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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON MSNBC'S MORNING JOE

Mika Brzezinski: Joining us now though, Democratic mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio, along with Parkland, Florida shooting survivor and co-founder of the March for Our Lives, David Hogg. They are here to announce a new partnership between student activists and mayors across the country to get younger voters more engaged.

Mike Barnicle, Eddie Glaude, Jr., Yamiche Alcindor, and Rick Tyler are all still with us as well. Mr. Mayor, thanks for being with us. I want to ask you a few big picture, broader questions and then we want to focus on your plans, on your new partnership here.

The tone of politics as we lead up to the midterms and look toward the midterms, I want to ask from a Democratic perspective – with the President warning of violence if the Democrats win and the race for governor in Florida already being tinged with racism and getting ugly, what are some of the challenges, what are some of your concerns about how Democrats move forward and try and win?

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, I think what Democrats are doing this year more and more is acting like real Democrats and being bolder, being more clearly progressive, speaking to working people and everyday people's lives. I think that's why Gillum won in Florida. I think that's why Ocasio-Cortez won in Queens and the Bronx. I think you see something happening all over the country and the reason I say that is I think that's the pertinent reality – it's what's going to move people in their hearts emotionally to come out and vote.

That energy is on the democratic and the progressive side right now. And that's what I think can't be tracked. Polling is not picking it up. The reality of turnout is something that is beyond the reach of traditional polling to analyze. And we keep getting surprised. We keep seeing things happen that were not predicted. And I think you're going to see a lot more of that in November.

You certainly saw it last November. Virginia is a great example – the House of Delegates. This is going to be an extraordinary change election in my view, and things are happening at the grassroots that none of the experts, none of the pundits can possibly see.

Mike Barnicle: That's not unusual. That happens but – David, Mayors for Our Lives. How many mayors? What's your objective? What are you going to do? And cite specific what impact would Mayors for Our Lives in the Florida gubernatorial race?

David Hogg: So, what we're doing with Mayors for Our Lives is we're announcing a campaign that's bipartisan with Republicans and Democrats to register a new generation of voters. Right now we have over 50 [inaudible] in 25 states including D.C., in terms of mayors.

And I think the impact on the Florida election will be the fact that polls do not register people that are newly registered a lot of the time. They don't expect young people to go out. They don't take into account young people and especially a lot of the time people of color in different communities that historically speaking – like, even my AP Gov textbook, it talks about the Latino population being the sleeping giant in terms of demographics and they don't turn out.

But I think we're starting to see with like Beto and different people, these people are turning out and polls are not registering them. If young people turn out, even if Beto is within one point of Cruz, for example, it's not registered –

Barnicle: Explain who he is – Beto O'Rourke from [inaudible] Ted Cruz.

Eddie Glaude, Jr.: So, let me ask two different questions. So I want to hear more about the role of young voters in dealing with this nomination to become the democratic nominee for the governor of Florida. What role did they play particularly in Orlando, perhaps in Broward or other places where he [inaudible].

And then the second question, to you Mr. Mayor, is do you remember that story in Politico a while back saying that the progressive wing – Bernie's army was in disarray, that this talk of the progressive move or thrust within the party was always a bit much. That Ocasio-Cortez didn't really signal something. But something has happened –

Mayor: Something is going on.

Glaude: So, how do you think about what's – I heard you mention this in your answer to Mika – but how would you characterize that alongside of the DNC reform with regards to superdelegates? What's happening in the Democratic Party?

Mayor: Look, the change is happening. It's profound. It's happening in states across the country. You can see progressive candidates who have won primaries they weren't supposed to win all over the country. You can see that when the progressive candidate does get the Democratic nomination, the kind of energy that can create among a whole swath of the electorate including younger voters who we must get involved.

That's a bipartisan statement but I'll speak as a progressive and a Democrat. Younger voters are going to be the difference-makers. We've seen it already. We saw it November 17th – how a lot of younger voters engaged in states including Virginia, as I mentioned, and changed the whole dynamic. And are choosing to run too.

This is another big x-factor – more and more younger candidates. So, I think it fits perfectly with this amazing initiative. I have to say Mayors for our Lives – 50 plus mayors united in the concept that we're going to reach younger folks, students – even in the high school level getting ready to vote and beyond. And there are going to be game changes in our society. And I'll tell you something when it comes to gun safety, what I hear from younger voters is uncompromising. They believe it's a matter of life and death. They're right. And what David and his colleagues have done has changed American politics and awoken a different sleeping giant which is younger voters.

Hogg: Yeah, exactly. The issue of gun safety is not democrat or republican, its and American issue that we face as a country. In terms of more developed countries we face one of the highest rates of gun [inaudible] per capita of any country. And we – the only way we're ever going to solve this is by working together as democrats and republicans and as Americans to solve this issue and registering everybody to vote. On the topic of what happened to the gubernatorial race, I think young people have made an impact on Gillum. And the reason why they didn't expect him to win is the fact that we had a Florida team going across Florida, to every congressional district, all 27 in Florida throughout the summer registering thousands of new voters. In Orlando, our team for March for Our Lives Orlando helped promote voter registration so much that it went up 90 percent in Florida. Youth voter registration is up 41 percent. Those people are not taking into account on polls. And that's why these things are happening. Young people are angry but more importantly they want to see people that bring people together, and don't divide us more. They want to see democrats and republicans that actually make this country unified and not even more divided than it is.

Brzezinski: So, let me ask about another gubernatorial race, and that would be the State of New York, Mr. Mayor. The democratic primary for governor has gotten kind of spicy. Andrew Cuomo accused Cynthia Nixon of being a phony who concealed her tax returns. I don't think that's true. And that she would run the state into a debt driven chaos. So I guess two questions – Would Cynthia Nixon be good a governor for the State of New York? And are you concerned that the race has gotten too negative?

Mayor: Well, first of all I have not made a public endorsement in this race, and it's something I am still looking at. But I want to say there is no question in my mind Cynthia Nixon is an extraordinary human being, activist who's made a huge impact particularly in terms of education and fairness for our children. I thought she more than held her own last night in the debate. I thought she got a lot of very powerful ideas out and a lot of very powerful critiques out. And I found some of the governor's counterpoints a little desperate honestly, the notion of calling her a corporation. That sounded like the Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court that a corporation is a person. Look, I think the bottom line here is just like we've been talking about this race is unpredictable here in New York. There's a lot going on on the ground and there's a lot of people who are thinking very independently. And anyone who thinks they know where this is going is not watching what's happening in current politics.

Hogg: And I think one important –

Brzezinski: Mayor Bill –

Hogg: thing to remember –

Brzezinski: Yeah.

Hogg: Is that fact that when it comes to voting for people. Young people – we are starting to see this shift in America that not only around voting for young people. But around the fact that when wealthier people are running, younger people are starting to think why would these people be wanting to fix the world that quite frankly a lot of us think that they messed up. Like the President being a billionaire. Why would somebody – these are the people that are creating a lot of the problem that we face as a nation right now are coming back into politics in saying that they want to solve them when in reality they're only in it for themselves and that the truth. But that's why it's so important that we vote, because no matter what your opinion is you get out there and you vote on November 6th. You get out there and you register on September 25th in a bipartisan effort. Because you can say what you want about politics but if you don't vote you have no right too.

Mayor: Amen, David is right.

Brzezinski: Alright, fair enough.

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