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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON NY1

Dean Meminger: The city is bracing for a long two days as the forecast shows the five boroughs expected to get hit by at least a foot of snow. Joining me now to talk about how the administration is getting ready, Mayor Bill de Blasio. Thanks for joining us, Mayor. Give us an update right now on what we can expect tomorrow morning from your administration in getting people to and from work – those who need to go there.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Yeah, Dean, thanks for the opportunity to be with you. Look, this storm is growing all the time. We got to be really clear about this. Even compared to the reports we received this morning, we've got a much more intense situation here. Right now, the National Weather Service is projecting between 16 and 22 inches of snow, and very, very fast accumulation in the morning. So, I just signed an executive order declaring a local state of emergency, and I am directing all New Yorkers, unless you are involved in essential work – and I'll define what that is for you – but unless you're involved in essential work, stay off the road after 6:00 am tomorrow morning, Monday morning. Because this situation is now going to be much more dangerous than we originally understood, and we've got to keep people safe. We'll be enforcing this state of emergency. NYPD will be out enforcing it. We need to keep the roads clear. We need to protect people. We need to let the Sanitation Department do its work and that's only going to happen properly if cars are off the road. So, state of emergency in effect starting at 6:00 am. Exemptions for first responders, of course, folks who provide the crucial services, essential services, for-hire vehicles, obviously members of the media. There are exemptions but unless you are in an essential category, you should not be on the streets.

Meminger: You said there will be some sort of enforcement and that always becomes a very sticky issue. Someone feels they need to get to work, the boss says be there – what sort of enforcement are we talking about, Mr. Mayor?

Mayor: Look, we had this situation – Dean, you may remember that intense blizzard we had back in 2015. I declared a state of emergency back then. And you know, look, the vast majority of New Yorkers paid attention and they stayed off the roads. But the NYPD was out there and if someone was out on the roads and wasn't obviously part of public service or essential work, they would pull them over to find out what's going on. And if they had a good reason for being out, that was one thing and if not, they would tell them to turn around and go home. So, you know, this is not about going to work, business as usual. This is a major, major blizzard. It's dangerous, what's going to be happening tomorrow. It's not the boss says, you know, you got to be at work. This is only for people doing essential work. And I say to all the employers, you got to give leeway to your employees tomorrow. This is the kind of thing we see very rarely, this kind of storm. And you can't require your employees to come in unless, again, they are doing absolutely

essential work, you know human services, social services, first responders, that kind of thing. But not everyday stores and all. Everyone should realize this is a very, very serious storm We're talking wind gusts up to 50 miles an hour, snowfall levels, Dean – at some points you're going to see not one or two inches of snow, you could see four inches of snow in an hour starting around mid-morning. This is a very dangerous storm.

Meminger: Of course, snow is already coming down across the city. Now, many essential workers, they take public transportation. If they work the overnight hours or have to leave early, the trains are not running now. They have to take city buses. Are you confident that the MTA, City Transit, and the Sanitation Department will be able to have those streets clear so folks can get to work at least during the early morning hours, and then, you know, later on, on Monday when they're coming back home?

Mayor: Well, it's going to be tough. I'm not going to sugar coat it, Dean. Again, the only people who should be out are people who are doing essential work because it's not going to be easy. I know the MTA is doing everything they can to figure out to keep things moving. Obviously, if there are not cars on the road, Sanitation has shown it can do amazing work. But the problems of some of those snowstorms of the past, where things went wrong, was when there were a lot of vehicles out and things got jammed up and there were no abilities of Sanitation to get the plows through. This is why it is so important for people to stay off the roads. So, I think it's going to be tough for mass transit but honestly there is a direct correlation. The fewer people out driving around, the more ability of Sanitation to clear the roads, the more ability of the buses to keep going. That's how we've seen it work in the past.

Meminger: And a final question for you, when it comes to the vaccination appointments tomorrow. We know many of them have been cancelled already. Today you spoke about disparities with Blacks and people of color, you know, not getting the shot. What's the situation for that? Once you cancel all of those shots tomorrow, it's not like people can go back on Tuesday. How will your administration work that out with making sure that people get those shots who are scheduled to receive them?

Mayor: Yeah, really good question, Dean. Thank you. I want to emphasize to everyone, if you have a vaccination appointment tomorrow, you should assume it is cancelled. You're probably going to hear from your provider shortly if you haven't already. But it will be rescheduled quickly. Obviously, the supply for tomorrow isn't going to be used so we're able to give those shots in the coming days. But we don't want people out trying to get a vaccine – get a vaccination and end up being in harm's way because of this weather. Hopefully if people stay off the roads, Sanitation does their job well – I'm sure they will – we're going to be at the potential to have the vaccinations going again on Tuesday. It's too early to say right now but that's our hope. So, I'd say to folks that those reschedulings will happen quickly. And as you said, Dean, we're going to really work hard, we talked about it this morning, to ensure that communities that are not getting vaccinated at a high enough rate, who've really borne the brunt of COVID – communities of color, immigrant communities – we're going to double down and really focus our efforts to give everyone opportunity. But that will not be happening tomorrow anywhere. Tomorrow is just about, stay home if there's any way you can stay home. Stay safe. And the state of emergency starts at 6:00 am tomorrow morning.

Meminger: All right, Mr. Mayor, Bill de Blasio, thank you for joining us and thank you for that update.

Mayor: Thanks, Dean. Take care.

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