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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON MSNBC**

**Chuck Todd:** Let's move to our top guests for this hour. The President says he's worried about sending federal aid to states hit hard by the coronavirus, because then that will lead to what he is calling a Democratic bailout – that is from an interview with the New York Post. The President adds, it's unfair to ask Republicans to bail out Democratic states that have been “mismanaged over a long period of time.” Joining me now is Democratic New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. And Mr. Mayor, look, I think, we're all grown-ups here, we know there's going to be a lot of politics practiced in the negotiating between aid for states and cities and all of that. But do you have your own plan of how to try to [inaudible] the politics out of this? Because it does – my fear is that, you know, okay, so the right is going to hit you for pensions and unfilled this, and then the left may get angry at other states that rely too much on oil and gas industry, and we could just devolve into food fights all the way down everybody's budget. How do you avoid that?

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Chuck, it's a great question. I think, look, we should think like Americans, right? We should actually think about the fact this whole country has gone through this crisis together and the stimulus we need is to get everyone back on their feet, regardless of who they are, where they are, what their political affiliation is. You know, the President said, oh, look, you know, Texas, everything's fine. A hundred mayors in Texas, Republican and Democratic, both called for stimulus aid because their cities are reeling right now, both from the health care crisis and the economic crisis. The President said that Midwest is fine – no, it's not fine. We see what's happening in Iowa with the meat packing plants and how that's having a bigger impact on the community. This is an American problem. So, I think the answer is, for all of us, to talk about we're all in this together. This stimulus needs to reach every part of the country in common where the problem is and according to how bad the problem is. And, on top of that, to recognize whose lives and jobs on the line. When we're talking about stimulus that keeps public services going, that means firefighters, EMT, paramedics, police officers, health care workers. Those are the heroes of this crisis, but their jobs are actually are going to be in jeopardy if we don't have a stimulus that reaches everywhere that's been hit by this.

**Todd:** You know, Mayor de Blasio, I'm convinced this conversation changes in a couple of months when we start to see the financial forecast in states that rely on tourism dollars to fund their State governments or sales tax dollars, things like that. But let me ask you a larger philosophical question. Former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie seemed to say – imply, yesterday, in an interview that maybe we as Americans, we're going to have to get used to death for a while in order to reopen the – let me read you a quote, exactly what he said. He said, “We send our young men during World War II over to Europe, out to the Pacific, knowing that many of them would not come home alive, adding and we decided to make sacrifice because what we

were standing up for was the American way of life. In this very same way now, we have to stand up for the American way of life.” It’s his justification of how you open up an economy in this unsure health environment. Is that where we’re headed? We just have to get used to a higher death toll for a while?

**Mayor:** I don't know what Governor Christie is thinking when he says that. It reminds me of some of what we heard from the Lieutenant Governor of Texas, seeming to almost explain a way that people are going to die and cause – and treating that like a cost of doing business. I think that's unconscionable. We need to save every life we can save, and that's an American value, and that's what all the people who are being celebrated – the health care workers, the paramedics, the EMTs – they're being celebrated because they went out and saved lives no matter what. So, I think the national goal should be to have the strongest possible health care system, to actually address the disparities that have been laid bare and make our health care system better, more universal, to save every life, that is consistent with our values. It does not have to be inconsistent with an economic recovery. And I get very worried, Chuck, when I hear folks putting the almighty dollar on a pedestal above saving human life. I don't think that's consistent with what the vast majority of Americans believe.

**Todd:** I don't envy any of your decisions on life versus livelihood on this, because somebody's livelihood is life and death, somebody's life, all of that. There's no doubt about that. Let me send it over to Katy Tur. Katie, next question?

**Katy Tur:** Mayor de Blasio, what happens if states don't get the help from the federal government? The funding that they need?

**Mayor:** Katy, this is the great irony. You know, we're trying to come out of a shutdown and move towards a restart and a recovery. If we don't get help from the federal government, we're going to be in a perpetual state of some kind of shutdown. That's the reality. Right now, we only can provide basic services if we have a budget that's whole. My city's already lost \$7.4 billion. That's the projection today. That number is going to get worse over time for the very reason Chuck said, so many of the things we depend on for revenue aren't going to be there in the months and years ahead. So, if we have a massive hole in our budget and we can't pay for basic services and we have to look at things like furloughs and layoffs, it's going to stop us from having a vibrant economy, being part of the recovery. It's going to be a different way that we remain shut down. This is what's so strange to me, the federal government gave \$58 billion to the airline industry without even thinking about it. But cities and States around the country that are core to America's life and economy might get left out? It makes no sense. The President literally said about his hometown in an interview with the New York Post that he wasn't for envisioning a bailout for New York City. How on earth do you leave the nation's largest city and one of the drivers of the American economy out of the equation any more than you would leave any other hard-hit part of America out? It's not what any president should ever say or do, and it shocks me. Any president before, Republican or Democrat, would have said, we're all in this together and we're going to take care of the places hardest hit, just like after a hurricane or a tornado or anything. This president is literally saying some places are less worthy than others. If he does that, all of America will be held back because we won't have the recovery we need.

**Tur:** Does that mean you're laying off cops, you're laying off firefighters, you're laying off teachers?

**Mayor:** Katy, I want to avoid that at all cost. But if I'm already missing \$7.4 billion, I can't raise that money here. As you heard, the economy here is going to take a long time to recover. If it doesn't come from the federal government, then we have no choice but to cut expenses radically. And that leads to things like furloughs and things like layoffs. And what does it mean? The very people who are the heroes, the health care workers, the first responders who have been lauded as the heroes, are the people whose jobs would be on the line.

**Todd:** Very quickly, Mr. Mayor, how concerned are you that the major businesses may, in the mid-to-longterm pull out of New York City? Because you start to look at this, particularly when we don't have a vaccine – I don't know how you can safely move people in New York City for the next, for the next six-to-12, 18 months. How concerned are you that's going to lead to companies leaving the city permanently?

**Mayor:** Chuck, I don't see that, honestly. I think there'll be a time of transition as we all work our way back to normal. Look, overwhelmingly, the last few weeks, the news has been good here in New York City, consistent decline in this disease. There's still work to do – as you indicated up top, there's still work to do, but we're moving in the right direction. I think the vast majority of people here and businesses here are going to stay and be committed to this place, this heroic place. What New Yorkers have done in this fight has been absolutely heroic for the whole world to see. I mean, people are inspired by it, and there is confidence that we're going to come back strong and, in some ways, even stronger, addressing some of these disparities that needed to be addressed a long time ago. So, no, I'm hearing a lot of confidence from the business community. They want to be here. This is one of the great economic capitals of the earth and will continue to be.

**Todd:** And a whole bunch of us want to go back out to eat again in New York City and enjoy what is so much fun about that – that signature, amazing – there's no way to get a bad meal in New York City and we look forward to being able to say and utter that again as well. Mayor Bill de Blasio, thank you. Thank you very much.

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