So we are suing the people who did this. We want to change the behavior of these companies that are basically profiteering while people are dying.

Anyone who is dealing with opioid addiction, whether it is prescription drugs or heroin, if you need help it's one phone number you have to call and that's all. And we can, we have trained counselors who can get you connected to treatments, specifically who can really help you find the treatment you need and make sure you get it. That number is 1-8-8- NYCWELL. Let's do it one more time – 1-8-8-NYCWELL. Anyone call 24/7 if they need help with opioid addiction.

**Rosenberg:** Alright, last thing Mr. Mayor – prediction for the Super Bowl please.

**Mayor:** You know I grew up in Massachusetts.

**Rosenberg:** Yes.

**Darden:** I knew you were going to do this.

**Mayor:** I do want to note that after the –

**Darden:** After all these great things you said, you know supporting black and brown people, understanding the plight, you know the white man trying to keep us down in America [inaudible] –

**Rosenberg:** The Trump loving Kraft and Brady, is that where you are going?

**Mayor:** Well, I do want to say after the last victory in the conference championship he took off his helmet, and his hair was perfect, I just want to note that.

[Laughter]

Laura you noticed that right? Come on, his hair, how do you that –

**Stylez:** Of course, Mayor.

**Mayor:** football game. But I don't agree with the politics of the New England Patriots hierarchy but I did grow up with the team and I remain loyal to it and I always say they only start playing once they are behind by a touchdown or two. So I think they are going to prevail. I don't go to sleep on the Eagles, they are good team too but I think the Patriots will prevail.

**Rosenberg:** Alright, I respect it.

**Darden:** Mayor, you are breaking up, we can't hear you anymore –

**Rosenberg:** Oh no.

**Darden:** Mayor, I think we lost our connection.

[Laughter]

Give it up for Mayor de Blasio.

**Rosenberg:** Thanks Mayor.

**Stylez:** Thank you.

###

