



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 13, 2018
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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW

Brian Lehrer: It's the Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC. Good morning everyone. And we will begin as usual on Fridays with our weekly Ask the Mayor segment. My questions and yours for Mayor Bill de Blasio. Our lines are open at 2-1-2-4-3-3-WNYC, 4-3-3-9-6-9-2 or you can tweet a question, just use the hashtag #AskTheMayor. Mr. Mayor, welcome back to WNYC.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thanks very much Brian.

Lehrer: And I'll begin with some things that are in the news this week. Beginning with your new Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza urging parents not to opt their kids out of statewide standardized tests. It's one of the few policy positions he's taken so far being new on the job. Is that consistent with your own views as a critic of high stakes standardized testing?

Mayor: Yes, and I'll tell you why. And I really do understand deeply why parents who during the previous approach in this city and in this state just a few years ago were profoundly frustrated with an overreliance on high stakes testing. Remember, five years ago this city was devoted, under the Bloomberg administration, to a high stakes testing based approach to education. The State was too much as well.

A lot has changed, and this is what I really want to emphasize to my fellow parents. Since we came in we greatly reduced the focus on testing. Testing is not used in the grading of schools which I think was one of the most idiotic approaches in the previous administration towards education. We don't grade schools anymore based on high stakes testing. We have changed the admissions structure. We have changed – and the State has changed the evaluation of teachers. Tests – students are given more time on tests. There's a host of changes that have reduced the undue pressure.

There's been an absolute de-emphasis on test prep which used to be central to the approach in the previous administration. We do not believe in a focus on test prep. We believe in teaching and doing what we think is best for the educational development of students and then measuring with not just test but other measures as well to see how we're doing with each student and then make adjustments.

And the State has certainly stepped away – the State Department of Education and the Commissioner MaryEllen Elia have done a lot to step away from an overreliance on high stakes testing. And obviously, one other point, I – you know the worst remaining example is the single test to get into the specialized schools which I would like abolished. And I’m going to work to do that.

So, I understand where parents’ feelings and honest concerns come from. But I want to emphasize that a lot has changed, and testing as one of multiple measures still helps us to figure out what we need to do to help each student. And I think people should participate for that reason.

Lehrer: According to the numbers in the New York Times the epicenter of opting out is your home neighborhood of Park Slope where 35 percent of the kids at P.S. 321 sat them out last year compared to just 3 percent citywide. What’s going on in your neighborhood? Is it a class thing and what would you say to your neighbors?

Mayor: Look I think it’s understandable. It probably is more of a specific political thing than anything. I think it’s understandable that people who opposed what was going on for many years in this city, and this state, and this country, and certainly people who I agreed with on so many levels including opposition to the approaches in No Child Left Behind under George Bush, that they would want to continue to act on those concerns. I’ve met with parent groups, I understand the underlying concern.

My argument is a lot has changed, and I get why sometimes people are skeptical or you know are not seeing all the changes because they are focused on some of the problems they originally were confronting. But I would ask that people look carefully at what we’ve done here and how much we’ve de-emphasized high stakes testing. We will continue to do that.

And especially how much we’ve gotten away from test prep. One of the worst parts of the Bloomberg-Klein years was the incessant focus on test prep which really undermined our kids’ ability to learn and our teachers’ ability to teach. We’ve moved away from that. We don’t believe in that. So, I would just ask that people look at the consistent changes that we made. Look at the values at Chancellor Carranza who absolutely does not want to see a focus on high stakes testing, only believes testing is one of many measures we use to evaluate and to act. And I think if people looked carefully they would take comfort that a lot has changed.

Lehrer: Next issue. We had the City Council Speaker Corey Johnson on this week touting his plan for half fare MetroCards for about 800,000 low income New Yorkers and thousands of veterans in poverty or attending CUNY as a \$212 million item in the Council’s proposed City budget. He said this would be for families of four with an income of only \$24,000 as one benchmark. That item is not in your version of the next budget, but when I asked Speaker Johnson how – if you seemed open to it now, I want to play you what he said.

Speaker Johnson: The Mayor has said in the past that he’s not opposed to the concept and the proposal of Fair Fares, but that he believes the way we should pay for this is through a millionaire’s tax authorized by the State legislature in Albany. I don’t see that happening. It didn’t happen during the State budget. I don’t see it happening this legislative session. And we believe we should take City dollars and resources to fund this.

So did Speaker Johnson basically characterize your position right? And where are you today?

Mayor: I think he got some of it right for sure. And Speaker Johnson and I have a very collegial, collaborative relationship and I have had with the previous City Council and this City Council, and remember I was a City Council member for eight years unlike the vast majority of mayors we've had. So, I think that's one of the reasons that I understand the concerns of the Council.

I believe the underlying notion of the Fair Fare is absolutely right. I support the Fair Fare concept but believe the best way to pay for it is the millionaire's tax. Now what has changed in just the last week is the announcement that the Democrats in the Senate will reunify which has the potential to give them a working majority. I have said also on that topic I want to see it fully take effect and become permanent before we make assumptions.

But I do think it's important to say that there's sort of been a persistent conventional wisdom argument that a millionaire's tax wasn't workable in Albany, well guess what, Albany just changed in the last week. And now we have to factor that into the equation. I believe a democratic controlled State Senate would be much more open to a millionaire's tax.

By the way, look at what the public thinks of a millionaire's tax. They think taxing millionaires and billionaires to fix the subway and to provide the Fair Fare is a very good and sustainable and long term vision.

Lehrer: So –

Mayor: In the meantime –

Lehrer: So what you want to do is have –

Mayor: – budget discussion with the Council and – a very open one and respectful one. The challenge is I don't know where we find \$200 million after the many cuts we received and unfunded mandates we received from Albany in the last budget.

Lehrer: Since you brought up the IDC, those independent breakaway Democrats in the State Senate, I saw that they held – even though they supposedly have disbanded as a separate conference to conference or caucus with the Republicans, they held a fundraiser in Washington Heights in the district of one of them, Marisol Alcantara, the other day and Governor Cuomo showed up at that fundraiser. Were you aware of that?

Mayor: I just saw the coverage of that and I got to tell you I'm very surprised because this – you know the proof has to be in the pudding here. I am as I've said many times exceedingly troubled that a group of Democrats broke away and supported Republican leadership and then they continued to in the age of Donald Trump and I think that's just unconscionable.

If they're really coming back and staying back that's very good thing. But that has not been achieved yet fully. So, I don't know why any Democrat would reward them before we've seen them actually act like democrats and come back into the fold.

Lehrer: But your position on the half fare MetroCards for the moment is you would rather wait a year to see if the Democrats do take control – control of the State Senate in the November elections and then try again for the millionaire's tax to fund it first?

Mayor: So, a couple of things. I believe the millionaire's tax – remember anything the City does, if we even were to act on an issue like this, we are only in a position to act year by year and again I don't know where we find \$200 million in this budget after the hit we took from the State.

The difference with a millionaire's tax is it can be made consistent and ongoing. It could be made a permanent tax. And look, the millionaires and billionaires of this country have continued to do better every single year. They've gotten huge advantages previously in taxation. The newest federal tax bill greatly advantaged millionaires and billionaires additionally. It seems to me the exact time you'd want to do a millionaire's tax. And again, I think the political dynamic will allow for it.

So my argument is that's where we're going to actually find the ability to have this funded long term. I will talk to the Council respectfully about anything they're concerned about but I don't think the City is in the position to afford an expense like this, certainly not for the long term.

Lehrer: Let's take a phone call. Salvatore in Greenwich Village, you're on WNYC. Let me ask our engineer to put Salvatore up on the line. For some reason my clicker isn't working in here. So Salvatore you're on WNYC with the mayor. Hi there.

Question: Hi. Hi Brian. Hi Mr. Mayor. Both doing a great job. I live in a rent stabilized apartment in Greenwich Village, and as soon as someone moves out or someone passes away the apartment gets renovated. Now I'm wondering is this legal because after a generation there will be no more rent stabilized apartments in New York City if this is the case. Because everybody does it, it seems.

Mayor: Well Salvatore the – the reality is I mentioned what happened last week in Albany and it's very pertinent to your question. If we have a democratic led State Senate, which I think that will be very good for the whole State of New York and certainly for this city, it also allows us to now go back and fix the rent laws. The rent laws do allow too many times for affordable housing to become unaffordable. There's too much porousness in the current rent laws, and we lose apartments all the time we shouldn't lose. We have an affordability crisis in New York City, we've never seen anything like it in our history.

It's time to not only keep our rent laws in tact but strengthen them and take away all these loopholes that allow landlords to get apartments out of regulation. And so this is a golden opportunity, it's a moment where the combination of the affordability crisis and the focus that people feel on this issue, plus the potential for real political change in Albany, those two things come together. We've got seize that moment and it should be a big issue this year, you know, there is obviously elections – state elections this year – I think this should be on the agenda this year.

Everyone on the state level, whether it's an assembly member, a senator, or a state wide official, should be asked a simple question, are you committing to strengthening the rent laws? Because if

you don't, that means we're going to lose affordable housing consistently in New York City. So this is our chance to finally act because of what we changing in Albany.

Lehrer: Since he brought up converting apartments to market rate from rent stabilized, I would like to follow up on a question that WNYC news reporter Rebecca Ibarra asked you yesterday, about a landlord suspected of harassing rent stabilized tenants into leaving in an area of gentrification.

The City cited a building at 85 Bowery in Manhattan in 2015 for having an unsafe staircase. Our new department reports it gave the landlord two months to correct it, which he has since drawn out to three years, in January the Buildings Department stepped in, evacuated the tenants and gave the landlord two weeks fix the staircase, which he has since drawn out to three months. So our reporting is that since the citation three years ago was for a Class-C violation, the City could have ordered an emergency repair for the staircase in which case it would make the fix and bill the owner. And I guess the broader underlying question is if that sounds like a lot of weeds to our listeners about one building. Broader underlying questions, how serious does this show your administration to be about protecting rent stabilized tenants against landlord harassment?

Mayor: We are very serious on this matter, and look, let's just put this in perspective. With the City Council we passed the right to council legislation, nothing like it in the entire country, now every New Yorker is guaranteed legal assistance in taking on landlords who are harassing them or not giving them heat and hot water. There is a whole package of anti-harassment legislation that was passed by Council, I find, I would argue in the last few years we have beefed up all the anti-harassment measures and put real teeth into them, including in some cases working with the attorney journal to bring criminal charges against landlords, which I'm very much in favor whenever evidence exists of criminal activity.

So there is no question what the direction has been. In this case, this one has been a very thorny case and I don't understand honestly why it took so long for this to be acted on. I want to get to the bottom of that. There is no question, right now, the City is working to make sure everything is fixed and making sure the landlord pays for all of it, and that's been our typical approach, Brian, when we see a landlord not providing heat or hot water or something like that, we - if we can't get them to fix it - we do the work and then bill them and make them pay. So that's - directionally we've been in the right place. Why this one has played out this way, I need to know more about what happened here, if it teaches us anything. But we are standing by these tenants, we want them to get back into their building, and the landlord has to pay for everything that has been associated with this case.

Lehrer: Let's take another landlord housing question from Andres in the Bronx. Andres, you are WNYC, hi.

Question: Hi, good morning Brian Lehrer and good morning Mayor de Blasio. Thank you for taking my call. This is a follow up from a call I made four years ago when my landlord [inaudible] Properties had brought me to court wrongly for squatting, and I walked in with a lease, I am a person with disabilities.

My concern is that I'm in rent stabilized apartment, I'm in the Bronx, I live across the street from doctor, also my psychiatrist, and my local precinct knows that I have mental illness. So I know

when I have meltdown, they know not to draw their guns, my concern is, my rent just went up \$17 and HRA has asked me to leave my building. So they are going to put me in a \$580 a night hotel room, for six months, at \$108,000 instead of \$17 a month. Mind you, my apartment is \$340. That is what is wrong with our system. So that's my four year update, Mr. Mayor, how are we going to solve this problem, I'm supposed to leave in 30 days, I had to give up my two companion animals, okay?

Mayor: Okay, I got the point. I got the point.

Question: You don't have the point. It's still going on -

Mayor: I do have the point, my friend, I'm listening to you -

Lehrer: Hang on, hang on, hang on -

Mayor: I'm going to have people follow up with you. The bottom-line here is first of all, there is no hotel rooms that are \$540, so I just want to always make sure when someone gives a fact that's wrong that I correct it, so all New Yorkers can hear it.

I don't know the specifics of this case. There are many, many situations where our Human Resource Administration provides rental assistance, keep people in their apartments, and make sure if there is any change in their circumstance that we pay to cover the difference because we don't want someone to lose affordable housing, I do not know the specifics of your case, and honestly Brian a lot of callers very understandably call about their individual case and suggest it is a policy matter for the whole City.

Lehrer: Yes.

Mayor: Each case is individual. New Yorkers are smart, smart people. I'm going to affirm this to everyone on the air, each case is individual, what people say on the air I'm sure reflects their view, but does not necessarily reflect a larger policy ramification. So in this case, if you'll give your information to WNYC, we're going to have senior people at HRA follow up with you directly and see what we can do to help.

Question: Andres, hang on we're going to get that contact information and make sure the Mayor's Office, which he is promising to do, will follow up with you.

And I'm going to stay on housing for another item in the City Council budget, which is a \$400 property tax rebate for about half a million homeowners who have \$150 million or less in income - \$150,000 a year or less in income - and Speaker Johnson urged you to finally form a property tax reform commission since you acknowledged inequities among different categories of homes but haven't yet formed the commission that you've been saying you would form, he says. What's your response to either of those?

Mayor: Okay, so two points, the property tax commission will be announced by the end of this month. As you know, yesterday we just announced the full membership of the Charter Revision Commission, and now that we have that resolved, the next item of business is to finalized the property commission and get that out so we can get to work, reminding everyone that property

tax commission will have to do some very complex work which will then lead to some City Council legislation, which hopefully we can act on, you know, this year or early next. And then State legislation which would require going to Albany during the legislative session next year.

So there is a lot of work to do with that commission, it will be named this month, April, and then we'll get to work. On the question of the rebates, I go back to what I said earlier, we have now an increasingly tight budget situation because there is a number of areas where we took hits in Albany. In their budget, there were a lot of ramifications for New York City, a lot of areas where we got cut, a lot of areas where unfunded mandates were put on us, that's going to have a huge ramification. So we are going to have a – as always – a respectful negotiation with the Council, but the challenge of any new major spending item is I don't see at this moment the resource to pay for anything and I certainly don't see the resources to pay for anything on an ongoing basis. So we have to be very, very careful about what we do at this moment.

Lehrer: Let's go next to Valarie in Brooklyn. Valarie you are on WNYC with the Mayor, hi.

Question: Mr. Mayor, my name is Valarie, I'm actually a PhD candidate in Urban Planning at Columbia and I'm studying the Next Gen Plan and the future of NYCHA. I saw this week that Ms. Olatoye stepped down, I'm wondering what you think about her replacement? Who can replace her in an era where NYCHA has suffered disrepair for decades? I don't envy Ms. Olatoye or anyone who is set to replace her and I would love to hear your thoughts Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Well it's a very good question. It's an extraordinarily tough job. You know, the Chair of Public Housing, of NYCHA, in New York City is almost the equivalent of being a mayor of a city of 400,000 people but the difference being a city that was disinvested for decades by the federal and state government, and in many ways the city government as well.

So it is a very tough job. What I have found is there are some really good public servants who are willing to step up no matter how tough the job. And I wish, honestly, there was more understanding and more respect for how tough the work is and how many challenges involved because if you think about there is a whole lot of people out there who, in any of these jobs, who would simply say I don't want the hassle, you know, and just not step forward because it comes with a huge amount of criticism and a huge number of challenges.

But she did and I think she did a lot of very good work for the residents. Stan Brezenoff has now stepped up, who is a legendary public servant in the City, and is going to be the interim Chair for as long as it takes while we find a permanent Chair and he is another example of someone – like – he is, okay, easily be enjoying retirement but he believes in public service and he is willing stand in the fire and I admire that a lot.

So I believe there will be quality people all over this country who are willing come in and take this job because they believe in something bigger and they're willing to take all the criticism that goes with it regardless of what they do, just a baked in criticism.

Lehrer: You had Mr. Brezenoff in a similar role for the public hospital system interim head, he goes back to the Koch administration where he was Deputy Mayor, the Daily News reminds us he was runner up to Joel Klein for Schools Chancellor under Mayor Bloomberg, the Times calls him a fixer, I think in a good way, not like Michael Cohen –

[Laughter]

Mayor: In a good way.

[Laughter]

Lehrer: Do you want to sing his praises? And what are his interim goals for NYCHA?

Mayor: It's – I do want to sing his praises. He's amazing. He's an amazing public servant. He is a true believer in public service. He's someone who actually started out in the 1960s as an activist and this is something – to all the folks out there who have been in public service or want to be in public service this is, I think, a very inspiring story because, he and I talked about this the other day, he started as a grassroots activists. He started in a time of profound social change just like this one, believing he could make a difference. He didn't make any money. He fought for good causes including the Civil Rights Movement, and started to have an opportunity to get involved in government, and more and more people saw that he had just an extraordinary gift for management, leadership, and also was just an honest broker.

If you work with Stan Brezenoff, one of the things that comes through is he is who he is. He believes – he is straightforward. His reputation precedes him. So, I want to remind people – to come into a situation like this willingly and saying I think I can do something to help 400,000 people who are hurting, it's just a positive thing. It's something people should feel some pride over as New Yorkers.

So, you know, the mission now is to work with the federal government. We're in negotiations right now on some long-term issues and trying to resolve some long-term issues with them. Work with the State government, work with the Council, and the residents in determining who the monitor should be under the State executive order, and then continue at the same time to move the progress under the Next Generation NYCHA plan.

And we did, you know, Brian, two things this last week. We, one, showed the progress that had been made in fixing roofs. Sixty-five roofs have been fixed in the last year, stopping leaking, stopping mold, brand new roofs for buildings that haven't had them in decades.

That work is continuing and will continue regardless of State and federal actions. But also what we showed this week in Far Rockaway that there's a whole new way of financing repairs at developments. Fourteen-hundreds families in one development benefitted, have new kitchens, new appliance, new hallways, new elevators, all sorts of stuff that makes their standard of living much better.

This is a part of the Next Generation NYCHA plan that Shola Olatoye created, and it's working and we're going to expand upon it. So, Stan's going to take those things and deepen them while we do a nationwide search for a new Chair.

Lehrer: I want to ask you about the story in the Times today about naloxone, the anti-overdose drug. They say a third of the locations that are supposed to have naloxone don't have it and since

this was a signature program of your administration, what – were you aware of this before the story and why would it be so sparse?

Mayor: When I heard that I was very unhappy and we are going to act. Our Department of Health is going to act very aggressively to fix that. One of the ways we save lives is with naloxone. Now, I want to emphasize, all of our first responders – our police officers on patrol, our EMTs, our firefighters now have naloxone. There's been unprecedented success in saving lives, stopping overdoses, since we distributed naloxone to all the first responders.

It's working very powerfully. But there's also has to be a greater distribution with the non-profits and the hospitals, and shelters, all sorts of other places, and it has to be available to everyday people through pharmacies.

We set out this policy to save lives. Any pharmacy that is not following up, we're going to be very aggressive with. This is about their mandate. Pharmacies have an obligation to everyone to help protect people's health and well-being. So, we're going to fix that very aggressively, and I do not find that situation acceptable.

Lehrer: What kind of auditing system did you have in place and how did this slip through the cracks?

Mayor: I'm not familiar with the details of how each pharmacy was monitored but – and again this is a pretty new initiative in the scheme of things where we went to the pharmacies and provided the naloxone. But now that we found there's a gap, one, we're going to go back to all of them and make sure they have it. Two, we're going to set up an ongoing monitoring system and make sure it doesn't happen again.

Lehrer: Allen in Brooklyn, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hello, Allen.

Question: Thank you and good morning. I want to agree with the Mayor in his position on the way to finance poor-assistance for subway fares in regards to the New York Times editorial today. I'm all in favor of helping the poor afford transit rides but what they're doing now in effect forgets the history of the Fair Housing Act. What they would be doing is localizing benefits to the poor within a certain area, akin to the experience of red-lining on mortgage interests and the disparate effects of highway subsidies to help people in suburbs versus cities during the 60s.

And if we localize that benefit only for city riders, we're in effect saying that the people who live in the MTA region outside the city are trying to keep people who want to work or live in those areas from getting that kind of access.

It's also not hitting the people who are getting the greatest windfall from subway service which is the real estate owners in central business districts rather than asking middle-class subway riders to put a greater subsidy within the city to help poor subway riders and not actually look at the larger picture of benefit groups.

Mayor: Well, look, you're making a couple of very important points. First essential point – progressive taxation versus regressive taxation. After everything that's happened in this country,

the tax bill that was passed which was the biggest giveaway to the wealth and corporations we've seen in decades, after the 2016 campaign which was all about income inequality particularly what Bernie Sanders said and did in 2016, I think this would be the moment in our history, for the first time I should say in decades, where the question of progressive taxation was front and center.

And what is more fundamentally progressive than a tax on millionaires and billionaires to pay for mass transit for everyone else and particularly for half-priced MetroCards for lower income folks? I think we should stop this political prognostication which so many people love to do in the media and the political class, and stop saying, "Oh, is it viable, is it not viable?" And go fight for it especially again because we have a new reality in Albany.

That's point one. Point two you make is crucial. The MTA acts on the whole region. It would be very smart for the MTA using a millionaire's tax model to extend this notion and help lower income folks through the region. What I've talked about is a tax only on New York City residents to help New York City subway riders because I thought that was the fair thing to ask for knowing there would be some members of the legislature who would not want to tax people in the suburbs.

So that was my concession to what I thought was viable but still progressive taxation. But I think you're raising a very good point. A very smart model overall would be to go farther – would be for this State government in general to move to progressive taxation, something this Governor and the Republican Senate have not been willing to do on an ongoing basis.

We should be taxing millionaires and billionaires more. We should be using that money to help create fairness all over the state. Now that there's the prospect of a Democratic State Senate, I think it opens the door to that kind of discussion finally.

Lehrer: Comparison question – until we have such a funding stream, if we ever do from a millionaire's tax, you've said \$200 million is a lot to spend and where are we going to find the money on half-fare MetroCards for 800,000 New Yorkers. Compare that to the \$325 million that you're spending on the ferry system that while popular only serves a much smaller fraction of the city's population.

Mayor: That's a great question and if we had the luxury of not expanding mass transit options, then I think that argument would be a more powerful. But here's the challenge, Brian.

One thing I have learned in these four years is we're working not only for New Yorkers today but for the New York City of the future. And the problem right now in New York City – you know that we just this year have reached 8.6 million for the first time in our history. The projection now, is that we'll at nine million people as early as 2030. And we are fundamentally under-endowed with mass transit.

And the MTA is not going to profoundly change that situation. We saw how long it took to build just a piece of the Second Avenue Subway. I think all New Yorkers – again New Yorkers are smart. They know we're not going to be seeing a lot of new subway development going forward. And if anything was proposed it would take a long, long time to be achieved.

We have to create new options. So what we have focused on – it's the ferries which has limitless potential because our waterways are so underutilized and we're a coastal city and there's so many places you can get to on the ferry. Light rail – which is something we're going to be talking a lot more about with the BQX in Brooklyn and Queens.

Greatly expanding Select Bus Service, which we do with the MTA but the City has to fund a piece of that and facilitate that. We're going to be doing that a lot more.

And of course, Citi Bike and other bike options which have played a big role.

We have to keep investing and building out a mass transit infrastructure because there's huge swaths of this city that are underserved and there's just not enough capacity in the subways right now. They're overcrowded, as everyone knows.

So, I don't think it's apples to apples, Brian. I think we have to of course find ways to address the needs of lower income New Yorkers. That's what we've devoted a lot of the work of this administration to. I simply believe in this case because it's the MTA, the best way to do it is with a bigger effort and a more sustainable effort from the millionaire's tax.

But at the same time we have to keep building out mass transit options not just for today. The ferry service has started very, very strong but Brian, I'd come back in five years or ten years, I think you're going to see ferry service being a much more central part of this city's mass transit infrastructure.

Lehrer: Last listener question, this one from Twitter, says, "Mayor told you he thinks transparency is crucial in NYPD killing of Saheed Vassell, so why won't he release names of cops who killed Saheed or explain why SRG," that unit rather than community police, "were deployed?" This says, "Basic transparency NYC used to do, other cities do routinely."

Mayor: Well, I think there are a couple of important points here. The unit – I don't know the specific nuances of how the calls came in and how units were deployed. I can say if you look at the transcripts of the 9-1-1 calls and you look at the video that's been released, it's very clear that this was perceived by the people in the neighborhood to be an urgent emergency situation where lives were in danger, and was perceived the same way by the police.

There's going to be a full investigation by the NYPD. There's going to be a full independent investigation by the Attorney General. The Attorney General will determine if any charges are brought in terms of the judicial system. Obviously, anytime that happens, the specific names of the officers are brought forward.

But I believe the way we're doing it this way is right because there's both an internal investigation and independent investigation but we're also mindful of protecting everyone involved and we don't want a situation where the names of the officers are out there. I don't think it's productive.

Later on when there is a follow through on the process, you know, that's when names come out appropriately. But the bottom line here is the transcripts have been put out of the 9-1-1 calls. The video has been put out – all video that we have and that we continue to get will be put out once

the Attorney General signs off on its release. That's been the cases previously with body camera footage and situations like this as well.

And there's going to be a full process here to find out the truth. I spoke to Mr. Vassell, the father of Saheed, and he said to me the one thing he hopes will happen at the end of the process is that the truth comes out and justice is served whatever that is. And I said, I am absolutely committed to that and I know the Attorney General is as well. And that's where this will ultimately go. There will be a full process and there will be, obviously, in the end an explanation of what that process yields.

Lehrer: Alright, we're out of time except for one quick political question – are you any closer to making an endorsement between Cynthia Nixon and Governor Cuomo. The Working Families Party has an important conference on that for their endorsement this weekend.

Mayor: I got asked this question as recently as yesterday afternoon. No, when I feel it's the right time to talk about the 2018 elections in the state, I will do so. But that's not today.

Lehrer: Mr. Mayor, thanks as always. Talk to you next week.

Mayor: Thank you, Brian.

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