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

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Well, good morning, everybody. We have a lot to go over today. I'm going to go through it all very quickly. First, most important – look we are now five months into the coronavirus crisis. The most central thing we can do in New York City is keep ourselves healthy, keep the infection rate low in this city. If we get that part right, and New Yorkers have been heroes, fighting back against this disease, we keep this at a low level. Everything else becomes possible. Restarting our city, restarting our economy. It all depends on this. So, we're going to talk about several things today, but one very, very important piece of the equation is the offense here. The force that we've put together, the fight back against the disease, the Test and Trace Corps. We're going to talk about the latest on that and how it's helping us keep that infection level low.

But I want to first talk about a couple of other really important pieces that are happening today that we need to talk about. First of all, question of evictions – this is on the minds of thousands and thousands of New Yorkers. People just trying to keep a roof over their head. Look, we have some good news today and I want to thank Governor Cuomo. He signed an executive order extending some of the protections against eviction for tenants as a result of COVID-19. Now we need the court system to play the role. So, I'm calling on the State court system. Please aggressively follow up on this executive order to protect tenants who simply can't pay the rent because they lost their income due to the greatest crisis in generations. We need the court system to come in and then we need the State in general to address the bigger questions here. These eviction moratoriums. It should not be something that just has to be renewed all the time. This needs to be ongoing for the extent of this crisis, and then for several months thereafter, as people hopefully consistently get back on their feet and have the money to pay the rent, but really what we need as part of the stimulus, we need tenant assistance. We need rental assistance to help people get by and we need the state to pass a law, giving tenants the ability to pay the rent when they can, if they don't have any income, what can they do? But for those who don't have income, giving them the opportunity to go on a payment plan and pay back when they do that's right for tenants and landlords alike. We need state action on that front.

Now let's talk about so much has happened last few days with the storm that hit this city, Isaias. First of all, the ongoing power outages. This is an unacceptable situation. Con Ed continues to be unclear in their response, and this is something we've seen before, and I really wish Con Ed would get the memo that they have to be clear in their game plan for New Yorkers. People are depending on this power. The power has come back on consistently. I want to give that credit, but what I'm not happy about is a lack of clarity and speed about the next steps for the people of the five boroughs. So right now just about 57,000 households do not have power in New York City as a result of the storm earlier in the week, from the latest we've heard from Con Ed, they are still sticking to the notion. They will add another 15-20,000 restorations today. So another

15-20,000 homes we'll get their power back today, based on the estimates we've gotten from Con Ed, I want to see that number greatly intensify – telling people by the end of Sunday is not a good answer. We need to see that speed up, certainly for the vast majority of households and we'll keep Con Ed's feet to the fire, and we have urged them to move faster, but also offer whatever help they need.

Also you should know, separate, totally separate from the storm. Earlier in the week, there was an early morning outage affecting over a hundred thousand customers. That was a new outage. It appears to have been weather related from weather activity last night, but all of those customers have been restored. So that was a very brief outage.

Now there's other damage, of course, from the storm. This is the worst wind we have seen since Sandy and we saw the worst wind damage since Sandy. We are working with the state right now, and I certainly want to call on the state to authorize an emergency declaration given what's happened in New York City, given what happened in Long Island, this certainly should be a state of emergency, and then that would help us to activate FEMA support and funding. Now, some people reached out to me and said, could FEMA come in? And FEMA is not in a position to come in with a lot of resources that would have an immediate impact in this kind of event. They often coordinate the resources of other local and state entities, but what they can help with for sure is reimbursement for the cost. So we need a state declaration of emergency. We need FEMA funding to cover the very real costs of this cleanup. Now, today we will have over 1,000 city, state, National Guard, and private contractors working to clear the tree damage. So that's a substantial number of personnel will be out there from a wide range of city agencies, Parks Department, Department of Environmental Protection, Police Department, Fire Departments, Sanitation Department, a number of agencies are getting involved combined efforts over a thousand personnel out Con Ed has apparently about 550 personnel out.

Our first concern of course is safety. There are still places where there are real safety issues cause of down power lines. That has to be the priority to get those lines secured, protect people's lives. We also need streets to be cleared. At this point, there's been a number of streets cleared, but there's still 280 streets blocked in New York City. We will have over 200 of those resolved by the end of the day, according to the latest information from the Parks Department, the rest we expect to be resolved hopefully on Saturday. So, a lot to do there, but keep moving forward.

But now back to the central issue that has been gripping our lives for the last five months, how we fight this virus, how we keep it from spreading, how we stop a resurgence, New Yorkers have been heroes, you've been amazing. The whole country is looking with admiration in New York City for the way we fought back, and Test and Trace is a crucial piece of the equation. Again, this is this army of over 3,000 hardworking people out there every day in communities on the phones, finding people, helping people, reaching people, literally stopping thousands of new infections with their work, and it's an army that's growing, and part of the magic here is not just to say we need you to get tested, but also if you are testing positive to get you to help you need, if you have to safely separate from others. So amazing hit rate, so far amazing success. 92 percent of all positive cases have been reached. Thousands, we now estimate over 5,000 potential coronavirus cases, averted, meaning 5,000 more people that would have been infected were not because the folks who tested positive were safely separated from the folks around them, but we got a lot more to do. We know big, big things coming on. Flu season's coming colder weather people more indoors, school coming back. A lot of hits, so Test and Trace will be more

important than ever, and when Test and Trace calls you, it means someone is calling not only trying to stop the disease from spreading and protect you and your family, but they're trying to give you help that if you need to safely separate, we will be with you every step of the way, and the leading the charge, the leader of this piece of the effort, making sure that people get smart, compassionate, resourceful care for whatever they need to get through that period of isolation and get healthy again, the Director of the Take Care Initiative of Test and Trace, Dr. Amanda Johnson. Welcome doctor.

**Director Amanda Johnson, Take Care New York:** Thank you so much, Mr. Mayor. As the Mayor mentioned, the Take Care arm of the Test and Trace course responsible for ensuring that New Yorkers have what they need to safely separate. To date this program has looked like helping New Yorkers connect with a hotel so that they have a physical space and the amenities that they need to prevent spreading the virus to their loved ones, their roommates, their family, their friends, and for New Yorkers who choose to complete isolation and quarantine at home we'll deliver you the services that you need to do so from the comfort of your own home. We are really pleased to announce that starting next week, we'll actually be able to deliver you the supplies that you need to complete your safe separation in the form of our Take Care package.

So I'm going to walk you through the contents of this package, some of which are going to be familiar to you. So having the weathered the storm over the past five months you'll know that this is a medical grade mask that you can use to protect yourself from the other people who reside in your homes, and we've also included hand sanitizer for you. Nothing takes the place of washing your hands as frequently as possible, but I just want to take a moment to remark on how impressive it is that we're being able to deliver a hand sanitizer and masks at a time where we would not have been able to do so five months ago. We also have antibacterial wipes so that you're able to clean the surfaces so that you reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to people who share your household. We're also including two items to help you with monitoring your health during the time that you're isolating quarantining. One is a disposable thermometer. This is really important because your contact tracers going to call you and ask you about your symptoms, and we specifically want to know if you've registered any fever over the past day. This will help us ensure that when it comes time for you to exit your safe separation, you're able to do so at the appropriate time. We've also included a medical device in the kits that we're going to be sending to cases – so the people who have been confirmed positive for COVID. This is a pulse oximeter. It gives you two very useful pieces of information. One of which is your heart rate. The other is your oxygen level – the level of oxygen saturation in your blood, this information is really important because a low oxygen saturation can be an early warning sign that you need to seek additional medical attention. You can have a low oxygen saturation without even feeling breathless, so we're really pleased that we're able to include this so that you have the information you need to be able to escalate care when the time comes – when and if the time comes. We've also through the generosity of a couple of donors, been able to include a couple things, to make the duration of safe separation, more engaging, and more productive. So we're really appreciative to Kind for the inclusion of a couple of Kind bars in the Take Care package, and we'd also like to thank Microsoft for providing information about how to access online workshops and training. I know that was a lot of information but we've also included a booklet in the Take Care package so that you can go over the resources that are included and also find information about how to connect with other services that you might need during the time of your safe separation. This package is going to be translated into 13 additional languages as well.

We understand that being able to safely separate comes down to more than just tools. It's about building relationships with your contact tracer, with your resource navigator, so that they can help you get the services that you need to safely separate, particularly if you choose to do so at home. We're really proud of the work that the 15 community-based organizations who form our core of over 200 resource navigators – the relationships they've built to help people get the services they need while they're safely separating at home. These tireless 200+ resource navigators have fielded over 8,000 calls to people who have needed services, people who have reached out to us during this really critical time. They've been able to connect individuals to about 5,000+ city services, including prescription medication delivery, as well as mental health services, and we've been able to enable 2,000 individuals to receive food delivery in their homes.

I want to take this moment to extend my appreciation to all the New Yorkers out there who have been participating in the Test and Trace Corps so far. So if you've gone out and you've gotten tested, if you've picked up the phone, when your contact tracer has called you, if you've given information about your contact so we can help them know their status and help them safely separate, I am indebted to you, and I'm also very grateful for everybody who has made the sacrifice to safely separate at home or hotel so that we can break the chains of transmission and stop the virus in its tracks. Thank you so much, and I'm going to turn it back to the Mayor.

**Mayor:** Thank you so much, Dr. Johnson, excellent report, and look, everyone, just think about what Dr. Johnson has been over there. There's a very, very comprehensive, extensive effort to get people whatever support they need. We're not saying to people, hey, you're on your own. Quite the opposite. We're saying we're going to be with you every step of the way. In fact, if you engage with the Test and Trace effort, you're going to have a lot of support, a lot of compassion, a lot of creativity to get you the help you need, and it just makes so much sense that if folks know they're going to be supported, they will do more to safely separate from others, and that will stop the spread of disease. This effort is going to be even more important as we go into the fall. So thank you doctor for your great work and your team's work.

And look, we are ever vigilant about this disease. So we also are recognizing that while we're serving the folks in this city who need to safely separate, we're also very keenly aware of folks traveling in or New Yorkers who have been to one of the 35 states, where there are problems coming back. They need the Test and Trace Corps too. They need support in quarantining. They need information, and we're going to do that in a lot of ways. One of the things we're doing is our checkpoints, and we announced them earlier this week, and this is crucial. This is both to help people give them information, let them know how important it is. If they're in the situation, according to state law, where they should quarantine that this is how you do it, and this is the help you will receive. But it also will spread the word to all New Yorkers and all visitors that this is really, really serious. So the checkpoints began with that clear message, positive message: we're here to help, but we got to make sure everyone takes this seriously. I want to thank everyone at the Sheriff's Office. They've been doing an outstanding job. The first stops were about 200 vehicles just as a test run. That number is going to grow greatly this weekend. But unquestionably, it will help to reach thousands and thousands of people as individuals. But I think millions of people get the message because of these checkpoints that these quarantines must be honored for the good of all.

Let me take us now to our daily indicators. And again, this makes the point how the discipline, the focus, the hard work of New Yorkers, everything we've been doing including test and trace,

especially is keeping these numbers low. So first, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, threshold, 200 patients, today's report 79 patients. Number two, daily the number of Health + Hospitals ICUs, 375 patients is the threshold, 302 is the number today. And most importantly, people testing positive citywide for COVID, threshold 15 percent, today's report one percent. Excellent number and congratulations to all. And a few words now in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish:]

With that we'll turn to our colleagues in the media. Please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

**Moderator:** Hi, all we have with us here today Dr. Amanda Johnson, Director of Take Care in the Test and Trace Corps, Deputy Mayor for Operations Anglin, Parks Commissioner Silver, Emergency Management Commissioner Criswell, Sheriff Fucito, and Senior Advisor Dr. Varma. With that, I'll start with Dave Evans from ABC 7. Dave, are you there?

**Question:** Yes, I'm here. Can you hear?

**Mayor:** There you go. How you doing Dave?

**Question:** I'm fine, Mayor. Hey, I wanted to ask you, first of all, a question about the schools. It sounds like we may have some news from the Governor later. I don't know how Earth shattering it's going to be, but I just wanted to see your reaction in that it sounds like it's going to be a region by region thing? What the metric is for each region of the number of people with the infection rate, So we could have the schools in Albany, I guess, open and maybe the schools in New York City not open? But the word is to proceed and act as if we are going to have schools, in-classroom school this fall. But if that metric kicks up and we have a lot of people infected then I guess he gets to pull the plug in September. Is that your understanding of what's going to be happening?

**Mayor:** Dave, you know, appreciate the question and it's on everyone's mind. I'm not going to comment until we get the formal, formal decisions from the State. But there's been a lot of close collaboration between the State and the City on the notion of tough thresholds in general, during the coronavirus crisis. There's been real unity on the notion that we were going to be very careful and tough in deciding when to proceed through each phase. You know, we went through phases one, two, three, four on time, but with exceptions. And the City and State were unified on those exceptions. On the schools, you know, I've already said, I want to whole New York City schools to a very tough standard. And that is that three percent standard over a seven day period, if our average goes above three percent infection in New York City, we would not open schools. If it happened during the school year, we will close them. So, you know, I believe we're all going to be unified on that and vigilant. We need to open schools because we know, just extraordinary number – we have 1.1 million school kids. And three quarters of our families have said they want the kids back in school. They want that support. They want the kids to do better educationally than they can do remotely. They want everything that goes with school, the social development, the mental health services, physical health services, food. It's our obligation to do our very best for parents and families. But we're going to work with the State to figure out what's safe. That's what counts most. Go ahead.

**Question:** So my second question is also to do with schools. I think today is the day that parents have to decide if their kids are going to stay home and learn completely online and not go into the classroom. But my question is, I know you probably have heard this before. It's kind of difficult to make that decision, isn't it? If the parents don't really know what the classroom situation is going to look like this fall? Like how many days, how safe it is, all those things?

**Mayor:** Well, I'd say a couple of things. And I was a public school parent for the entire education of both my kids. So I certainly can relate to the many, many things parents are going through now and made so much worse by the pandemic. It's really tough for parents. But I also think New York City parents are realists. They understand we've gone through a disruption like never before, and it's not going to look like a normal year. Here's the deal, people have until the end of the day to indicate if they want to go with all remote from the beginning. We'll talk about that Monday. We'll give an update once those numbers are tabulated. Of course at any point, parents can make that decision. And they can go to remote pretty much instantly along the way if they need to. But we also know, again, a survey 400,000 parents is unheard of, to get that kind of response rate, that most parents by far want the kids back in school. They understand it's going to be blended learning for the short term. And Dave, I'll keep saying, this is not forever. You know, five months, six months, seven months. I don't know exactly when, but there's going to be a day when there's a vaccine and kids have it. And things go back to normal. This is, I hope only part of our school year, we're talking about, that gets affected by the coronavirus. But thinking through the perspective of parents, I'd say this. You know, right now if you choose to have your kids in school, you know it's going to be some days a week. In the course of the next couple of weeks, you're going to get all the details about your school's schedule template, and then your individual child's schedule. You know that we're going to be providing childcare for as many people as we can. And we're going to continue to try and build that number up. And parents are going to use all the resources at their command. Their family, friends, fellow parents are all going to work together. It will not be easy, but I think most parents feel strongly that even sometime in school is a lot better for their kids than none.

**Moderator:** Next we have David from the Queens Daily Eagle.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor, two questions about homelessness. Yesterday you talked about continuing to house thousands of people experiencing homelessness in commercial hotels for the duration of the crisis, to limit COVID in congregate shelters. Commissioner Banks said there've been 13,000 adults moved into two bedrooms, that's 6,500 rooms. DHS says its average is \$237 a night with services. That's more than \$1.5 million dollars a night, \$46 million a month. And it's a stop gap solution. So officials in your administration have talked about converting hotels for permanent residential use either relaxing SRO law, or turning the hotels into permanent supportive housing sites. So will the City do that? And what is the long term housing plan for people staying in hotels?

**Mayor:** David, look, you've done your research. I appreciate that. Yeah, the goal here continues to be to deal with the short term, which I'm just going to use a round number. Let's say it's six months-ish. While we're dealing with this crisis until people are vaccinated, then once we get through that, we're going to of course, start to move out of those hotels and go back into the shelter system. But we're going to constantly try and reduce the number of people in shelter with all the other tools we have. We'll have a lot more to say on that in the coming weeks. But I think

we're going to have an opportunity here to be creative and continue to get people to other better housing. Yes, if we have control of a facility and it's no longer needed for shelter, the goal is always to convert it to permanent affordable housing. But we also have to have enough shelter available by law and morally for folks who need it. So different pieces of the answer. But I think the simple point is job one is get folks out of the hotels they've been in temporarily. Back into the shelter system once it's safe. Go ahead.

**Question:** So would you support changing the SRO law to allow those hotels to be converted to permanent use?

**Mayor:** Well, again, the ones that there are buildings we control already and that's where we're looking to, or want to control, want to purchase, where we're looking to do permanent affordable housing. I think in terms of SRO law, I have to check that. And I think there's some open questions there. That's something we'll come back to you on. But I will say to you, and this has been raised by a lot of folks, you know, are there times when the City can actually buy a building, take over a building, turn it into permanent affordable housing? That's what we've been trying to do more and more. That's actually showing some success. Let them be run by community based nonprofit. Not by folks, you know, trying to make a profit often off the misery of others. So that's our main thrust, but I will come back to you on the SRO law.

**Moderator:** Next we have Marla from WCBS 880.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have two questions, one concerning education. The City Comptroller was talking about holding classes outside. How feasible would this be to do in New York City?

**Mayor:** Marla it is something we want to take advantage of for sure. The Chancellor has been very clear about that, but it's not a reliable solution. You got a couple of problems. You got rain and storms. You got cold weather. I think it's fair to say in September, October, you might have some opportunities to do some things outside. I think it's fair to say in May, June, but a lot of the year it's just too cold. Some folks have said roofs, a lot of the roofs just wouldn't work the way they're configured for kids to go up there. It wouldn't be safe. This is about safety and health first. And just the reality that you got to have a certain amount of reliability and consistency when you're running a school. But that said, schools are welcome to be flexible, that if there's good weather and they've got the right opportunity, the way their school's set up and they can get kids outside. We're going to work with schools in each and every situation and take advantage of as many days as we can. Go ahead Marla.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, there was quite a bit of blow back on social media yesterday about your advice not to buy a car. With your critics saying you aren't doing anything to discourage people from driving. And it does appear anecdotally that more are driving as they try to stay off mass transit. And one of the questions was you get driven around in a chauffeured car. How are you going to get to the gym in Brooklyn once it reopens?

**Mayor:** You know, Marla, that's just not pertinent to what we're dealing with right now. Right now we are dealing with a crisis where the job one is to give people confidence again in mass transit. And I want to say the City and State work together to show that the MTA could be a lot cleaner, subways, buses, people have been coming back. Citi Bike has been a big part of the

solution. People are coming back to Staten Island Ferry, New York City Ferry. This is the way forward. I've been clear for years, I'm not going to have a car in the future. I don't think cars make sense for the future of New York City. People may use them in the short term because of the crisis. Fine. But this is a crisis again, that could be over in a half year, give or take. Then we got to continue to deepen our commitment to mass transit and other options because that's the future of the city.

**Moderator:** Next, we have Debralee from Manhattan Times and Bronx Free Press.

**Question:** Hey, good morning. Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** Yes Debralee, how are you?

**Question:** I'm well, thanks. Good morning to all. Mr. Mayor I wanted to ask you about concerns raised by staff and teachers and administrators, specifically at MS 324 in Washington Heights. Which services about 1,400 students. And the concerns that they raised, they say are emblematic of many of the campuses across the city. They formed a school safety committee and they're expressing concern that a previous 2018 building facilities report from the DOE, the City and independent engineer evaluation since, point to the campus's ventilation system as inadequate. And while individual classrooms have AC, that the filtration systems just don't exist. And again, altogether, the system is ineffective. And that's from an independent analysis made by the City. And repairs have not been issued, have not been done since then. And as they enter into now, the final weeks of preparation, their concern is that they are in fact not ready. What is the City doing to address these concerns specifically, despite the fact that there are reservations on the part of parents? The buildings themselves, what is the DOE and the City to help prepare the facilities to be able to receive students?

**Mayor:** Say the number of the school again, Debralee?

**Question:** MS 324 in Washington Heights. It services about 1,400 students.

**Mayor:** Thank you. I'm going to follow up with a Chancellor today on that specifically. Look, the bottom line here is we have been working on all fronts to make schools safe. There are a variety of ways to do that. Do not forget for a moment, every classroom will be socially distanced. Every part of the school will be socially distanced. You're talking about a classroom, we'll have ten kids, 12 kids in it, you know, very small number with distance. Everyone will have a face covering, students and adults alike. Cleaning incessantly, hand sanitizer, hand washing stations, incessantly. There's a lot of pieces to how you fight back the disease. So we absolutely want to make sure that the circulation systems are in good shape. If there's a specific problem in a school, we're going to deal with that. And we'll be open about that. There's going to be a lot of different pieces that come together. So thank you for raising this and we'll look into it immediately. But rest assured that there's a lot of pieces that create safety for our kids. Go ahead.

**Question:** And as a follow-up to that [inaudible] has been the concern ongoing for parents and families about not having adequate technology resources, even as they face the choice between being online or facing a hybrid model. Can you speak to what the City and the DOE have done in the last few months and for that matter, what parents can do in these last few weeks of



preparation, to be able to access resources? Because many of the parents that we're speaking to still continue to be stymied by access to online learning resources.

**Mayor:** So, let me say the most important point is getting devices and getting service in the hands of every child who needs it. There was a Herculean effort by the DOE – I give them a lot of credit, 300,000 devices distributed in very short order while setting up remote learning for the first time at a vast level. Look, everyone who has a complaint has a right to complain. Everything we have to do better, we have to do better. But let's stop and appreciate our educators and the DOE and all the companies got involved. They were asked to create remote learning for 1.1 million kids in a matter of weeks from scratch. It had never been anticipated to have to do it on this level, this quickly in the history of New York City. But they did it. Imperfect, yes, but they did it. 300,000 devices distributed in a matter of weeks. One of the most actually direct ways of addressing the digital divide we've also seen in New York City's history. But any kid who doesn't have a device will get one for free, any device that's not working will be replaced. Anyone who doesn't have service, will get service. The same methodology for letting the DOE know if you need it, is there, and anyone who's not sure can simply call 3-1-1. But that's going to be an ongoing effort. I've heard a few people say, 'Oh, what if a device breaks?' We'll replace it. It's as simple as that.

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

**Question:** Hi, Mayor. I know I've been harping on this issue, but I wanted to talk with you about testing again. You had asked me to go to a City site if we needed testing again, and we did. We've been waiting for the results for two weeks. So, it seems very critical to the school's plan to have testing with short turnaround times. What do you say to parents whose kid has a runny nose or a fever and they want to get tested?

**Mayor:** Well, first of all, I appreciate the question, Emma. It's so important. I'm very sorry what you've been through and I honestly don't understand where the breakdown is. Which site – could you, do you mind saying which site you went to?

**Question:** Yeah, we went to Highbridge Pool, which is a Health + Hospitals run site, but they send their testing to Quest Diagnostics' lab, which apparently is the one with the slowdown.

**Mayor:** Right. That's where the problem is. So, I spoke to the CEO of Quest yesterday. We had a very productive conversation. You and others went through something absolutely unacceptable. It was directly related to the massive overload that occurred all around the country. The combination of the huge uptick in the disease in other parts of the country and actually also, ironically, a lot of businesses coming back and putting very intense testing programs into place. So, what happened was, Quest just got overloaded all over the country and they are spread thin. They have resolved a lot of that. What we agreed on is over the next week or two the Quest turnaround for New York City will get to four days or less. On that, you know, we obviously want one day, two day. That's always our goal, but four days or less we can work with. But the CEO was quite clear that the worst is behind them. They've added a lot of capacity and we should not see that problem again. But, again, I'm sorry to you and anyone who went through that. Go ahead now.

**Question:** Thanks for that. I appreciate it. But in terms of, if it is four days, you're just expecting if a child shows any symptom related to COVID, they would keep their child home for those four days until they can confirm that they don't have the virus?

**Mayor:** Correct. Yeah. Any time you see symptoms, we want, in fact, we insist that families – I'm saying this as a parent, I would abide by this in a heartbeat and I expect every parent to abide by it – if your child's sick, if your child is showing those symptoms, keep your child home, keep your child home until they are well, and also let's get that test. And if it comes back negative, great. If it comes back positive, you got to go through the whole course of that pause until you come back

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

**Question:** Hello, Mr. Mayor, how are you doing today?

**Mayor:** I'm doing okay, Henry. How about you?

**Question:** I'm doing pretty well. I want to get back – I mean, have you heard from the Governor on what his decision is going to be, or is he withholding this as a big surprise?

**Mayor:** I haven't heard from – as I've said, Henry, first of all, he said he'd given an announcement at some point today. The day is young. There's been a lot of communication. Our teams are talking constantly, really constantly, on a whole host of things. And I do understand the Governor has to think about the differences between the regions in the state. That's a real obligation that I fully understand, but I'm sure we'll hear it more in the course of the day. And we welcome tough standards because that's what we believe in here. I said, proactively, we want to hold ourselves to that three percent standard. That's much lower than any other standard I've heard around the country. But we believe New York City is up to that because of how well we've done over the last two months, keeping the infection level down. Go ahead, Henry.

**Question:** Okay. But the Governor has also said that the two major considerations are the parent and union buy-in. And from reporting that I've done and others have done, the unions are still extremely skeptical and fearful really about the health consequences of subjecting teachers to the classroom. And parents are also skeptical, number one, that the remote learning experience has really been improved to the point where it's going to engage students and on the other hand, they've got concerns about the health consequences of sending their kids to school. So, in light of all that does it cause you any concern that the Governor will decide not to go along with your plan?

**Mayor:** Henry, I'm not going to speculate. I appreciate the question. It's an honest question. Just not going to speculate it. Doesn't get us anywhere. The Governor will come to his final decision. We will work with it. Now, the parent buy-in, this is a known fact. I, again, respect everyone, but I ask everyone when we bring you an exceptional piece of information, please give it its due – 400,000 people responding to a survey and 75 percent say they want their kid back in school. I've talked to a huge number of parents, myself. Everywhere I go, I make sure to talk to parents and I've actually talked to a lot of educators too. I get, overwhelmingly, that people want to come back. No one underestimates the challenges, but they're New Yorkers. They're tough. They're strong, they're resilient. They see all these other good people out there fighting for their fellow

New Yorkers, our health care heroes, our first responders, teachers are incredibly devoted people. I tell you, a lot of educators have said to me, 'I know I can't do as much for the kids remotely, I want to be there in person with them because I can't help them if I'm so far away from them.' And I really honor that about educators.

So, I think what we have is a huge level of parent buy-in based on what we've seen so far, but we're going to have facts for you on Monday because parents will get to make that decision by the end of the day for the first round. And that will tell us a lot. And then we've been working with the unions daily to address a whole host of issues. And there's still a long time on the clock here to keep addressing those issues. So, I feel strongly we can bring the pieces together because it's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to do for our kids. It's the right thing to do for our city. And we're going to keep working to make sure it's safe.

**Moderator:** Last two for today. Next, we have Gersh from Streetsblog.

**Question:** Hello, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for taking the call. It's – about to ask one of the easiest, most basic questions I've ever asked you. On this call, on Friday, May 29th, Police Commissioner Shea was asked, 'what percentage of police officers live in the suburbs?' He said he didn't know the number off hand, which is fine. And he asked reporters to call the NYPD press office for that number. Mr. Mayor, my outlet has asked for that simple number six times. I know other reporters have, and we have not gotten that number. Does it bother you that the NYPD press office won't answer this basic question among others?

**Mayor:** It does. I'm glad you're asking it. No, it makes no sense. We know two crucial things about today's NYPD – it is a majority people of color and it is more and more New York City residents. My understanding is we're getting close to a breakeven point in terms of folks who live in the city versus suburbs, but I want to get the exact numbers. We will get you that number today. Even if it's a close estimate, we'll get you that number today. But, no, you should not have had to ask that so many times. That's crazy.

**Question:** Okay. I do have a follow up related to your oversight of the NYPD. So Mr. Mayor, last year, you responded to reports of reckless driving by NYPD officers by pledging to revoke parking permits for cops who get too many camera-issued speeding tickets. Now, the NYPD just last month finally turned your promise into policy by updating the patrol guide. Now it turns out according to that patrol guide that a cop has to get 15 camera-issued speeding tickets in one year before losing his parking permit. So, I ask you, is 15 speeding tickets in 12 months the threshold you wanted when you revealed your new policy last year?

**Mayor:** Not if they are in civilian use of their car. Now I – what I need to get clear and we will get you this answer is, if PD was putting that number in because they know a certain percentage of the time it's in the line of duty or people are rushing to a job, that's one thing. But if that's about civilian use, no that doesn't make sense. So, let me get more on that. We'll come back

**Moderator:** Last one for today. We have Reuvain from Hamodia.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor, I would like to ask you about your comments yesterday opposing the Governor's interest in accommodating the wealthy New Yorkers who wanted to

leave. You frequently mentioned how bad the city's financial straits are right now. Isn't losing these wealthy people and wealthy taxpayers going to hurt the budget even more?

**Mayor:** It's a very important question. And I appreciate it. What I'm trying to say first of all, is let's focus on working people. Let's focus on the millions upon millions of people who do their jobs every day, or are fighting to get their jobs back who need help, who are the backbone of the city, the heart and soul in New York City. They're not going anywhere. They're not fleeing. This is New York and these are New Yorkers I'm here to fight for. The wealthy have become more global in many ways not because of this crisis – long, before, much less rooted. They will come. They will go. Some are true New Yorkers. We got a lot of homegrown millionaires here. That's great. I know a lot of them really care about New York City and do a lot for New York City. God bless them. The folks who want to be a part of this community, God bless them. And if they've done well in life, congratulations. Now let's help out other people.

But I am not going to beg anybody to live in the greatest city in the world. There are plenty of people who want to live in New York City. There are plenty of people who will come here no matter what. This crisis will be over soon. And here's what we found, we actually analyzed this, in recent years some millionaires and billionaires have left, some millionaires and billionaires have come in and started to grow roots here in New York City. And here's the most important fact, New York City has bred more millionaires every year in recent years than ever before because up until February, our economy was booming and people from all over the world wanted to come here sensing opportunity, and they will again. So, I am convinced that by focusing on restoring this city and doing what's right for working people in this city, it will be a better and better and fairer place. And I actually think that's where creative people want to be, entrepreneurial people want to be, and that's our path back. Go ahead.

**Question:** And in regard to your desire to raise taxes even further on the wealthy, the wealthiest one percent of New Yorkers already pay more than 40 percent of the total personal income taxes paid in the state. How much is enough?

**Mayor:** Look, I'll simply go back to – if you want to talk about fair taxation in America and when America worked most fairly and equitably, unquestionably, it's the period after World War II up through the 1960s. We saw a huge amount of economic growth. We saw much less income inequality. We saw everyday people getting a piece of the pie and working their way to the middle class. We saw a huge amount of government investment in health care, infrastructure, science, research, education. And the highest tax rates that wealthy people ever experienced were under the administration of that well-known left wing, socialist General Dwight Eisenhower. So, I honestly believe that we had the model right at one point and we lost our way and we need to go back to a model closer to that time where the wealthy truly pay their fair share and our country can invest in its people.

Everybody, look, let me close today with this, we talked about a lot of different topics. The most important topic always is fighting back this disease. The people have done this in New York City. You're going to hear conversation all the time about what the government did, the city, the state, the federal government – that matters, but much more important is what the people do. The buy-in of the people, the strength of the people, the belief of the people that we could fight back. New Yorkers have shown it. We got to be there every step of the way to support people. This is why Test and Trace is so important. Giving people the help they need, giving them the support.

If you need to safely separate, knowing you're not alone, you're going to get all the help you need. And the people also can remind each other, including any of our friends who are traveling or a family members coming here, that this quarantine for folks who have been out of state really matters. So, I have faith in the people. No one wants to see this city go back to where we were in the beginning of this horrible crisis. But, in fact, New Yorkers have proven it doesn't have to be that way because of your hard work. Let's keep doing it. Thanks, everybody.

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