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NEW YORK, NY 10007

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 29, 2020, 10:00 AM

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

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Good morning, everybody. Well, a lot is going on and I want to start today with the most important underlying foundation of how we are approaching this moment in our city's history. Everything we are doing as a City government to serve you is focused on four things. It's focused on your health, your safety, keeping a roof over your head, and keeping food on your table. This is about what we've been doing, what we've been talking about now over the last four months, because this crisis has caused us to focus on the basics, to make sure that every New Yorker knows that we're going to protect them, protect their safety and health, make sure they have the basics to get by, their families have the basics to get by. While we restart our recovery, our economy, while we bring our livelihoods back. We have so much to do in this city to help people and bring back the vibrant life of this city. But right now, our singular focus has to be on those four basics.

So, I say this in general, and I say it because today is the day before our budget deadline. And we have been working for weeks now with the City Council on next year's budget. And to say the least, this has been the toughest budget that we've had to do as administration here at City Hall. We're in a whole different situation, in fact, than New York City's ever faced in our history, a health care crisis, an economic crisis, a disparity crisis, a budget crisis all wrapped into one and on a massive, massive scale. So, we keep coming back to the fact that we've got to focus on those basics – health, safety, food, shelter. But, while we've been trying to do that, we have been dealing with an extraordinary loss of revenue. \$9 billion has evaporated in the course of the last few months, revenue that used to be plentiful because of such a strong economy, it's gone. What does that mean? Billions of dollars of cuts have happened already in our City budget, more cuts coming because we have to live within our means.

Now, I want to note that while we, New York City, has been doing everything possible to address this pandemic, to protect people's lives, to keep our hospitals together, to maximize testing, to get people food – 1.5 million meals being delivered every single day – all the things that this city is doing, we're doing it alone. We asked repeatedly for the federal government to help us with the stimulus. It hasn't come and there's no sign when it will. We have been the epicenter of this pandemic, and yet the federal government cannot manage to get New York City the help it needs nor so many other cities and states. So, the federal government side has been, in so many ways, missing an action. I went to Albany over the last few weeks, asked for help to help us through this incredibly difficult time with long term borrowing. I want to thank the State Assembly. They were ready, willing, and able. The State Senate, however, has not acted. And I'm certainly disappointed and I think New Yorkers are as well. But we're going to persevere.

We're going to move forward, but it's not going to be with a vision of let's endlessly cut everything because we know what that means. It will hurt human beings if we have to keep

cutting and cutting. It will hurt families. It will hurt our workforce, the people we depend on – their families depend on them. Austerity is never the way to go. We have to find a way forward. That includes continuing to focus on what matters most in our city. And we'll do that with everything we possibly can as New York City. But again, at some point, if Washington doesn't act, if Albany doesn't act, then we end up in a very tough situation. So, as we're in negotiations with the City Council, as we speak, what's clear is we will have to put into our budget, labor savings. And I hope and pray we'll find a way to address this situation with labor unions, and especially hope and pray that Washington will act on a stimulus. But we're going to be ready for any eventuality and make sure we're going to serve New Yorkers no matter what.

Now, at the same time, we have an unprecedented opportunity to change some things. And there has been a very intense, detailed, focused discussion over the last month on how we change policing, how we focus more on young people and the needs of communities, how we address disparities, how we redistribute. And I have to tell you it's been a very productive conversation. So, over this weekend, City Hall – here at City Hall, my office presented to the City Council, a plan that would achieve a billion dollars in savings for the NYPD and shift resources to young people, to communities in a way that would help address a lot of the underlying issues that we know are the cause of so many problems in our society. I am excited to say that we have a plan that can achieve real reform, that can achieve real redistribution, and at the same time ensure that we keep our city safe, and we make sure that our officers are on patrol where we need them around this city. So, that's something that I think is so important for the future, to strike that balance the right way, reform, justice, redistribution, but always safety.

At the same time, we want to shift resources more and more into young people in particular, into youth centers. We want to shift resources more and more into public housing. So, the plan we presented has over a half-billion dollars in the shift in capital funding to youth recreation centers, to NYCHA developments, to help where the need is greatest. Look, we can do this. We can strike the balance. We can keep the city safe. So, negotiations continue. I think they've been very productive. I'm very hopeful where we're going, but I wanted the people of this city to know where I stand and what we believe we can do for the future of this city. And while we're talking about reform, while we're talking about the future, I want to talk about a very troubling situation, and one that reminds us of what we need to do more in the future. We have to look at the entire criminal justice system, and that means our jails as well. That means our Department of Correction.

You know, we've made a lot of changes. We have the lowest level of incarceration since the 1940s. I want people to understand that. There are fewer people in jail in New York City today at any point since World War II, and that's something everyone should be proud of. We had 180,000 fewer arrests in 2019 than the last year of the Bloomberg administration. By driving down unnecessary arrests, we're driving down incarceration. And, of course, we're going to close Rikers Island and end that bad history. But there's still an outstanding issue, and it's solitary confinement also known as punitive segregation. Look, we ended it already for young people and New York City led the way in this nation in addressing the fact that we should not have young people in solitary confinement. We all remember the tragedy of Kalief Browder and we acted on the lesson of that tragedy. He did not die in vain. But then we saw another tragedy recently. Layleen Polanco. Layleen Polanco should not have been in Rikers to begin with. Layleen Polanco should not have been in solitary confinement. And Lord knows she deserves justice. Her family deserves justice. The transgender community deserves justice. We have to right the

wrong. We can't bring her back, but we can make change so that no one else goes through such a tragedy.

There has been accountability. Seventeen Correction officers have been disciplined, four suspended without pay. And this is just the start of the disciplinary process. But we need to make changes immediately in how people who are incarcerated in our jail system are handled and we need to make sure they are safe. So, effective immediately, people with underlying medical conditions will not be subject to punitive segregation or solitary confinement. There already had been some prohibitions in place, for example, for serious mental illness or pregnancy. We're expanding the list. There's a list on your screen right now. Every medical condition you see on your screen will be a cause for a prohibition of any individual being put into solitary confinement. That's important. We're doing that literally starting today, but we have to go farther.

So, let's take the next step. Let's end solitary confinement all together. We have proven that we can keep jails safe with much less use of solitary confinement, punitive segregation. Now there's a lot to do because the jails are still not safe enough. Let me hasten to make the point. We have a lot to do to create more safety for people who are incarcerated and for our Correction officers and employees alike. But we know there are ways we can do this without punitive segregation. So, I'm appointing a four-person working group and they will get to work on a plan to end punitive segregation, to end solitary confinement in New York City once and for all. The four members of that group will be the Vice Chair of the Board of Correction, Stanley Richards; the Commissioner of Corrections, Cynthia Brann; the President of Just Leadership USA, DeAnna Hoskins, and there will be a representative from the union that represents our Corrections officers, COBA. This group will have a simple mission, a simple mandate – find a way to end solitary confinement and tell us all the things it's going to take, because it will take other measures and new approaches and innovations to keep everyone safe. I'm expecting to report back in the fall with whatever recommendations are there. And then we get to work on making it happen because we can make this change in New York City.

Now I'm going to switch gears in a very big way. I want to go back to the health front. I want to go back to talking about the coronavirus, the issue that pervades everything we talk about. So, we're going to go over to the indicators in a moment. And the good news is our indicators our health indicators continue to be strong, continue to be positive. Phase two has been going very well in New York City. And that means, as we see progress, we're able to do more and more things to help New Yorkers. And here's a nice one – we're going to be able to open up the barbecue areas in our parks for this coming weekend, for the July 4th weekend. So, folks can enjoy barbecuing. I want everyone to remember to be safe, still practice the appropriate social distancing, still wear the face coverings, but it's time for barbecuing to come back in our parks and they will be opened in the coming days for this weekend. And again, that's because of the hard work that so many of you have put in. The New York City story is pretty damn good when it comes to the comeback we're making from the coronavirus, the continued progress in fighting back to the virus and keeping us healthy. The rest of the nation, I don't need to tell you, is looking more and more troubling, and that is causing us to think about each step we're taking and to examine what we're seeing from around the country. So, a number of cities and states, unfortunately, have been moving in the wrong direction and we do see a nexus to a particular problem. We all love indoor dining, but we also see problems related with indoor dining. So, in East Lansing, Michigan recently 85 patrons tested positive for the coronavirus, all linked back to

a single restaurant. In Texas and Florida, we've obviously seen, has gotten a lot of attention, record number of cases, clusters being tied back to bars and restaurants. California had made great progress, they're now unfortunately slipping back and they are changing the rules regarding bars and restaurants. So, we're paying attention to this lesson. My team spoke with the Governor's team yesterday, said we're increasingly concerned. I know they are as well. We are now going to re-examine the indoor dining rules for phase three. The rest of phase three is moving on pace for Monday, July 6th, this coming Monday. But the indoor dining element is now in question. We're going to work it through with the State, figure out how we want to approach it, if we want to pause that piece for a while or modify it – we'll have more to say in the next couple of days, because we want restaurant owners to have that information right away.

But the most important thing is to keep us healthy and safe and not allow resurgence. So, I've said all along, there'll be ups and downs, there'll be modifications. This is now after steady, steady progress, a point where we're saying, look, on this one piece, we may need to slow down and think differently and approach it differently. But what is clearly working is outdoor dining. And I think the big message I keep getting – I've talked to our health care people about it – is outdoors is working across the board, meaning the disease does not spread anywhere as much outdoors, face coverings are working, outdoor dining is working. We want to double down on outdoor dining. So, we talked about the outdoor dining that we'll start to open up on our open streets. Now, we want to go farther with the Open Restaurants program. Right now, we have 6,100 restaurants who have already applied and gotten that certification to go over just the last two weeks so they can do the outdoor dining. It's been such a hit. It's been so positive. It's bringing people back to work. We want to go a lot farther with it. So, we're going to reach out to every single restaurant that qualifies, but has not yet applied, and help them to apply. We're going to work with BIDs. We're going to work with the Hospitality Alliance, chambers of commerce, everyone – let's get every restaurant into outdoor dining. Let's maximize their revenue, bring back their workforce, but keep it outdoors primarily while we figure out the indoor piece. We also want to remind all the restaurant owners – please, it's been a great success so far, but be careful with the outdoor dining areas along the street, there are specific rules of how to keep them safe and a specific approach you need to take to make sure there's separation from the traffic. We're going to send inspectors around and ambassadors around to talk it through and make sure that restaurant owners really get that part right, because it's going great. People love it. It's super productive, but we have to keep it safe.

Okay, let's talk about our indicators. Number one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19. The threshold is 200 – today's report, 51. Daily number of people in Health + Hospitals ICU's, threshold of 375 – today's report, 297. And, most important, percentage of people testing citywide who are positive for COVID-19, threshold of 15 percent – today, again, two percent. So, we're holding at that number, which is really, really good.

Quickly in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we will turn to questions in the media. Please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

**Moderator:** Hi, all. Just a reminder that on the phone today, we have Small Business Commissioner Doris, Chair of the Board of Correction, Jennifer Jones Austin, and Senior Advisor, Dr. Jay Varma. With that, I will start with Marcia from CBS.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. How are you on this day before the budget?

**Mayor:** Day before the budget, Marcia. You and I have been through a lot of budgets together. I'm okay, how are you doing?

**Question:** Okay. So, one of the questions I had was this, you, apparently, have struck out in Albany in terms of trying to get them to allow you to borrow money. But I also was told that you were willing to raise property taxes if they would agree to it. Are you still willing to raise property taxes if the Senate will go along and give you the borrowing –

**Mayor:** That's just wildly inaccurate. No offense, Marcia – that's totally inaccurate. I said, in fact, in writing to everyone in the Legislature, we will not – not – never raise the property tax rate, no intention to do it. The Assembly, Marcia, the State assembly was there with us every step of the way. I want to thank Speaker Carl Heaste and members of the Assembly. They were ready to come to the aid of New York City in our hour of need. The Senate was not. So, we move forward. And I told everyone I spoke to in Albany, if we don't get borrowing authority, which, again, Marcia, you remember, the Assembly and the Senate gave borrowing authority to the City of New York after 9/11 with basically no strings attached, no debate, they just knew it was right thing to do. Since they haven't done it, we now have to go ahead in this budget and put a billion dollars of labor savings. Hopefully, we can find a way with labor to avert layoffs. It's not a given. If we can't find a way, then October 1st is when that would begin.

**Question:** So, my second question has to do with the cuts that you've agreed to – the \$1 billion in cuts to the NYPD budget that you've agreed to with the City Council. There are published reports that it would involve moving school safety agents out of the NYPD, some homeless outreach services out of the NYPD, and canceling the July police class. Can you comment on that?

**Mayor:** So, Marcia, I'll give you a very broad picture, because, of course, budget negotiations are continuing. We have to resolve by tomorrow. So, I'm not going to get into a lot of detail. What I can tell you is we have found a plan that will keep the City safe, will achieve the billion dollars in savings, will allow us to redistribute money to youth programs and to communities that need it most. Everything was with an eye to safety. So, we will be able to ensure the patrol strength we need. We will be able to ensure that school safety can do its job. The school safety issue would be addressed over several years and we'll have more details again as we work on an agreement. But what I can tell you is, from the beginning, I said, I need to believe that if we make these changes, as I have to see evidence, I have to feel in my heart and soul that the city will be safe. You know, I'm very concerned about the uptick in shootings. We have to make sure we can handle that and we have to make reform. I came here to make reform. We have to make reform the right way, and I am convinced we have now struck that balance.

**Moderator:** Next we have Michael Gartland from the Daily News.

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

**Mayor:** Good, Michael. How are you?

**Question:** I'm good. I'm good. So, a couple of questions – one, Governor Cuomo was on NY1 this morning, talking about, you know, some anxiety about phase three reopening of indoor dining. And I was wondering if you could, kind of, address what he said today on NY1 about that, you know, just having to kind of take this nice and easy.

**Mayor:** I think he's right. I mean, I didn't see his interview, Michael, but I think he's right. Look, I've said the State and City have been highly aligned throughout this process. Not every single time, because we're human beings and there's differences, but overwhelmingly aligned. I'm enthusiastic that phase one has gone so well, phase two is going so well, and phase three is right around the corner. But we're also constantly looking at the facts. The facts have been worrisome. In the course of this week, it got worse and worse around the country, and it got worse and worse with this nexus to bars and restaurants. We saw it. The State saw it. Everyone started talking and saying, hey, we have an issue here. We're always going to make adjustments. So, we'll have more to say in the next day or two to clarify. But, Michael, my view is, we can go into phase three on all the other fronts, we can do that effectively, we can do the outdoor dining on a much bigger scale, but the indoor we really need to examine closely and come to a decision in the next couple of days.

**Moderator:** Michael, do you have a follow up?

**Question:** Yeah. The other question I had was on 50-a. And I was wondering if you ordered a FDNY and the Correction Department to post disciplinary records online as you've done with the Police Department?

**Mayor:** Michael, I have not yet, because our focus obviously has been on the police issues and the budget. But I will, I want transparency across the board.

**Moderator:** Next we have Henry from Bloomberg.

**Question:** Hello, Mr. Mayor. I'm multitasking here, so –

**Mayor:** You can do it, Henry. I have faith in you.

**Question:** I don't know, it's tough. I want to get back to these savings in the Police Department and how you're accomplishing that. You said something about capital expenses. Is that part of this \$1 billion or is that separate from it?

**Mayor:** We will get you – yeah, there's a – I'm sorry. I couldn't hear the rest, Henry. I apologize.

**Question:** Where are you cutting that's enabling you to make these cuts?

**Mayor:** Yeah, so again, we are in the middle of negotiations. So you're going to forgive me if I keep it a little broad. The capital piece is separate from the billion. The capital piece is crucial, and this is something I want to do. I want to take money that was going to go to the NYPD for capital, but as projects that can appropriately be delayed. When we think about the vast needs of

young people, the vast needs of our residents in public housing, everyone wants to see a focus on those folks, hardest hit by the coronavirus, and particularly on our young people, we can do that, and NYPD has worked very productively with me, my team at City Hall, Office of Management and Budget to find savings, to find different approaches, and I want to thank Commissioner Shea and his team for that because we found a way to focus on young people, so we're going to take that capital money and shift it into creating youth recreation centers, want to take that capital money and shift it to needs at public housing, and I think that will be so important for people who will benefit and also important for our communities overall, and for safety and part of how you improve the relationship between police and community. The – Commissioner Shea has talked about the NYPD playing a bigger role, a more positive role in the lives of young people. This is his central strategic feeling. We're going to do that now with NYPD saying, we want to contribute and I give Commissioner Shea credit. He said it coming out of the box. When I said weeks ago, we will take money from the NYPD and put it into youth services. He said, look, no one ever wants to lose money out of their budget. But if I had to, I would want it to go to young people, and that's what we're doing.

**Question:** Yeah. I remember all that. I understand what you're doing. I understand the rationale for it. I'm just wondering, where are the cuts in the NYPD, where are they going to sustain cuts and spending?

**Mayor:** Right. And so, Henry, again, I'll give you the broad answer, but we, until we have a formal budget agreement, we're not there. The bottom line was we asked for a lot of savings. We asked for creative redeployments. We asked for every conceivable way to do things differently that could free up money for these things we need, and to think about things like school safety, but not as an instantaneous transition, but one that was done smartly over time while focusing on safety and reform at the same time. So, you know, when we get to a final agreement with the Council, we'll show you all the specifics and how we got there. But I have been real, a real stickler Henry. I've been every moment of the way, and I've been deeply, deeply involved in details. I've said, show me, it can keep everyone safe. Show me we can move a reform agenda and help young people show me we can do both in a balanced fashion, and I'm convinced that we have now hit that moment.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Sam from the Atlantic.

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

**Mayor:** Yeah. Sam, how you doing?

**Question:** Hi. I'm doing well. So, at the end of next month, the \$600, the extra \$600 in unemployment money is going to wear off and New Yorkers will no longer be receiving the extra \$600. What do you think the effect of that will be on evictions when the efficient moratorium is lifted August 20th and how bad will things be?

**Mayor:** I'm very, very worried. I think it'll be very bad. I'll tell you, Sam. I've been out all over the city in recent weeks and just showing up unannounced in different communities, primarily the communities have been hit hardest by the coronavirus. People have a lot of different concerns, but I can guarantee you the number one concern has been economic. The number one concern has been from people saying they're running out of money. They either never got their

check from the federal government. They're still waiting for it, or they know it's not enough, or they got it. They're using it up. I think this is the central challenge. The fact that there's no stimulus scheduled, there's literally no vote scheduled in the U.S. Senate for a stimulus right now. There's no new money coming. I think it would be devastating for a lot of New Yorkers.

We will be there to help them with food, anyone needs food will be provided for free, obviously health care through our public assistance, through Health + Hospitals, whatever we can do to help people. But this is why I said on Friday, we need to go back to this eviction issue. If someone cannot pay the rent, they should not be evicted. They should be given the right to go on a payment plan for the future, pay it over a longer period of time. We just can't see evictions of people who can't pay. If someone can pay, pay the rent as always, but for folks who literally have no choice, we got to do better. So, I think the State needs to reconsider and expand for those who cannot pay, stretch out that eviction in the moratorium and give people by law, the right to go onto a payment plan that doesn't exist right now. It should be created as a matter of state rule or state law.

**Question:** And last week Council Members Mark Levine and Vanessa Gibson – they said they were drafting legislation about the expansion of Right to Counsel to include basically everyone. Do you support that, and is that possible given budgetary constraints?

**Mayor:** Look, Right to Counsel is one of the things we did with the City Council that was extraordinarily effective. We have driven down evictions, illegal, unfair evictions in the city intensely. I'll get you the last statistics but I think we're somewhere in neighborhood, about half as many evictions before the coronavirus as were happening previously and intending to go farther and farther because we're giving people lawyers for free to stop evictions, and we've done things like rent freezes, and other ways of supporting people that help people pay the rent and avoid eviction. So, I'm proud of the fact that we've had a consistent policy to stop evictions in this city.

Now, Right to Counsel is a great idea, but I do think we have a profound question about how far we can go with it financially, and what's the right approach to it. So, I have not seen their legislation. I want to work with them. I respect them both want to work with them, but I do think we're going to have to recognize that this is not the way to handle the eviction crisis it's for the State to act and give people the ability to have those payment plans. If they don't, we're just going to be an absolute contradiction where people don't have money, they can't pay and they end up out on the street and that's not good for them or their landlord who will never get paid. There's got to be a smarter way.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

**Question:** Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have two questions that are very different. I'll start with perhaps a sillier one, given that we're almost nearing a budget, but it's about the Macy's fireworks that are supposed to start tonight in surprise locations. So, I was just curious you know, given the fact that I understand it's important for Macy's and for New York City to some degree to have this nationally televised firework show on the 4th of July, it signals to people outside of New York, how the city is doing. But since we're pre-taping fireworks around the city, again, people can't even see them, because we don't know where they're going to be, couldn't they have just aired old firework shows, maybe with a new performance. I mean, do you know? I've asked



Macy's do they have these fireworks already where they got to go bad? What's the deal? I mean, people, as you've heard, people have had surprise firework shows for weeks and there haven't really been happy with them.

**Mayor:** So, Katie, look, I think, I don't know if fireworks go bad. It's actually a really interesting question, but I can tell you this much – I made this decision a couple of months ago, because to me it was about saying that, you know, we're still here, we're still fighting. We're still standing, and that was in a much tougher time, but I had confidence that New York City would find our way through. It is a message to the nation of the strength of New York City. It's also an opportunity for us to celebrate our country as our country's in crisis and have a moment of something positive and something respectful. Macy's was ready to do this. They were ready to go ahead and I thought it was the right thing to do. So, we're going to have locations that give people an opportunity to say something very brief. A lot of people be able to see them from just wherever they live. We don't want crowds. We don't want a lot of commotion. It's a simple approach in a very imperfect world to give something special to people, but do it with a lot of sense of security and safety, and you know, look, folks will know at the last minute the broad area and they'll get a sense to look out for it. I think that's the right approach and then it will be packaged together in the show for July 4th. So, in a world of imperfect options, I came to the conclusion with Macy's that this was the best approach.

**Question:** Oh, thanks, and my second question is involving the budget right now, I guess, as you're here at City Hall, outside of "Occupied City Hall", there's a protest from Teens Take Charge, people pushing for the restoration of the Summer Youth Employment program. So, I'm curious, you know, I know there's still a decent amount of summer left. There were some programs you announced that would address that. But I think people – I'm curious if there will be a better plan and a larger plan for so many, the teams in New York City who don't have much else to do.

**Mayor:** Yes, absolutely, Katie, this has been one of the central discussions over the last few weeks. The Council feels that deeply, and I do too. We, we have to find a way to give our young people positive options this summer. Look, when we did the budget back in April, we did not know at all what the summer would look like, and we feared there would be honestly, no possibility of any kind of programming except potentially online. We didn't know if people would be able to go outdoors or do anything. Things are a lot better now. On Monday, we're going to be able to open up a lot of the sports areas in parks. We obviously have said to summer camps that operate in the city that they can be operating in our parks. We're in a much, much better situation than we were in April. So now we're going to do a number of things to ensure that young people have options, including still some online options because the traditional summer youth is going to be hard to reconstruct, but we can do other versions of it. High priority for the Council, high priority for me, we said weeks ago, money would go from the NYPD to youth programming and summer youth employment is obviously a central part of that.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Dana from the New York Times.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** Hi, Dana.

**Question:** Hey. I'm curious if you have any thoughts on why it is that the State might be willing to give borrowing authority for operating costs to Nassau County, to the MTA and to itself, but not to New York City.

**Mayor:** It's a great question, Dana. I want to again say the State Assembly was ready from moment one and has said continually they support borrowing authority for the City of New York. Look, we are the engine of the entire state economy. We are aware that revenue for New York State comes from. I think this should be an all for one, one for all a moment. You know, we are all, we're all together here and I talked to a number of senators and they said, in fact, they are concerned to have borrowing authority for their localities, and I said, I agree, you should, we should, everyone who needs it should use it to get through, to use it judiciously, use it carefully, avoid layoffs, avoid cutting services and get through to a better day. So, I think that's the right way to go. I commend the Assembly. I'm disappointed with the Senate. And I think if the Senate thought it was right to give borrowing authority to the State, the MTA, then of course they should give it to the place that is 40 percent of the State's population and the economic center of the State. It's only the right thing to do. You have a follow-up?

**Question:** Yeah and to follow-up, when you raise this issue with the Governor, what does he tell you?

**Mayor:** Look, I'm not going to get into private conversations. I'm only going to say that the bottom line logic, I've never heard anyone speak against, the State gave itself the authority, as you said, MTA, the city got the authority in 2001 unanimously, no strings attached used that borrowing authority over the last 20 years, judiciously, carefully helped us come back from 9/11, no one – the New York City bond ratings went up in the last 12 months for God's sakes. This is not the 1970's. So, I have not gotten a coherent answer as to why it's just not the right thing to do. And again, we're going to keep working on it, but I am unfortunately obligated to say that by October 1st, unless we get borrowing or stimulus or some kind of different approach from our labor colleagues, we do have to look down the barrel of something no one wants, which is layoffs.

**Moderator:** Last two for today. Next we have Rich from WCBS880.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, good morning.

**Mayor:** Hey Rich. How are you doing?

**Question:** Okay. Listen, are the cuts against the NYPD punitive?

**Mayor:** No, not at all. Rich, every agency has had to go through a lot of cuts to begin with. Remember, we're talking about between the Executive Budget in April and this budget now, billions of dollars of cuts across all our agencies. Everyone's been going through the exercise. The NYPD did a hell of a good job of saying, okay, here's a bunch of things we could do while still keeping the city safe. So no, it is a moment where we have to address profound issues. We need to redistribute revenue to communities that need the most. We know our young people are hurting. It's been a horrible time for them. We know a number of communities have been very hard-hit by this virus. We need to redistribute resources toward them. We need to go at the root causes of so many of the problems we're facing. There is a way to do both, and Rich, I was

skeptical at first and wanted to see how it could all come together. But a lot of painstaking work occurred to figure out the right way to do things, to focus on both safety and social justice and young people and redistribution. We found a plan that we felt good about, and this weekend presented that to the City Council to say, here's a way we can all move forward together.

**Question:** If I could follow up. Is any other agency being cut the same amount as the NYPD?

**Mayor:** I'll get you the final numbers when we get to a final agreement. The NYPD is being treated clearly in a specific manner. A number of agencies are being cut quite a bit, but we're dealing with a specific reality with the NYPD unquestionably, and that is because it's important to show that we are going to make changes in this city, that we're going to refocus our efforts on young people in particular, and that we can do that while changing the approach to the NYPD. The NYPD is a very well-run organization. They're good at finding ways to make things happen and finding ways to be as efficient as possible. That's what CompStat is all about. So, this is a particular moment and there is a particular need to show that we will redistribute to young people to communities, but it's being done in a smart, safe manner. And I know the NYPD can handle it effectively. So that's how we approach this, Rich. And again, I set a high bar. I had to be comfortable that we could do this in a manner that would keep this city safe and I am.

**Moderator:** Last one for today. Next we have Nolan from The Post.

**Question:** Hey, Mr. Mayor, can you hear me?

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

**Question:** I'm doing all right. A couple of questions. First, and it gets back to something that you referenced earlier this morning, shootings in the city are nearly double in this June what they were in the last June. Murders for the month are also significantly, both metrics of tracking well above their 2019 numbers. You've said a couple of different things. One that the problem is particularly bad in North Brooklyn and parts of the Bronx, and that until the court system gets up and running, there's really, you know, what can be done about it as somewhat hamstrung. Can the city really not do anything to tackle this shooting surge we've seen so far this month? And do you think that cutting a youth employment has contributed to the uptick?

**Mayor:** Nolan, absolutely, the City can do a lot, the police can do a lot to address this. I think we have to look at the sheer of what's happened here. A court system that still is not functioning. The reality of months and months of people's lives being disrupted people who've lost their livelihood, the pain that people have gone through, the loss of life, the frustration. We're in a very particular moment – there's no parallel in New York City history, Nolan. So there's a lot of factors coming together. But I do think the fact that literally the underpinning of the whole concept, that if someone's arrested, they go to court. If they need to be incarcerated, they're incarcerated. That whole thing has broken down. It can be restored. I'm hopeful if we can keep the health situation together and can be restored very soon. I want to see the State bring the courts back as quickly as possible, as fully as possible, but that doesn't mean we stop doing the work we do, and the NYPD continues to. There's still a huge number of guns being taken off the street. There's still a huge amount of work being done to keep people safe and that will continue. And the work of COMPSTAT refocusing energy and resources in the commands that need the help the most, so that we'll all continue.

Summer Youth Employment Nolan was only slated to begin next week, even if it or so – even if it had begun. So, I think by definition, that has not been a contributing factor up to now, and remember it's a meaningful number of young people, but by no means the majority of our young people. But again, we're now going to do something, I'm very hopeful we'll come to an agreement with the Council and be able to do something really good for young people, including a robust Summer Youth Employment effort this summer.

**Question:** And, and then I guess on the on the second piece of this, the billion-dollar cut proposal from the NYPD. The department spent give or take \$700 million on overtime last year, is that spending going to be significantly reduced? And can you guarantee that the headcount of the department will remain at its current 36,000?

**Mayor:** So, Nolan, again in the middle of negotiations, I'm not going to go into a lot of detail. I'll say, and I want be responsive to your question, we're looking at all of that. Over time is always an area where we want to do better and this has been well before current realities. I've been in many a budget meeting where we've pushed the NYPD and other agencies to reduce overtime. So that's an area we always want to do better, especially in the middle of an unprecedented fiscal crisis. Our budget is \$8 billion smaller, \$8 billion smaller than the one proposed in February. So we're cutting everywhere we can, smart savings, smart efficiencies, reducing overtime makes lot of sense. Whatever we do in terms of headcount has to keep the city safe. So we'll have more to say on that if and when we get to a final plan with the City Council.

Everyone as I conclude, look, first of all, a lot going on, so many important issues, but I want to say once again, that amongst the other announcements today, the vision of ending solitary confinement, ending punitive segregation once and for all in New York City. This is something that could be a signature moment for change and reform and for a humane approach to rehabilitating people and turning around their lives. I know we have on with us, I just want to thank her, even though questions were not directed her way, Jennifer Jones Austin, Chair of the Board of Corrections, someone who I honor so much for all you do for New York City, and you helped us build this administration from the beginning and Jennifer, I know you're going to help us to find a way to a plan that really will work and profound reform in our correction system. So, I just want to take a moment to thank you publicly, Jennifer, for the work you are doing and will do.

**Chair Jennifer Jones Austin, Board of Correction:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** Yeah, I – you will have plenty to do, Jennifer. You will never be – you will never lack for important work to do. So, everyone to conclude, look, we're at a watershed moment for the City of New York. We have to get it right. We have to get the approach to health right. We have to keep beating back this virus. We're going to make adjustments all the time. We're going to be really open to you about when we see a need to make an adjustment, but we're also going be very, very focused on the progress we're making and what that allows us to do. So far, New Yorkers are doing great. We have to be smart to keep focusing on what works and when we see a problem, like the concerns we're having about indoor dining, we have to address them. But as we conclude the budget for the year, hopefully the next 24 hours, again, I come back to where I started. Our singular focus will be on you and your family, your health, your safety, keeping food

on your table, keeping a roof over your head. That's what you need your city to do for you and that is exactly what we will do. Thank you, everybody.

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