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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE MOBILE  
VACCINE BUS IN THE BRONX**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Alright, everybody. This is really exciting. Here we have the best way to get to people – take it to the streets, take it to the people. Here we have the vaccination bus, the vaccine bus that goes out to where the people are. And you're seeing something amazing in here. Hundreds of people each day could get vaccinated here and the great people who work on this vaccination effort, they talk to people, they go up to them and talk to them, they answer their questions, they address their concerns. This is the best kind of grassroots medicine. I want to thank everyone who was part of it, special thank you to Dr. Torian Easterling, First Deputy Commissioner of Department of Health in New York City. Thank you to your team.

[Applause]

Everyone who's doing this amazing work. It makes a profound difference. So, you've heard all the talk about what's happening with vaccination. Let me tell you something, we're going farther and farther into communities. We're talking to people more. We're making it easier, and if you build it, they will come. You go out to the streets of a neighborhood like this in the Bronx, people want to know how can I get vaccinated? And we make it easy, and we make it free, and we're seeing plenty of demand. So, we continue to move, to hit our goals, and reopen this city fully – fully. Everyone, I want to remind people, you can walk up – you can walk up to this bus. You can walk up to over 50 sites around the city, and if you want to find them, go to [nyc.gov/vaccinefinder](http://nyc.gov/vaccinefinder). If you want to make an appointment, you can still do that, but if you just want to walk up, there's over 50 places in New York City where you can do that. If you prefer the phone, 8-7-7-VAX-4NYC. This is how New York City comes back. This is how we achieve recovery for all of us. Every neighborhood – because my colleagues are going to speak and I'll tell you one thing, we all feel strongly. We do not want a recovery that repeats the status quo. We don't want to go back to what was. We don't want just some parts of the city to do well. We don't want a recovery from Midtown Manhattan alone. We want to recovery for all five boroughs. All people, a city that matters to everyone the same. I'll say a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

Come to the bus, get vaccinated. It's easy and you're going to feel safe, and you're going to feel good for yourself and your family. I want you to hear from my colleagues. First of all, we got a lot of help from Washington DC. We got a stimulus we could only have dreamed of. We've got talk now about an infrastructure plan that's going to turn this city around. One of the reasons that all these good things are happening is because we had leaders who pushed the spectrum, who said, we're not taking half measures. We need a real recovery. One of the strongest voices, and

I'm so proud of her as a New Yorker, one of the strongest voices, not just in New York, by this whole country for a true recovery for all of us, Congress member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

[...]

**Mayor:** Thank you. I want to give the Congress Member credit. She called up, she said, we need something in the community, and I love getting that call because we want to bring it to the people. That's what we're doing today. But I also want to say, we talked about something else we innovated here in New York City, getting health care to everyone. Here's one of the greatest leaders in the country for Medicare for All. I believe in Medicare for All, while we're waiting for that day to come and it will come, here in New York City we have guaranteed health care for all New Yorkers. I want to emphasize that anyone who needs health insurance, we can help you to get the health insurance that works for you with MetroPlus, or if you don't qualify or can't afford any insurance or you're undocumented, we still have you covered. We want to cover you with NYC Care, a health care card for you that gets you a primary care doctor, no matter who you are, no matter where you're coming from, no matter what your documentation status. So, here in New York City, we are proving there really can be health care for all. And that's what's best for all of us. And speaking of health care for all, someone who knows about it, because she devoted her life before she became an elected official, she did amazing work as a health care provider and the midst of COVID she stayed out there helping people with her health care skills, now she represents the community in the Assembly, and she's been fighting for us. Amazing budget you pass that brought us the help we needed. Historic, unprecedented, I got to thank you from the bottom of my heart, Assembly Member Karines Reyes.

[...]

**Mayor:** I want to quote the Assembly Member, it's not just *rapido*, it's super, super *rapido*. It's a whole another level. Okay. Any quick questions?

**Question:** Mark Levine today said [inaudible] the City could still do more, is this – how much is this like, a beginning? Like a first step? –

**Mayor:** There's a lot more coming, I'll tease, I'll tease, tune in on Monday, there's a lot more coming because we're going to go out to the people, we're going to work with community leaders, and we're going to make it a little more fun, we're going to offer a few more incentives. Stay tuned.

**Question:** So how important [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** Look – I welcome my colleagues on this too – I think there's a lot of people who are ready to get vaccinated, but it has to be easy. It has to be in the neighborhood. Sometimes they have questions. We've talked to the folks who work here, they said, sometimes people need a few answers and then they're willing. I think we've got a lot of people who are ready but need a little extra push or a little help, and that's the group of people – I think that's hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people we want to reach.

**Assembly Member Karines Reyes:** I think particularly in this community access to appointments was difficult and we really didn't have the sites that could accommodate the amount of people that we have here. And like the Mayor said, there were people that just had questions, particularly because of the pause of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. And I think that you have the staff here that's going to answer those questions and ease some of those concerns and that's what people need, and that's what we provide here today.

**Question:** Did you think incentives would help?

**Assembly Member Reyes:** Perhaps, I think it would motivate some folks. Yeah.

**Mayor:** Very judicious. Yes.

**Question:** For the representative. Are you ready to make an endorsement in the mayors' race [inaudible] –

**Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez:** You know, I didn't want to start on topic and then we're going to go off topic in a second, so I'm happy to answer the question, but I just want to make sure we clear our vaccine questions first.

**Question:** [Inaudible] this being sort of a model, can you elaborate more on that? Might we see something like this even outside your district and if so, what role would play in it?

**Representative Ocasio-Cortez:** Yeah, no, I hope so. I mean, first and foremost, we had a couple of years ago – well, not a couple years ago – but we have an already progressive spot for a community health center, community health clinic model throughout the country, and it was so popular, but I think that it's just a small piece of a larger strategy of grassroots health care. And I think that's really what we're hoping for. If we can show really promising models here, I'm happy to push on a federal level to ensure that we have a strategy that can get this type of vaccination strategy, because it's not enough for us to have the shots. It's not enough for us to have the supply. We need to get the supply to people. We need make it as convenient as possible and even on the question of incentives, you know, there are people that are really excited to get vaccinated, to make sure that we can go back to normal. There are people that may have a few questions that we're happy to answer. And then there are just some people who, you know, you procrastinate a little bit, but if there's something fun involved, maybe you can get you out to a bus and just, you know, move that up on your priority list, you'll get it on Tuesday instead of a Friday.

**Mayor:** You know, we need public health outreach. So, one of the things from the future in this city and the whole country is Public Health Corps. We're going to take the Test and Trace Corps, which has done amazing work in this city, and make it permanent. So, we have a Public Health Corps that goes out into communities, educates, answers questions, helps people come in. We literally find if you go to someone and you say, hey, there's health care for you right here, come with me, and I'm going to connect you right here to a vaccination. It makes a world of difference, but in this country, there's not that kind of human to human connection. In other countries in the world, my colleagues know in certain parts of Latin America, I saw it myself in Nicaragua years ago, the public health model going literally knocking on every door in a neighborhood and

checking to see what people need. do they need an appointment? Do they need a vaccination? It makes a world of difference. We're going to innovate that here and show how it can be done all over the country.

**Question:** [Inaudible] –

**Mayor:** We're doing great on second doses. So, New York City's rate is about 95 percent. When someone gets a first shot, they come back and get the second dose. Basically everyone. That has been very consistent, stronger than the rest of the country. We're a close to seven million doses from day one, and I'll really want to give a lot of credit to Dr. Torian Easterling, everyone at the Department of Health, Health + Hospitals. I mean, I want you to hear that number. We're New Yorkers, we're a little jaded – seven million vaccinations from day-one, the most in the history of New York City and growing. So, the bottom line is, if we connect with you, we'll give you your first shot, you're almost inevitably going to come back, get that second shot. And as someone who got Johnson & Johnson, I strongly recommend it, one and done. There's a lot of people in this city who prefer that and that's available too. Right? Okay, thank you everybody.

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