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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning, everyone. So, last night, a magical moment in New York City, it happens once a year, but special meaning last night – last night, 11:52 PM, the Summer Solstice in New York City. And it is the formal and astrological start of the Summer of New York City. And you can feel it out there all over the city, the energy is amazing. You can feel the recovery happening. You can feel the – just a reality in the streets of our city is so positive right now, people out there. We had amazing Juneteenth celebrations throughout the weekend. Folks really embracing this beautiful, powerful holiday now, so important to everyone to be out there together. Open Streets, alive. We had amazing continued success with Open Restaurants. We see the Summer of New York City, and it's growing, and it's really just beginning, because some of the most amazing things are ahead. The parade to salute our health care heroes and first responders and the heroes of the battle against COVID. And, of course, our homecoming week coming up in August and so many other amazing moments.

So, we are having an incredible comeback. Let's remember why – because people went out and got vaccinated. We said to New Yorkers, here's the way. They heard it. They acted on it. As of today, over 9 million vaccine doses have been given in New York City. This is just a staggering figure, over 9 million in this city – 9,000,171 to be exact. And happy to say, as of this morning, the lowest COVID positivity level since the beginning of the crisis, 0.53 percent. So, we're moving the right direction, but it all depends on more and more people getting vaccinated. And, therefore, we keep remind you of the amazing prizes available for folks who get newly vaccinated. And we see some real response to these incredible incentives. Right now, \$2,500 prizes for 10 winners this week, staycation packages for 15 winners this week, and we'll keep offering these amazing incentives. So, if you haven't gotten vaccinated, this is the time to do it.

Now, let's talk about how we bring this city back. Let's talk about a recovery for all of us. A recovery for all of us has to include our small businesses. A recovery for all of us means keeping it local, keeping money in our communities, community jobs, mom and pop stores, family businesses that have been around for generations, the backbone of our city, the heart and soul of our neighborhoods. So, we're talking about this today, and it happens to be a day that a particular company has made prominent – Prime Day. And this is the day when Amazon tries to outgun every small business, every local retailer everywhere and continue to dominate. Now, I'm saying something simple today. Today is Prime Day. It's a perfect day not to shop Amazon. It's a perfect day to keep it local, to buy from your neighborhood stores. It's a perfect day to shop your city, keep the money in our city, support our small businesses. Also, it's a perfect day to show

solidarity with Amazon workers. While Amazon has gotten richer and richer than our workers have not. At Amazon's warehouses in Staten Island, JFK8 warehouses, Staten Island's largest private employer. We appreciate that. What we don't appreciate is repeated efforts by Amazon to stop unionization by the workers. That is not fair. That's not respecting the democratic rights of those workers. Amazon literally made record profits last year, but they don't seem to want to share them with working people. So, to me, a real prime shopper keeps it local, keeps the money in our neighborhoods, helps working people directly, doesn't put the money in the pockets of Amazon.

Now, small business, if you want to see it thriving, I had an amazing experience on Saturday night at the Queens Night Market. The Queens Night Market is back. It is back and strong and energetic, and, if you haven't been, it's the time to go. Amazing energy, amazing pride, these wonderful small entrepreneurs who make up the Queens Night Market – food from all over the world. Amazing opportunity in one place to experience the very best of New York City. I know folks in Queens are really, really proud of that. And we need to support all the small businesses as they come back. So, the Queens Night Market is back, that's amazing for this city, but we need all of our small businesses back. And we have to do things differently. We can't do business as usual if we expect to achieve the Herculean task of bringing back tens of thousands of small businesses that have been closed because of the pandemic.

So, weeks ago, I gave my team a mandate. I said, once and for all, we're going to cut the time in half it takes to open a business in New York City. The time is now. We've been through so much. We're coming out of COVID. Let's do things differently. No more businesses usual. Cut the time in half, because, as of this moment, about 40 percent of New York City small businesses are still closed. 240,000 small businesses in the city, about 40 percent still aren't back. We think a lot of them can come back and come back strong, but they need a helping hand. And so, we're going to make it simpler than ever, easier than ever to open up a small business – again, bring it back – or to open a new small business. And we see that happening more and more as well. Folks who have been waiting to open a business, seeing this as a moment of opportunity, wanting to make an impact, wanting to help New York City come back – they're acting now, they need help. And that's why we have started NYC Business QuickStart. This is a new approach. You've never seen anything like it before. It will make New York City the easiest place in America to start a business.

What does it mean? First of all, number one, we've created a small business concierge. Literally, if you want to open a business, you call the City of New York, you get a specific person, a facilitator, someone who's going to be with you the whole way through to cut the red tape, to make it simple, to get you answers, and to get the doors of your business. Open person – you've always heard the phrase, one-stop shopping. This is even better. One person who guides you through the whole process as a small business gets you where you need to go, gets you answers, gets you solutions.

Two, we're guaranteeing for all small business owners, when they call with a concern, a problem, an issue, we are guaranteeing them 48-hour response time. Everyone who calls and needs help should know they're going to get answers quickly. They're going to get either a final answer to solve their problem, or they're going to get a pathway of how it will be done specifically and a

concierge to make it happen. We need this for our small business. I cannot stand the idea of small businesses waiting when they're trying to do the right thing and come back and bring back jobs, we have to be there for them. So, when a small business calls 800-SBS-4NYC – 800-SBS-4NYC or goes to [nyc.gov/business](http://nyc.gov/business), they are guaranteed now a 48-hour response time. Anything longer than that is unacceptable and we will be monitoring closely.

And then the third part, we're committing \$11 million to the QuickStart initiative. We need to have the people in place in every agency who are problem-solvers, who are decisive, who are quick to help small business. We're dedicating over 100 personnel across a variety of City agencies to get to yes with small businesses and make things happen. I want you to hear about what it means when a small business owner gets that support, how it helps them move forward. The person you're going to hear from, she turned to SBS for help. She opened a business during the pandemic – that's gutsy – but she needed help, she needed clarity, and SBS was there. This is what we want to do for everyone. She is the owner of the Wi Cafe on Bergen Street. I want you to join me in welcoming Melissa [inaudible]

[...]

**Mayor:** Congratulations, Melissa. Really happy for you. I like your persistence and your belief that you can get things done no matter what. I want to come experience the drunken French toast. That's a must do, right? And this is an example, Melissa benefited from Open Restaurants, she benefited from the direct help and response from our Department of Small Business Services – tremendous things to Commissioner Jonnel Doris and his whole team. Now, we're taking it to the next level with Quickstart. This is again, you've never seen this before in history of New York City. I've talked to so many small business owners, they've expressed real frustration about how much there is to navigate. We can't have that kind of maze for them anymore. It has to be simple. One human being, seeing them through the whole process, getting them answers, getting it done. I want to hear from someone who understands why this is so important, because he's been a champion for small businesses. He represents his community in Queens with passion. He knows what people are going through. He knows how important it is to make sure there's jobs for the community and that small businesses are the backbone of our communities. And he is the Chair of the Committee on Economic Development in the City Council. My pleasure to introduce Council Member Paul Vallone.

[...]

**Mayor:** Thank you so much, Council Member. And you're right, people need this help and they need it in multiple languages. That's something we have been doing throughout the pandemic, providing service and support multiple languages. It is key to making things actually work for people. So, thank you for standing up for your community and reminding us of that. And that's what we're going to do, in fact. And, Council Member, you'll be happy to know, we call it QuickStart, and we mean quick start – so, starting today, any small business owner can call 800-SBS-4NYC or go online [nyc.gov/business](http://nyc.gov/business) and get support now. Thank you so much, Council Member. And, everybody, this is how we build a recovery for all of us, from the grassroots up, helping small businesses back, giving them support they've never even seen before or imagined

before from government. It's time to do something very, very different, and that's what QuickStart is.

Now, recovery, I talk about recovery all the time. You can feel it, and we believe in it, and we see it, and we know it, but we also know recovery is constant work. And I keep telling everyone, recovery will help us to achieve greater safety in this city, but we need, obviously, consistent efforts at public safety to help fuel the recovery. It all goes together to protect people and build a recover, it's one thing – we do it all together. And this is so consistent with the philosophy of neighborhood policing that has governed us now for eight years, bringing police and community into dialogue, making it clear that the police – they work very, very hard to protect all of us, but they can't do it alone. The community has to be deeply involved. The more involved the community, the better the outcomes for all of us. The historic, I think, stereotype, if you will, that policing was a thing unto itself misunderstood. Policing only works in coalition with the community. That's why we started neighborhood policing, to show that it is absolutely a connection that is needed for real safety.

Now, one of the things that we do is we encourage community members to come forward, if they have been a witness to a crime or if they know information. And we understand people need encouragement and incentives in some cases, and that's why we've said throughout, when you call, you do something very important to protect yourself, your family, your fellow New Yorkers. Folks have heard that call. It's amazing to say that over 5,600 crimes – over 5,600 crimes have been solved with tips called in to 800-577-TIPS. Again, 800-577-TIPS. It's proven to be very, very powerful. However, we see during the last year, some decline in the number of people calling in. In 2020, over 1,000 people called in with tips. This year, under 500 for the first six months of the year. We need to bring that back up. We need information. We need help. We need the community to step forward.

So, as I said, one of the best ways of course is to encourage people to come forward and to know that they will be respected and rewarded in the process. And, therefore, we're increasing the maximum Crime Stoppers reward from \$2,500 to \$3,500. \$3,500 is real money, to say the least. For so many New York City families, that would make a big difference. Here's an opportunity to keep people safe, to help us solve a crime, to protect the whole community, and also be rewarded for it in a very, very meaningful way. I think this is going to make a big difference. I want to give a real deep, special thanks to the New York City Police Foundation. They do amazing work. They don't get enough credit. I want to thank everyone at the Police Foundation. You are constantly supporting efforts at creating more public safety and more bond, a deeper bond between police and community. Here is an example of that.

To hear why this is so important, what it means on the ground, how this helps us solve crimes, I want you to hear from the Chief of Department of the NYPD Chief Rodney Harrison.

**Chief of Department Rodney Harrison, NYPD:** Mr. Mayor, good morning. Thank you so much. And listen, I want to echo your same sentiments about the Police Foundation. They've been such a great partner for us and really have supported a lot of our policies as well as our programs within the NYPD. Especially when it comes to Crime Stoppers and how they're able to produce the rewards for us. You know, it's a vital program. It really is. And it helps our

investigators get leads into some of their cases which helps solve cases, which helps bring people to justice, which helps make New York City safe. If I could just real quickly talk about some of the statistics about Crime Stoppers. Crime Stoppers started in 1983 and has paid out more than \$2.7 million in rewards. We've had over 3,500 tips, which have led to the arrest and the indictments on many cases. And these anonymous tipsters have been paid for helping solve close to 1,600 homicides. The work that the people have helped us in solving the cases through Crime Stoppers has been absolutely, phenomenal.

If I could talk about 2020, as the Mayor stated, we've received over a thousand tips. We've made 66 arrests and indictments with those tipsters being paid. Crime Stoppers vehicles have been deployed to 850 scenes, which is one of the things that we have to continue to promote in order for New York City to feel comfortable to come forward and give us information. And these tips have been – had everything from hate crimes to homicides. If I could just talk about some of the notable cases that we were able to solve in 2020. The horrific rape of a 92-year-old woman in the 1-0-3 Precinct, another horrible incident of a sex crime that occurred to a 64-year-old woman in the 2-3 Precinct, as well as a gang shooting in Brownsville, Brooklyn during Old Timer's Day, back in 2019. All these cases were able to be solved through a tip that we received in Crime Stoppers. Today we are once again very proud to announce that we're raising the Crime Stoppers award from \$2,500 to \$3,500. The last time we've seen a reward increase was in 2015, where it went from \$2,000 to \$2,500. I do want to remind everybody that all of your information and all the calls remain anonymous, these are the ways to contact Crime Stoppers, 1-800-577-TIPS, or online at [Crimestoppers.NYPD.online.org](https://Crimestoppers.NYPD.online.org), as well as you could download the application at CS-NYC. Thank you very much.

**Mayor:** Thank you so much, Chief. And everyone, this is so important. We need everyone's involvement to stop crime. Here's a way to make an anonymous call, offer information, get a reward of up to \$3,500 and do something very, very important for your community. So, everyone, we need your help. And I want to say thank you to everyone who has been helping and providing information to the NYPD who is using it to solve crimes.

Okay. Now, a couple of milestones I want to talk about. Yesterday, an important day for all of us fathers, happy Father's Day to all the fathers out there. And tomorrow, Election Day, crucial day for the future of New York City. Tomorrow is Primary Day. This is an absolutely vital election. It will help determine the future in New York City as few elections ever have because we're coming out of the biggest crisis in our history. So, all of the offices that you will be voting for, you either already have with the early voting or you're voting for tomorrow on Election Day. It's going to decide the future of New York City and everyone needs to be a part of it. And everyone needs to participate in our new ranked choice voting system. Fill out those ballots completely, rank numerous choices. You have up to five choices for each office. The more you rank, the more impact your vote has. Don't waste your vote. We are going to keep reminding everyone, rank five choices whenever humanly possible, because it really intensifies the power of your vote. Now, early voting wrapped up, just under 200,000 people participated and that's good. But we need a lot of people to show up tomorrow to really represent this city so the decision represents all the people. So, reminding everyone tomorrow, please vote. Polls open 6:00 AM until 9:00 PM. 6:00 AM until 9:00 PM. Not only the election for mayor, but also a comptroller, public advocate, borough president, City Council, Manhattan DA, a lot on the line.

Now, some folks are still getting used to ranked choice voting. That's understandable. It's brand new. If you didn't see my pizza topping contest, you really, you need to go back and watch because it was epic. But – and congratulations, formal congratulations to pepperoni again. Everyone, if you want information about ranked choice voting or any other information about the election, where to vote, who's on the ballot, you can go to [voting.nyc](https://www.voting.nyc.gov), [voting.nyc](https://www.voting.nyc.gov) for more information. Everyone, please get out there and make a difference for your city.

One other point, something we are watching carefully, mother nature is at work. And this is an impact we may feel here in the city in the next 24 hours. So, we want to put people on alert. Our Emergency Management Office is closely monitoring Tropical Storm Claudette. It is near the coast of North Carolina right now. At this moment, we do not expect a major impact in New York City in terms of winds or rain. But we are concerned about rip currents. We are concerned that our beaches are going to be more dangerous because of these rip currents. So, everyone just really cautioning you tonight, tomorrow, really be careful if you are going near the water, in the water, those rip currents can be very, very dangerous. And we're watching that carefully and just urge everyone to be very, very cautious. Let's stay safe, everyone as we deal with the effects of this tropical storm.

Okay, let's go over our indicators. Number one, today's – I'm sorry, daily number of people admitted to New York City hospitals for suspected COVID-19, today's report 68 patients, confirmed positively down to 5.8 percent. Hospitalization rate is down to 0.34 per 100,000. That's fantastic. Number two, new reported cases on a seven-day average again, great numbers, number's down to 175 cases. And number three, percentage of people testing positive citywide for COVID-19, lowest number we have had since the beginning of the pandemic. Congratulations, New Yorkers, 0.53 percent. And you want to keep driving that number down? You want to stay safe? You want to open up 110 percent? Go get vaccinated. A few words in Spanish, on our efforts to help small business through our new Quick Start initiative.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's turn to our colleagues in the media and please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

**Moderator:** We will now begin our Q-and-A. As a reminder, we're joined today by Chief of Department Rodney Harrison, by Small Business Services Commissioner Jonnel Doris, by Dr. Chokshi, and by Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. First question today goes to Juliet from 1010 WINS.

**Question:** Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good morning, everyone on the call. My question is for you, Mr. Mayor and Chief Harrison. I was wondering, are tips coming in to find the suspect who was shooting the person who fell between the two young children in the Bronx? And where are you in that investigation?

**Mayor:** Yeah, that was a horrible, horrible situation. Thank God, those kids were okay. Chief, give us an update on that investigation please.

**Chief Harrison:** So, first Mr. Mayor, I want to acknowledge the young lady that pretty much saved her brother. She pretty much covered him up. I had an opportunity to go visit them on Saturday and talk to the family. And they're going through a very, very difficult time. They understand how close they could have been to losing their children. I'm not sure what it takes to get the key to the city, but I nominate her. But I will say this, I'm very optimistic. The detectives from the 4-4 squad are investigating it thoroughly. We do have some good leads. We have a couple of people we're looking at. And I'm very positive that we'll bring the individual that did the shooting to justice very, very soon.

**Mayor:** Thank you, Chief. Go ahead, Juliet.

**Question:** Yes. I was wondering, has the Crime Stopper tip line been helpful in this investigation and in any recent incidents? Whether it's, you know, Washington Square Park, to identify people there? Or the incident in the Bronx that, you know, people were run over by the Jeep?

**Mayor:** Chief, go ahead.

**Chief Harrison:** Yeah, sure. So, if you – [inaudible] mind, Juliet, once again the whole method behind Crime Stoppers is tips remain anonymous. So, I'm not going to get too much into regards of how we're getting information. I will say this. It is an absolute, a phenomenal tool to work with the community, to allow people to be compensated for coming forward. So, it has been beneficial in us fighting crime throughout the city.

**Mayor:** Thank you very much. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** The next is Amanda Eisenberg from Politico.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. How are you?

**Mayor:** Good, Amanda. You ready for Election Day?

**Question:** I'm ready. Cast my ballot, I'm ready to go.

**Mayor:** Alright.

**Question:** I wanted to ask you, so over the weekend, Eric Adams and his supporters have been accusing Andrew Yang and Kathryn Garcia of trying to steal the election, steal being the word used by Ashley Sharpton. And I wanted to know if you agree with that kind of rhetoric in light of what happened with the 2020 federal election?

**Mayor:** Look, what I saw was simply an opportunistic move by candidates. That's how I would characterize – excuse me. That's how I'd characterize it, Amanda. Two people who don't seem



to agree on a whole lot, teaming up for their own political needs. That's what I see. Not something much more than that. Go ahead.

**Question:** Do you think it's dangerous though, to conflate that with racism? Especially with, you know, there are, you know, some people might say there are more pressing issues in terms of how we talk about racism and how it affects New Yorkers versus this? You know, you're saying it's opportunistic, but [inaudible] be stealing the election. You find that rhetoric dangerous?

**Mayor:** I think people have to be careful, obviously. I think there's a deep desire for representation and that fuels strong emotions. To make sure we have a government that represents the majority of people in this city. So, I understand where the emotion comes from. But I think in the end, we got to just focus, in these last hours of the election, on what people are going to do for this city. What is their vision for addressing the world after the pandemic and moving us forward? That's what I hope everyone will focus on.

**Moderator:** The next is Andrew Siff from WNBC.

**Question:** Hey, Mayor, good morning. And hello to everyone on the call. Just following up on your characterization of the joint campaigning as opportunistic. If you're a supporter of ranked choice voting, why is it not merely strategic? Why is it wrong for a candidate to recommend to their voters who to rank number two?

**Mayor:** Oh, Andrew, look, it's totally normal around the country where ranked choice voting has existed for a while for people to team up for a common advantage. That is just part of the political process. But I think more typically it is people who seem to have a lot that they agree on or similar approaches, similar history. This one strikes me as sort of an odd couple situation and a little more overtly opportunistic. Go ahead.

**Question:** [Inaudible] today to tell us any of your five selections of who you're voting for tomorrow?

**Mayor:** Andrew, I hate to disappoint you. I told you you'd be the first to know. No, I've decided to keep this a personal decision. I'm still working on finalizing my ballot and for all the offices I'll be voting for. And look in the end, I look forward to working with everyone who's newly elected. We don't know who that's going to be. I think the best way for me to approach it right now is to just keep my thoughts to myself.

**Moderator:** The next is Emma Fitzsimmons from the New York Times.

**Question:** Hi, good morning, Mayor. So, Eric Adams and some of his allies had been raising concerns about RCV. Are you concerned, especially with, you know, official results, they could come in mid-July, are you concerned about them raising concerns about the process?

**Mayor:** Look, this is one of the challenges Emma, that comes with ranked choice voting. There are some great elements to it, but we've always known that one of the frustrating elements would be how long the count would go. And our Board of Elections historically has had challenges



whether on Election Day itself, or with counts. This takes a lot more work. We all have to get used to the idea. It could be weeks before we have a 100 percent final result. That's uncomfortable, right? Who wants that? No one wants that. But it's not a newsflash. It's something we've been seeing – we've have seen coming for quite a while. And I would just say to New Yorkers, we're going to have to exercise a little patience here, something we're not particularly good at as New Yorkers. But it does take a while to get the full and final count. Typically, you know, what happens with the number one votes tells you a whole lot. So, my hope and belief is that that will be provided pretty quickly, but this will be different. This will be a frustrating process and it'll take a while, you know, thank God it is a June primary, and the general election is not until November. So, there's plenty of time once the nominees are sorted out for them to get out there on campaign. Go ahead, Emma.

**Question:** And let's say, you know, Eric Adams is leading on primary night and then the person who's in second place ends up winning, which has happened in other ranked choice voting elections, are you concerned that Adams could question the legitimacy of the election or that that could confuse New Yorkers?

**Mayor:** Well, it's a fair question what happens in this scenario where the first-place winner doesn't ultimately win, but I think it's important that we talk about it openly. Yes, you are right, sometimes because of how rank choice voting plays out, the person who gets the most number one votes doesn't necessarily win the election in the end. By the way, if we were on the previous system, which I participated in, you have a primary and then, you know, folks go on the top candidates go on to the runoff, very typically folks – the person who won the primary didn't necessarily win the runoff. So, this is not entirely a new concept. It's a new version of it, though. What I'd say is there should be, of course, very close monitoring of the count by the Board of Elections. I'm sure a number of campaigns will have legal representation and watch this count carefully. We have to make sure the count has done right, but absolutely people need to understand from the beginning, you know, every vote has to be counted before there is a final result and the person who gets the most number ones, likely, but not guaranteed to win.

**Moderator:** The next is Nolan from The Post.

**Question:** Good morning, everybody.

**Mayor:** How are you, Nolan?

**Question:** I'm all right, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

**Mayor:** I'm all right. I'm all right. You ready for election day?

**Question:** I'm ready. I've cast my ballot. I understand you have not, and you will not bless us with who you think should replace you.

**Mayor:** I appreciate your verb choice, deeply, Nolan. But no, I'm going to keep that to myself. I am looking forward to voting at my poll site tomorrow.

**Question:** All right. So, to follow up on all the questions that you've gotten about statements made by Eric Adams and his supporters. You described the alliance is opportunistic. It's simply how ranked choice voting functions. So, is it appropriate to have an elected official in the city of New York describe something that is commonplace in every rank choice voting system here in the United States and elsewhere around the world as a poll tax? Because that's what Eric Adams did on CNN this morning.

**Mayor:** Yeah, again, I haven't seen the whole comment, so I'm not going to speak to it. In the end, this is a new system for us. When people make alliances, of course, you'd like to believe the alliances are based on shared values and vision, but in the end, what's going to play out here is, you know, for the next 24 hours plus, there's still an opportunity to speak to people about the issues, get people to vote, convince them how important it is to vote. It's been a quieter election than many, so I'm not going to be overly concerned about one phrase or another. I think the main event is what concerning me right now. We need to make sure people come out to vote and we need to make sure people take maximum advantage of the rank choice system and rank five candidates, that's where I'm putting my focus. Go ahead, Nolan.

**Question:** Fair enough, but the Adams campaign put out a statement yesterday from former State Comptroller Carl McCall, describing it as –the Alliance as “part of a disgraceful national campaign of voter suppression and an attempt to bring it to New York.” And then when asked about that statement on CNN this morning, here's the question, “some of your campaign surrogates are somehow” – quote now – “are suggesting somehow that by doing this, it works to voter suppression, I'm not sure I understand how that works?” Is what the question was from CNN. And this is Eric Adams’ response. “I could see this that African-Americans are very clear on voter suppression. We know about the poll tax. We know about the fight that we had historically, how you'd have to go through hurdles to vote.” How was it a hurdle to vote? How was it a poll tax?

**Mayor:** Again, I don't think he's saying that just from the quote you're reading, Nolan. I want to see the whole thing for myself before I give you any detailed analysis, but just from what you've read, I don't think he is saying that. In the end, again, I think people really want to ensure that this election is representative of all the people that everyone is involved, that people have a clear understanding of how the system works, and we're all getting used to it. And I think there is real concern about making sure that people come out and making sure that people fully engage the rank choice voting system. So, again, I'm going to keep my focus on urging everyone to vote and to rank five candidates for every office.

**Moderator:** The next is Ariama from the Amsterdam News.

**Question:** Hello. Good morning. Hi, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** How are you doing, Ariama.

**Question:** I'm good, I'm good. Okay, so I have two questions for you and Chief Harrison since he's here today. First off, do you guys have a theory about why the numbers for the Crime Stoppers Hotline has decreased?

**Mayor:** I'll turn to Chief Harrison for his analysis.

**Chief Harrison:** Yeah, Ariama, first of all, good morning, and thank you for your question. If I could say anything, I think one of the concerns that we've seen is people are capitalizing on wearing these masks for protection, of course, but they're using it also to commit crime, then I think, unfortunately, because people are wearing these masks, it's been very difficult for New Yorkers to identify individuals that are committing some of these acts. So that's why, if you would ask me where you may see a little bit of a dip in people coming forward.

**Mayor:** Thank you. Go ahead, Ariama.

**Question:** And my second question, I know you guys had announced the joint force – task force about how guns are getting to the city and also illegal fireworks with the ATF. Do you have any updates available, either one of you guys, about that?

**Mayor:** Thank you for that question. The joint work with the ATF is really important in terms of disrupting guns coming into the city. The effort to disrupt fireworks coming in, we learned a lot from last year, a lot more aggressive effort this year. Obviously, numerous agencies involved, including our Sheriff's Office. Chief, if you have any update you want to offer on either one, otherwise we'll get back to Ariama with some details.

**Chief Harrison:** I don't have any updates at this time, but we'll definitely get back to you.

**Mayor:** Okay. We owe you that one.

**Moderator:** We have time for two more for today. The next is Yoav from The City.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor. Last week Commissioner Shea said that essentially, unilaterally, he had decided that the department is not required to make public disciplinary actions for substantiated cases against the officers when the discipline is minor. Now when 50-a was repealed, I don't remember hearing such a caveats. So, I'm wondering, essentially, where did that new policy come from and are you okay with it?

**Mayor:** Yoav, we continue to look at that. The basic thrust of what we did with 50-a, of course, was to put out the information on a variety of cases where there were charges, officers were found guilty, putting out that, putting out the penalties, going way back. That was the central thing we focused on. I think the issue now of what do you do with a substantiated case where the officer's found not guilty, which is what I heard the Commissioner to be speaking to, I have a concern there that if someone's found not guilty, they're found not guilty, and that would be an obvious point where we'd say, okay, that's not so much what we need to get out there, but when there is guilt, when there are penalties, but we continue to look at that. There's no final decision on all of those pieces. It's a work in progress, and we're continuing to work on more transparency. Go ahead, Yoav.

**Question:** Right, but the issue is that while you continue to look at the issue, the policy in place now – and the Commissioner was clear about this – is minor when the NYPD meets out minor discipline, they are currently not planning to make that information public. And the problem is that sometimes there are – the public can't decide basically whether a punishment is a slap on the wrist – a slap on the wrist or not – if they don't know about the punishment, right? And I just want to read you something you said when 50-a was repealed, you said “transparency is not something to fear, but something to embrace because that's where trust and faith will deepen when people see that all this information is out in the open, just as it would be for any of us as citizens.” So, I'm still not clear on what's changed since then.

**Mayor:** Yoav, respecting the question, it's a very good question. Work in progress. The repeal of 50-a was not that long ago. We are now – we have put out a huge amount of information, we intend to put out more, but I want to be clear, the entire notion has been proven, the commitment to transparency has been proven by the fact that decades of disciplinary information have been released on a host of different types of charges and situations. So, clearly, we're committed to transparency. I think you're raising a very fair question. How do we look at all elements what we're doing and make sure they're consistent and make sure they're valuable? I think that's fair and is what we need to go back at and continue to work on. But we put out a vast amount of information, and honestly, that to me said very, very clearly where we're going as a city. That was the clear commitment to transparency and we're going to keep building on it.

**Moderator:** Last question for today goes to Paul Liotta from the Staten Island Advance.

**Question:** Hey, how you doing, Mr. Mayor?

**Mayor:** Good, Paul, how you been?

**Question:** I'm well, sir, thank you. Regarding your comments about Amazon earlier, I just wanted to get a sense of what steps, if any, the city has taken to sort of ensure a fair process and, you know, the organization efforts going on, on Staten Island?

**Mayor:** Paul, very important question. We are in touch with the Amazon workers who are attempting to exercise their rights and organize at that warehouse on Staten Island. We're going to make sure their rights are protected. Everything that happens out there, we're going to make sure happens within the law. Amazon does not have a good track record when it comes to labor. Here we are in one of the most pro-labor cities in America, we're going to do everything within our power to protect those workers. Go ahead, Paul.

**Question:** Thank you for that, and I guess just lastly ahead of the election, I understand you don't want to comment on the mayoral primary, but are there any races where you would like to, you know, offer an opinion, share your perspectives?

**Mayor:** Yeah, I've – you know, there are people I have worked with closely, and this is just certain races around the city where I've been out campaigning folks running for City Council, all of whom I've had a great working relationship with over time, Stacy Lynch in Upper Manhattan, and Harold Miller in Southeast Queens, Mercedes Narcisse in Canarsie and surrounding

neighborhoods in Southern Brooklyn, and Tahirah Moore in Bed-Stuy and other central Brooklyn neighborhoods. These are examples of just great up and coming leaders who I think will do wonderful work for their communities and for the city in the City Council. So, I've been out there supporting them and really hoping they will prevail tomorrow on Election Day.

And everyone with that, we will all prevail on Election Day if you show up and vote. So, we've come through COVID, it's been real tough. It's been a distraction from what we normally would see for an election discussion and sort of a thoughtful election process, no doubt, but a variety of candidates, the most representative field of candidates we've ever had in the history of city. That's a good thing. That's true all over the city, the campaign finance reforms that the people voted for a few years ago, that my administration sponsored, have clearly had the impact of encouraging more and more diverse candidates to run, a field of candidates that truly looks like New York City. That's good news. Lots of good people to choose from rank choice voting, giving you five choices for each office and more power because your vote never gets wasted. Your vote stays alive until it has an impact. So, please make a plan to vote tomorrow if you have not already voted. Bring your family, bring your friends, rank five candidates for each office and decide the future of New York City. Thank you, everybody.

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