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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: ... covered today, but, first, shout out to the Brooklyn Nets – gutsy victory. I really admire the Nets. Up against the wall, James Harden, just his presence alone made all the difference. Kevin Durant, amazing, amazing performance last night. This obviously was the decisive game, that's what it feels like to me at least. And now, the Nets are where they need to be to bring a championship home to Brooklyn. I keep saying, when it happens – when it happens, it'll be the first time since the 1950s that a team named Brooklyn will win a national championship. So, big night for Brooklyn, big night for New York City last night. And, yesterday, big day as well as the State announced that the remaining COVID restrictions lifted – really big deal, but people in New York City earned it. I really want to say – and all over the State, of course, people did the work, people went out there, helped each other, protect each other, got vaccinated. This is a victory for the people of this city and this state, and it is the perfect way to lead us into the summer. It's going to be the Summer of New York City. We know more than ever, this is going to be one of the most amazing summers we've ever had. And it's going to be the perfect beginning of the big comeback of New York City – and, again, all of that fueled by vaccination. And, as of today, the numbers keep speaking loudly. As of today, from the very beginning of the vaccination effort, 8,831,882 doses – it's breathtaking. It's almost 9 million doses now – 9 million individual doses that have helped us to be safe.

Now, we're going to keep building that. I want everyone to understand that we've made tremendous progress. We have record-low COVID positivity. The restrictions have been lifted. The City's coming back. But that's not a reason to stop, that's a reason to double down, do even more to get people vaccinated. That's why we announced the Referral Bonus Program, to work with community-based organizations, houses of worship, resident associations in NYCHA. And I want any organization out there that is listening and wants to be a part that wants to help get people vaccinated and bring funding into your organization at the same time, keep money in the community, go to nyc.gov/vaccinereferralbonus. It is all about going out to the grassroots, reaching people where they live, answering their questions and concerns, helping them to understand that this could be the beginning of something so much better if we can get more and more people vaccinated. We also are adding a tremendous new incentive, really great incentive when you sign up to get vaccinated. If you haven't been vaccinated and you sign up to get vaccinated, you can now win \$2,500. Yes, \$2,500 directly – debit cards, preloaded. 10 prizes will be given each week through July. This is a real opportunity to – after everything everyone's been through, I think the vast majority of New Yorkers could really use \$2,500 right now. It will make a big difference in your lives. If you haven't been vaccinated, and you're ready, all you have to do is make the appointment to qualify – go to nyc.gov/vaccinefinder. And if you get vaccinated at any City-run site, you get to enter for a chance to win this amazing prize.

Now, the whole idea here, incentives, working with community organizations, going to the grassroots, talking to people, getting doctors and pediatricians involved and talking to their patients – all of this is about reaching farther and farther into communities with vaccination. Listen, so many people just need to have a real conversation. And I want you to hear from a leader who understands how important it is to have that conversation. Sometimes all it takes to convince someone to get vaccinated is just a real thoughtful, honest conversation. And we are more and more making sure that's what happens all over the five boroughs, particularly in communities that haven't been vaccinated as high a level as others. She is a former social worker, a long-time community activist, and now a leader in our state, in our State Assembly. From the Bronx, Assembly Member Chantel Jackson.

[...]

Mayor: Thank you so much, Assembly Member. And I really thank you, I know you've been spreading the word. You fought early on – we were together originally up there in Bathgate, you fought early on to get more and more access for the people of the Bronx, more and more vaccination sites. And you're right, that piece has moved constantly. But now, it is about bringing the community organizations, the houses of worship, the NYCHA Resident Councils in, and it's about those incentives to really help people, to focus and want to do it. But it takes voices like yours to make a difference. I want to really thank you for your leadership.

All right. Now, everybody, that's still the number-one thing, bringing back this city is just vaccinating people more and more and more. So far, you've seen the amazing impact vaccination has had. We're just going to keep going and deepening the effort all the time. But a recovery also absolutely depends on safety, public safety. I keep saying it, I think it's really important for people to hear – we need public safety for recovery, we need the recovery for public safety. The two go together. The more and more the life of this city comes back, the safer everyone is. As people are coming back to the subways, to the buses, to the streets, the safer we all become. So, these pieces go together and we're always looking for new approaches to intensify public safety in this city. We went through hell together last year, we all know it. We went through a perfect storm. We went through something unprecedented. We went through a global pandemic, and yet look how quickly this city is rebounding.

The NYPD, I can tell you, after eight years working closely with leadership of the NYPD, NYPD never gives up, keeps creating new strategies, new approaches. That's where we learned way back when in 1994, with CompStat, the NYPD's incredible ability to innovate new approaches. Today, you're going to hear from the leadership in the NYPD about the importance of addressing a growing problem, which links to many other problems. We have seen a proliferation of counterfeit paper license plates. Now, you hear it, at first, that doesn't sound like much of an issue. Let me tell you what it really means. We see more and more folks who are involved in crashes killing and hurting their fellow New Yorkers who are using these counterfeit illegal license plates, sometimes hit and run crashes where people try to evade detection with a fake plate. We see a connection to a variety of crimes. We see a connection to any number of crimes, including violent crimes. This is an area where NYPD has noticed more and more of a trend, and they're acting on that trend – thousands and thousands of these illegal and fraudulent

license plates out there. As always, the NYPD looks at the facts, looks at the data, adjusts strategies and makes an impact. Here to tell you more about it – first, you'll hear our Police Commissioner, then our Chief of Department. My pleasure to introduce Commissioner Dermot Shea.

Police Commissioner Dermot Shea: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. As you outlined, when you look at the proliferation – excuse me – of paper license plates, this is something that we saw come up last year. It's important to know that at the time, myself, Chief of Detectives at the time, Rodney Harrison, had had many strategy meetings and we put into place a number of things to combat this. We think at this time it's the right – right time to really brief everyone on where we are now, warn the public also that if you have a car how important it is to have registration, inspection insurance and things of that nature proper. We've done an initiative already where we've seized the number of cars, but we have a strategy right now that's really coming together that works under Chief Juanita Holmes from patrol, Chief Kim Royster, Chief Jimmy Essig, the Chief of Detectives, and why. The why is really important here, because we have seen a clear connection at times to violence. And Rodney Harrison is going to go into detail with you some of the specifics that we've seen. We've seen the same fraudulent plate on numerous vehicles. Just this week, we had a shooting in Queens – Southeast, Queens, where the individuals are in a car and a fraudulent plate.

But there's more than just the violence. There's also parking. There's also moving traffic around New York City. There's also the sense of fairness that people pay to have insurance and registration, and some people are getting around that. You saw the article this week on the paper about people bypassing tolls. So, whether it's drunk driving, whether it's hit-and-runs, or whether it's some of the gun violence, we think we have a good grasp on moving forward. And now, to detail exactly what we're doing, your Chief of Department Rodney Harrison. Rodney?

Chief of Department Rodney Harrison, NYPD: Commissioner, Mr. Mayor, good morning. Thank you very much. This all started when I was the Chief of Detectives. And, with the increase in violence, we struggled to make arrests on many of our drive-by shooting incidents that had a fraudulent paper plate attached to the vehicle. During that time, we did several small initiatives in our areas of violence, making arrest and seizing cars that had fraudulent paper plates. But just as a recent couple of examples, we had a seven drive-by shooting incidents between Brooklyn South and Brooklyn North where a gray Jeep, a white Maxima, and a black Mercedes-Benz were all involved – all involved in a shooting that had fraudulent paper plates attached to them.

Transition into the chief of department, we see a wider concern with these fraudulent plates. Vehicles speeding through school zones where kids are playing, vehicles driving through red lights and hitting pedestrians, causing serious injuries and driving off. Parking illegally and causing quality of life concerns that can hinder the flow of traffic. The evasion of auto insurance, which can be a disturbance for someone in a vehicle accident. And, last but not least, having a concern of potential terrorist plots. This initiative will be conducted in all five boroughs throughout the city. The results of that initiative will have an impact on protecting New Yorkers. All of our patrol officers are currently being trained by our auto crime unit to be able to identify a fraudulent plate while patrolling and serving the citizens of New York City.

This criminal phenomenon is a by-product of COVID-19 when the Department of Motor Vehicles was shut down and provided limited services, and criminals taking advantage and producing fake fraudulent paper plates in return for finances. Certain states have lacked procedures that have allowed mischievous individuals, some of them being dealers, to gain access to fraudulent plates and sell them on different social media platforms, either Craigslist, Facebook market place, and other platforms as well. On a positive note, Texas Governor Abbott signed House Bill 3927 yesterday, this will give Texas DMV the authority to suspend a dealer who is selling tags inappropriately. This takes effect September of this year and should help eliminate the Texas tags from our streets. The goal of this initiative is to stop the purchase of fake and fraudulently obtained permits. This new law pass in Texas will definitely help achieve that goal. Thank you, sir.

Mayor: Thank you very much, Chief. And, look, everyone, this is a strategy that's going to be put into place energetically to address something that we're seeing connected to, as I said, a variety of problems, a variety of crimes. And this is the NYPD doing something strategic to make an impact on our safety and our quality of life. So, I commend the Commissioner and the Chief for developing this initiative and implementing it all over the five boroughs.

Now, we're talking about all of the things that are part of our recovery, all the ways we foster recovery. We also now can make changes, because we're having this recovery, because we're making this progress. And, obviously, as of yesterday with the State ending restrictions across the board, a very, very important sign and a signal that it's time to do things differently. One area where we've been very focused is on protecting and serving homeless New Yorkers, helping them from the streets to shelter, and then from shelter to permanent affordable housing – that has happened for more than 150,000 New Yorkers in the course of our administration. We've gotten them from shelter to permanent affordable housing and we're going to keep doing that work. In shelter is where we can support, a variety of services, and that pathway out of shelter into a better life. So, we said in the midst of the worst of the pandemic that we had to take immediate and emergency action to protect homeless folks, move them out of shelter settings to hotels for their health and safety. But now, the situation has changed. We obviously have record-low COVID levels, vaccinations rising all the time. It is time to move homeless folks who were in hotels for a temporary period of time back to shelters where they can get the support they need. We're talking about approximately 8,000 New Yorkers who are now in 60 temporary hotels. We're going to start the process of moving folks back to shelters. And, again, the shelter is only a step along the way. The ultimate goal is affordable housing and a new life.

Now, everything is ready to go. Obviously, the situation has greatly improved. All of our planning is in place. We know exactly what shelters we are going to be bringing people back to, they are being prepared. We're ready to go. What we need is authorization from the State of New York. Back a month ago, on May 18th, our Department of Social Services asked the State of New York to authorize the return of folks in temporary hotel locations to permanent shelter locations. We have not yet gotten that sign off from the State of New York, Obviously, given yesterday's announcement in particular, it's time for us to get that clear sign off from the State so we can move forward. Once we get that sign off, we can start immediately moving people to shelters and getting back to that work of moving them forward in their lives. We will be able to

complete this by approximately the end of July. This is something that's going to help move us forward, but we need the State to make clear that they are giving the authorization.

I want to say one more thing about the folks who do the work of supporting the homeless. I don't think they get the credit they deserve, whether it's the outreach workers out there talking to folks who are sleeping on the streets and convincing them to come in – this is happening every day in our city. These incredibly good-hearted people who go out and have the conversations. Many times it takes – with folks who have gone through a lot of trouble and convince people to come in. I've had the conversation so many times with these really noble souls to do this work. And when they talk about a victory, when they talk about bringing someone in off the street and getting them to a better life, there's a glow in their faces for good reason – what an amazing act of kindness and goodness. But we also have the people who work in the shelters who help folks who become homeless. I always say there but for the grace of God go any of us. Folks who become homeless have always have the potential to turn around and get back on their feet and move forward. But incredibly good people working in homeless shelters to give people support and services, mental health support when they need it, substance misuse support when they need it, support connecting them to new housing, helping families. These people do amazing, amazing work and I want to thank every one of them. And they are ready to serve homeless New Yorkers back in our shelter system.

Okay, let's go to our indicators. And, again, continued good news, because people are getting vaccinated. So, thank you to everyone who has gotten vaccinated. And everyone who has not yet gotten vaccinated, I hope what we went through earlier in this presentation will encourage you further to step forward now. And now is the time. So, number one, daily number of people admitted to New York City hospitals for suspected COVID-19 – today's report, 69 patients. Confirmed positivity at 12.68 percent. Hospitalization rate – 0.45 per 100,000. Number two, new reported cases on a seven-day average – today's report, 188 cases. And number three, percentage of people testing positive citywide for COVID-19 – today's report, continuing the lowest we've ever seen since the pandemic began, on a seven-day rolling average, 0.57 percent. Really amazing, let's keep going in the right direction.

A few words in Spanish on the efforts that we are taking to keep this city safe and to make sure that public safety is a core part of our recovery.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's turn to our colleagues and media, and please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: Good morning, we will now begin our Q-and-A, as a reminder, we are joined by Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, Chief of Department Rodney Harrison, Commissioner Steve Banks, Dr. Dave Chokshi, and Dr. Mitch Katz. Our first question for today goes to Dan from ABC.

Question: Hi there, good morning. Thank you so much for taking my question.

Mayor: Good morning. How are you doing?

Question: I'm doing well. Thank you, sir. Last night, we had a, quite a big celebration for the state hitting the 70 percent vaccination rate, but we take a closer look at ZIP codes, many of our areas have less than 30 percent vaccination rate. For example, Far Rockaway has a rate of only 27 percent of people vaccinated. That rate has been low since winter. What are you doing to get more people vaccinated in these areas?

Mayor: Well, Dan, it's exactly what we were talking about earlier. It's going to take persistence and just intense, constant effort at the grassroots. The referral bonus program says to houses of worship, to NYCHA resident councils, to community-based organizations, go and literally find individuals who are willing to get vaccinated and we will reward your organization for it and make sure that money comes into the community to do good. That I think is going to inspire a lot of focus. The incentives, obviously incredible incentives. I don't know about you, but \$2,500 got my full attention, I think for a lot of people, it will. And then, you know, the effort that Dr. Chokshi has talked about, getting doctors and pediatricians to talk to their patients, very systematically and tracking that effort. All of those pieces are going to add up. We've got to overcome hesitancy in some cases with dialogue, with information, and time has been on our side. A lot of people started out hesitant over time got more willing, but I still contend, and we see a lot of evidence of this, there's still hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people who hesitancy is not the issue. They just need to focus. They need it to be convenient. They need it to be in the community. They need some incentive. We're just going to keep going non-stop and keep building up those numbers. Go ahead, Dan.

Question: I just spoke with a Council Member in Far Rockaway who said it's not so much a trust issue there, as an access issue in educating the public that these vaccination centers that are relatively new are open and available and is encouraging more marketing in communities that are the hardest hit. Is that something that you're considering moving forward? Or do you think that we've done enough marketing?

Mayor: Oh, no. Constantly doing the marketing. I think the Council Member makes a good point, and part of what is so important about the marketing is to add new elements that really get people's positive attention, thus, the incentives, which unquestionably are getting attention and people appreciate, but also to bring it to the grassroots. We can put up advertising, you know, all day long, different types of posters, whatever that helps, but getting community-based organizations to make it a priority to go out and reach people that really, really helps.

Moderator: Our next question goes to Juliet from 1010 WINS.

Question: Good morning, everybody. This question is for the Commissioner and the Chief of Department, what are your plans this weekend for Washington Square Park? And do you think you need a more consistent approach to dealing with the issues there?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah, I'll start, and I'll let Rodney jump in. Juliet, thank you for the question. You know, we're working very closely with the Parks Department on that as well as getting input from the community in that area. There is going to be a presence of police officers

in there and our goal is pretty simple here for people to be allowed to use the park, because it is a beautiful park, it always has been, but also public safety. So, we'll continue to be there for the residents of that community where we are intending on being there enforcing the closing with the Parks Department, if requested. You know, overall, when you look at what we do throughout New York City, we have, I would say Mr. Mayor, probably thousands, not hundreds of Parks and we're going to balance the needs of the community and be there for New Yorkers. Rodney, any specifics?

Chief Harrison: Sure. So, one of the things that you're going to see going into this weekend is our Community Affairs Bureau going out and passing out flyers to anybody that's inside the park regarding – informing them the timeframes that the park will be closed. I think that's going to be a step in the right direction. The second thing is we're going to allow the Parks Department to take the lead in regard to going through the park and trying to escort people outside of the park during the hours of closure. Unfortunately, we've had incidents in the past that got a little contentious, if it gets to that point, that's when the NYPD will assist in step in. But we're just going to follow normal protocols like we've had in the past and we're looking forward to getting through some type of cooperation going into the future with the park being closed.

Mayor: And also, Chief, I want you to talk about the community meeting because I think it's important for Juliet and everyone to hear this, that there's also effort to constantly communicate with the community and hear concerns and different ideas. That's coming up in the next few days, I think.

Chief Harrison: So that – today we're having what's called a Build a Block meeting with some of the residents outside or right around Washington Square Park. We went to hear their concerns. We want to make sure that we're able to address them appropriately. So, I'm looking forward to hearing their voices and see how we could assist.

Mayor: Thank you very much. Go ahead, Juliet.

Question: Okay, and this question, Mr. Mayor, is for you. Now that most restrictions have been lifted in New York, when will you be holding in-person briefings?

Mayor: We're going to have to figure that out. I think we have had a really good experience with this approach because it's allowed so many journalists to participate and so many guests to participate in new ways. So, we want to keep some of what we've learned here, some very positive features, obviously looking forward to seeing people in person too. So, we're going to figure out what combination makes sense and how to implement it as we move forward, Juliet.

Moderator: Our next question goes to Andrea from CBS.

Question: Hi, good morning everybody. Mr. Mayor, this first question is for you regarding the homeless hotels. I had asked the Governor last month if there was any State COVID guidance that would bar the city from putting homeless people back into shelters, and the Governor said the short answer is no. So, I'm just wondering what exactly is – what exactly does the State need to sign off on because they claim that there was nothing that they had anything to do with it?

Mayor: Right, and look, we are paying attention to the folks who are the specialists in this area at the State level. If they simply want to send us a letter today saying you do not need any further authorization, you can do as you wish, that's great. We would love that. They can do that today. I would welcome it. But our understanding from previous experiences on this issue is that we did require state authorization and so we simply want that to be done formally. It can be done as quickly as today, and we will immediately start the effort. So, we're ready to go, they just need to communicate with us one way or the other. Go ahead, Andrea.

Question: Thank you, and then just for the Commissioner or Chief regarding the fraudulent license plates, can you just explain a little bit more about, I know you said that the police officers are being trained, so just on regular patrols there, can you explain a little bit more about what they're looking for? What will happen? Will they, you know, when they pull a car over, if they suspect that the plate is fraudulent, can you just explain a little bit more about that?

Commissioner Shea: Yeah, I'll jump in, and Rodney can finish. It's important to remember here that there are legitimate paper plates out there too. If you purchase a car, many times you will be issued a temporary plate. So, what we've done in the past is, and we're going to really step that up with additional training. We've prepared training videos for the officers, things to – done in collaboration with outside agencies coming in to help us, as well as our auto crime professionals. This is what they deal with. Things to look for, things to spot fraudulent plates, and there are many, and we've done that already, but now we're going to, with this proliferation that we see, we're really going to increase that training to make sure that number one, we, you know, public safety. We get as many of these cars in compliance. We do it the right way. We do it in cooperation with people. We don't want to seize cars and then have people lose their cars. We know how important cars are to people, when they're lawfully and they need to get to work and other things. But what we're trying to do is strike that right balance here, Rodney.

Chief Harrison: So, there's certain markings that our police officers on patrol will be trained to be able to identify if a plate is a fraudulent or not. If we identify that this plate that was obtained is fraudulent, that car will be removed, and it'll be vouchered. And the person who is the registered owner of that vehicle needs to come with the appropriate paperwork to recover the car. If not, it will be sent off for auction.

Mayor: Thank you, go ahead.

Moderator: Our next question goes to Amanda from Politico.

Question: Hey, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

Mayor: Good, Amanda, how you been?

Question: I'm good, thanks. So, I wanted to follow up on your radio interview this morning. You were asked about ranked choice voting and, you know, hearing people's thoughts about how they're ranking, and you would suggest that people do more research. What does more research look like to you, beyond watching the debate?

Mayor: Yeah, I think and again, I really feel this, and I've been thinking about it myself, Amanda, you know, I've been in this work a long time and yet I realize a lot of the time, you know, I go into the booth and I'm kind of just going by my gut or going by a piece of information. I think what ranked choice voting calls upon us to do is, you know, be a little more intentional, little more purposeful. Don't make a decision in the booth because it's five people and its multiple offices, think about in advance. I think it means things like looking at the voter guide, looking at the websites of the different candidates, making sure you have a sense of their positions on the issues. It's a different process. It's a richer process in so many ways and it really empowers the voter by keeping your vote alive, but I do think it's requires everyone to take a little more time to think things through. And obviously the debate will be a crucial piece of that equation. Go ahead, Amanda.

Question: Yeah, so early voting obviously has started, and you had mentioned you're going to be traditional and vote on Primary Day. I guess my question is what's been holding you up in terms of, you're saying that you're still trying to decide like – primary season's been going on for a while. So, my question is, you know, why is it taking this long to come to a discission on who you're ranking and how you're ranking –

Mayor: Look –

Question: [Inaudible] little bit more about that.

Mayor: Yeah, I think I still want to hear more about the vision. This has been something I've talked about several times. I respect the candidates. I know some of them, well, there's others I don't know so well, but I want to hear more about where they're going to take us, and I think there's still a level of discussion that hasn't been reached. And I really think in fairness to the candidates, the intensive focus on COVID, particularly at the end of last year, beginning of this year, has taken away some of the time and energy that would have gone into people looking at candidates or the media covering candidates. So, I think to some extent everything's been pushed back, but I do want to hear more, and I hope we'll hear tonight, of a clear vision. When I ran, I think my vision was pretty straightforward and unmistakable, I wanted to address the tale of two cities, particularly income inequality. I wanted to tax the wealthy so we can have pre-K for every child for free. I wanted to end the broken and unconstitutional policy of stop and frisk. I wanted paid sick days for New Yorkers. It was pretty straightforward. I hope we're going to hear more of that tonight, exactly what people are saying they will do for us.

Moderator: Our next question goes to Reuvain from Hamodia.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Good morning, Reuvain. How you doing, man?

Question: I'm good, I'm good. If I may, I'd like to add my vote for keeping at least some version of these Zoom things, they are very helpful for journalists, as you mentioned. So, my question is for Dr. Chokshi. There was – it was announced in the news a while ago that they said that

vaccines work for – they know for sure for six months, but now they're saying – I haven't heard any follow up of how long it works for. I know they can't speed up time in the lab, but I'm just thinking the first vaccines were given in December, and I don't want to be the Grinch that stole the summer of New York, but that six months - so what do we know now about, what's the latest that we know now about how vaccines work?

Mayor: I'm going to give you real credit for terming the phrase, the Grinch who stole the summer of New York. That was agile. Okay, Dr. Choksi and Dr. Katz, I'm going to turn to you, obviously I will start by saying Reuvain, you know, there's a lot we know, and there's still things we don't know considering we're dealing with a disease that literally none of us had even heard of a few years ago and we're learning as we go. But I will say the actual results from the vaccines have been striking, unbelievably clear as expressed by the reduction of positivity, and reduction of hospitalization, reduction of death. So, we know it works. As to how long and when we'd have to think about things like boosters, Dr. Chokshi and followed by Dr. Katz.

Commissioner Dave Chokshi, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thanks for Reuvain for the important question. Let me start with the big picture, which is that the vaccines work and all of the evidence that we have thus far is that they work extremely well, particularly to prevent severe illness, but growingly we're finding that they also work to prevent infections in the first place and the transmission of those infections. So, that's all-good news and the reason that we are doing everything that we can to ensure that people get the protection that vaccines afford. With respect to the duration of immunity from vaccination, you are right that thus far the studies indicate that it is at least for six months. We're continuing to gather data on that because it just takes time for that data on the duration of immunity to actually accumulate over time. My expectation is that we will find that the vaccines last for longer than six months, but that does have to be born out in the science. The final point that I'll make is that there are still some unknowns with respect to how the variants and particularly newer variants will interact with the vaccines, and so that's one of the reasons that boosters may need to be administered at some point in the future. But the clear message, for now, again, is that vaccines work, and they work for a long time.

Mayor: Thank you, Katz.

President and CEO Mitchell Katz, NYC Health + Hospitals: I think Dr. Chokshi did a great job answering the question. Health care workers were among the first people to get vaccinated, and we have not seen cases in any large number of people now that they're getting near that six-month mark. So, I feel very confident that the vaccines will go for longer than six months and we'll watch the data very carefully, and if it shows signs that they need to be boosters, we will be doing boosters, but I think we're all going to have a great summer. I know I'm looking forward to being on my roller blades and Hudson River Park. So, don't take the fun away from us, Ben.

Mayor: Yeah, blade carefully, Mitch. Okay. Reuvain, go ahead.

Question: Just a very brief follow-up. You mentioned earlier this week that you'd be putting out guidance for the restaurants as far as having to use the outdoor sheds there or having to give it up for parking space, and just wondering when that guidance is going to be put out? Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you. Good question, and I need to get you a clear answer on that. Really do want to emphasize the commonsense point to all the folks in the restaurant community, if you want to use that space at the curb, and you're going to put up outdoor dining, we welcome it. We'll support you. We'll work with you. If you're not going to use the space, don't take it up, you know, and if you're not going to use it now, but you might use it later, you can activate it at any point. It just – all that matters is when cars move out, you can take the space and put up your seating and everything else. So, you said it really well, Reuvain, you know, we got to get clear with people, don't hold the space unless you intend to use it. When you do, we'll work with you and make it work, and we'll put out clear guidelines on that.

Moderator: Our next question goes to Nolan from The Post.

Question: Hey, good morning, everybody.

Mayor: How you doing Nolan?

Question: I'm alright, Mr. Mayor, how are you?

Mayor: I'm okay. I could use more caffeine, Nolan. And I'd say, it's a running issue with you and me. I just want to say, I wish I had even more caffeine in my life.

Question: Well, it seems fixable, and I also, you know, I might just encourage that, you know, the Nets to put away the competition in the first half of the game instead of waiting to the second –

Mayor: I'm telling James Harden you said that. Go ahead.

Question: Yes. Well, second half James Harden. Anyways, the police brass are there, so I figured I'd ask a couple of questions on that. First of which is what's the benchmark for this summer? How many murders and how many shootings show success this summer?

Mayor: I will have our colleagues answer you, but I want to just frame for a moment, Nolan. Again, we are coming out at a global pandemic and a perfect storm of negative factors, and you can see it all over the country the impact this has had in terms of increase in gun violence. We will turn it around. I want to be really blunt and clear. We've had this conversation many, many times internally. We will turn around, I can't tell you the exact day, and I think it is a mistake to say, here is our exact metrical pattern, but what I can tell you is gun arrests have been strong, the cooperation with the community is improving all the time. The investments in the community are making an impact. The courts are coming back, the economy's coming back. I'm very confident about where we're going, but I think it's still going to take time to know exactly how it's going to play out. The Commissioner and then Chief.

Commissioner Shea: Hey, Nolan. I share your desire for caffeine too. Thank you for that question. The simple answer is zero, and someone may look at that and say, that's unrealistic, but I assure you that in this agency, from every cop on the street, to every civilian member, to myself

and everyone in between – day and night, all through the day, thinks about how to keep people safe. We are acutely tuned into every incident of violence that occurs. Every single incident we take personally, and every single incident that happens, we examine with an eye towards how do we prevent this from ever happening again. That's whether it's a child or whether it's an incident of domestic violence or strangers on the street. That is the absolute truth. We know that we're in a tough time. I mean, it was not long ago that we had record lows in violence, and it is the goal of, I know I'm speaking for Rodney and myself, and I know the Mayor shares this view as well – how do we not only get back to that as quickly as possible, but surpass it? That is the focus of everyone in this agency and we are moving positively forward. That there's a lot of positives that I take, but certainly we got to intensify on our end with the Police Department how we deploy, how we police this city, how do we work with others? How do we work with the community? How do we work with violence interrupters? How do we work closely with the district attorneys? How do we get those courts working in such a manner that they're prioritizing all the work? There's a lot of good that's going on. But I'll be the first to say, it's never quick enough for me.

Mayor: Amen. Chief?

Chief Harrison: Hey, good morning Nolan, and I think we're dropping the ball here by not giving Kevin Duran his respect. 49 points last night. So, let's make sure we acknowledged the great shooting on the offensive game he had last night. Regarding your concern about the violence yes, it's a struggle. You know, we take every single shooting incident personal we do see a spike in the borough of the Bronx and we're putting a lot of resources there. The one thing that I'm very optimistic about is the NYPD, we're resilient. We evaluate every single week regarding how we go into come up with innovative ideas to protect the city, and we're going to continue to fight because we're the experts in public safety. I'm sure that the men and women are really putting their best foot forward to bring the violence down and make this a safer city. But I appreciate your question.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, Nolan.

Question: And just to follow up and to apologize, it wouldn't be a back and forth between us if I wasn't trying to badly troll you over your sports fandoms, Mr. Mayor. But to the very serious topic of these shootings – you know, take schools, for instance. We all expect or hope that every child in school will get a good quality public education will graduate high school capable of doing reading and writing and mathematics on grade level. We also know that getting that perfect mark is not possible. So, there are benchmarks that are set that we say, this is what success looks like. How many students graduate, how many students graduate with proficiencies? How many of those students go on to college? So, my question is, and I think it's a very reasonable one, with the factors on the ground, what does a successful summer look like to you and to the police Commissioner when it comes to shootings and when it comes to murder so, we have something to judge your success or failure by?

Mayor: Yeah, it's a very fair question, but Nolan, again, I don't think there's any fear of contradiction here. We are coming out of a global pandemic. We're coming out of something absolutely unprecedented. The normal rules don't apply. We – our job is to constantly make

progress. We are resetting the equation. Where do we want to get? We want to get ultimately back to where we were pre-pandemic. Is that going to happen overnight? No, but we want to get to that place, and I believe we can. We've had to, over the last year, plus fight crime without a functioning court system, with a million people out of work, with none of the normal supports that make up our society, with a lot of our officers sick and out because of COVID. We had every conceivable disadvantage. Now the pieces are coming back together, and you see it in the action on the ground. The gun arrests had been a great example. The growing cooperation between NYPD and community exemplified by a lot of the efforts, the Commissioner has undertaken working with community groups to make investments in communities. Obviously, this initiative today on the fraudulent license plates is a new approach, an innovative strategy to address a host of problems. We're going to keep coming back and ultimately, we will turn the tide, but because we're dealing with something absolutely unprecedented, we can't tell you the day it will happen. I can only tell you what will happen.

Moderator: We have time for two more questions today. The next question goes to Yoav from The City.

Question: Hi, everyone. The NYPD – I asked about this last week, Mayor, this is for the Commissioner. The NYPD provided us a list of outcomes for alleged misconduct by officers during last year's protests that were captured in 64 videos that were assembled by the New York Times. But the Department declined to reveal the names of officers even if they had substantiated allegations, when the discipline was deemed to be minor. So, I wanted to ask you, Commissioner, is it the NYPD's policy, not to name officers with substantiated allegations against them if the discipline is minor and given the repeal of 50-a, I'm just wondering what, what the legal basis for such a policy is?

Mayor: I'll just start before turning the Commissioner and say two important things because you did raise this point before, Yoav. One, obviously with those cases, the CCRB retains the opportunity to look at any of those they want to look at and follow through if they choose to. Two, we're still refining our approaches on many fronts. 50-a, the change of 50-a is something this Commissioner has two predecessors believed in, I believe in, and we've put out a huge amount of information since the law was changed, but we're still working to continue to improve transparency on many levels. So, with that said, turning to the Commissioner.

Question: Yeah. Thanks, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for the question. I think, as you asked the question about the specific questions, I think there's a larger discussion here. I think that when you look back on my time as the Commissioner of this agency, certainly building upon many things that were put into place already. When you go back to Jimmy before me, when you go back to the blue-ribbon panel, but I think it's important to have that discussion. When you look at what we have done over the last 18 months, to the Mayor's point, we're not done, but we've done an awful lot in terms of, you know publishing the discipline matrix and refining, and that we did that, not insular. We did that with the community input, with stakeholders' input. People had different opinions. Sometimes we took it and made modifications. Sometimes we said, you know what? We're not going to go that route, but here's why. But it is something that is, is fluid. When you look at what we did with the recent MOU with the Civilian Complaint Review Board. When you look at what we did with our publishing of discipline data and here's to your point, not every

single instance, but publishing a discipline matrix where people can look up the history, and this is coming out of 50-a, and look up individuals creating in essence of scorecard for serious infractions, linking on that to then where additional information can be obtained, whether it's about lawsuits, whether it's about Civilian Complaint Review Board cases. I think that we have done more in the last 18 months to further the transparency around discipline than has been done in probably the last 30 years. I'm proud of it. It's a work in progress. We'll certainly take recommendations, but I am pretty confident that right now we're striking that right balance of the rights of the officers, from minor infractions or not guilty infractions. Something that I didn't think was appropriate to publish – versus serious offenses and guilty ones. We'll continue to monitor this moving forward, but that's where we are right now.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, Yoav.

Question: A related question for the Commissioner. A number of the cases from last year's protests were closed because investigators couldn't identify the officers or the victims in the videos, but at least two of the victims filed notices of claims with the City and could have been tracked that way with which we were able to do, and so should the public be concerned that, that the IAB didn't take that step?

Mayor: Again, I'm going to start and pass to the Commissioner. One, continuing to remind you that if there's anything else that needs to be looked at that was missed previously or that the connection wasn't clear to make – CCRB is obviously a very pertinent venue. Two, I can say having worked eight years with Commissioner Shea and, and Chief Harrison and so many other good leaders of the NYPD, we're constantly working together to try and figure out what to do better. So, if there's something that we need to learn from here about how to cross check these different pieces of information we want to learn from it, and we want to act on it. Commissioner.

Commissioner Shea: I would just say to that point broadly, we have a very robust Internal Affairs Bureau under Commissioner Joe Reznick. I have a hundred percent confidence in them. I'm briefed frequently on cases. I'm proud that in those rare instances where we have occurrences that shouldn't happen happen, quite often, it's our own people that are reporting it to Internal Affairs, which I take as an extremely positive sign. To your question, there could be any number of reasons why. Does it concern me? It's something that we will look at? Absolutely. Does it concern me on face value? Not necessarily. There's a number of reasons why in reaching out to people, sometimes people don't want to cooperate, or for other reasons don't choose to go forward in this avenue and explore the other avenue of filing action. So, I have seen that before – no one should draw any conclusions from that.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead.

Moderator: Our final question for today goes to Ashley from the New York Times.

Question: Good morning to everyone on the call and very—

Mayor: How are you doing, Ashley?

Question: I'm good. How are you, Mr. Mayor?

Mayor: Doing well, thank you.

Question: Also, a very belated happy birthday to the Police Commissioner, getting on up there.

Mayor: Getting on up there. Wait a minute, that was left-handed.

Commissioner Shea: Where's the cake?

Question: I wanted to ask about the license plate issue. I'm curious if the police officials can give us the Chief, either the Chief or the Commissioner can give us a sense of the size of this problems, such as, you know, how many drive-by shootings there were that remained unsolved because of these illegal license plates, and you know, what's your sense of why there's been an increase in this phenomenon during the pandemic?

Mayor: I'm going to just start as the layman before turning to my colleagues, Ashley, and say, we do know there are thousands and thousands of these plates in New York City right now, illegal and fraudulent, and again, as we talked about in recent weeks, one of the most striking things to me is the fact that whatever the crime that could be committed, including the traffic offenses that could be deadly and the hit and runs, et cetera, you immediately undercut the ability of the NYPD to find someone if they have a fraudulent plate. So, this is why it connects in many different ways, but in terms of magnitude of the problem thousands, for sure, minimum. In terms of the specific question that Ashley's raising, who wants to go first?

Chief Harrison: I'll take it Mr. Mayor and Commissioner, if you don't mind. Ashley, good morning, and if you just take a look at shootings for the year to date, and these are not the exact numbers, but we do have 33 identified shooting incidents that are involved with these fraudulent plates. We also have another 60 incidents with these fraudulent in plates where it's a shot fired job called. There are 562 crashes involving these fake plates, where 293 injuries had occurred. So, these numbers are alarming, and I'm going to be honest with you – I think I'm low balling the numbers. I think those numbers are a lot higher. Once again, is this still a lot of investigations going on with some of these shooting incidents, but it's troublesome, and we saw this last year in 2020, and we have to address it.

Mayor: Thank—

Commissioner Shea: Ashley, I'll just add in, I echo what Rodney said, but it's an imperfect science too, and I agree with the Mayor. Thousands is an accurate number as you specifically related to violence. You know, you and I probably have talked about this at some point in the past when we see gang violence from one area to another, inevitably, certainly, we have people that walk, certainly we have people that ride bicycles, but more often than not what we have is gang members getting in a car and driving from one area to the rival's area. It is most definitely not uncommon to take it a step further that gang members that are willing to drive around and shoot someone and endanger innocent people are not that worried about following the New York State registration laws. We encounter that very frequently, and the numbers that Rodney says is

probably the tip of the iceberg in terms of the amount of work and investigative manpower that goes into tracking. Just because we don't have at the instant captured on video, that they drove by in a car or ran right into the car. The car is usually a block away, two blocks away. So, we think that it is a problem. It's something [inaudible] spoke of what we're doing on the violence to try to tackle it, and as we said earlier, there's a lot of facets to this in terms of just pedestrian safety and things of that nature, too.

Mayor: Thank you. Go ahead, Ashley.

Question: I just want to re-ask the second part of that question, which is, do we have a sense of why that is? Do we think that the State's move for instance, to cashless, tolling has kind of helped facilitate these illegal license plates coming in from out of state or if there's you know, something else that's happening on the roads or in other states? I mean, it seems, sounds like you're pointing to a specific increase during the pandemic and other than, you know, the country falling apart, you know, what, is there something else or something specific that you can point to that's driving these increases? Social media, you know, these license plates have been sold on social media for years, I think and—

Commissioner Shea: I'll start with that one. It's not scientific, but I could tell you, you know, with 30 years of experience from time to time, we see sometimes things, not all that different from this. There was a time in the past when we had a proliferation of out-of-state plates, not paper, but plates, and they would, kind of – we would call them phantom plates – from Pennsylvania or other states from time to time, we see this crop up, that's pre COVID. That's not to say that COVID doesn't have something to do with this one where multiple states, DMVs probably were experiencing, you know, less than optimal work environments there. So, it's probably a little of everything you mentioned. The social media piece, we, there are a number of investigations that the NYPD is involved with. Rodney touched on one out of the state, and he may want to say more. But also, that we're dealing with whether it's local law enforcement, state or federal law enforcement, as well as other agencies that are seeing this and not just New York, but other states right here.

Mayor: Rodney, would you like to add?

Chief Harrison: No, just pretty much want to echo what the Commissioner stated. You know, this is another process for criminals to make gain, and no they're selling these fraudulent paper plates online sometimes \$70 up to \$200, and if you sell enough of them, you could probably make out pretty good. So, it's something that we have to address, but there's so many moving parts, but one of the things that I'm concerned about the most is public safety and that's making sure that I address that as a priority.

Mayor: Yeah, thank you, and just to pull it all together. I think the fact that we see a trend and Ashley, I think you're asking a really important question. What's the origin of the trend that what, what it has to do with this, what does it have to do with this moment in history? I do think the fact that some people saw an opportunity to profit. That certain folks believed it was going to be a tool they could use in the work they were doing of being unfortunately violent towards others. We see the trend and we've come up with a strategy to disrupt the trend, and I think this is really

the wraparound here, that we went through massive disruption last year, but like New York City, the NYPD got right back up and came up with approaches to address everything we were seeing and coming up with new approaches when we saw a new phenomenon and this has always been the NYPD at its best. We're going to disrupt this pattern. We're going to make sure that there's more and more pressure felt out there, that if you're driving a car, it has to be with a legal plate, and I think the very attention we're giving to it right now is going to help to address the issue as well. Once, people know they can't get away with something it tends to help us stop a negative trend.

So, everyone, as we conclude this morning, this is an example of the fact New York City always comes back. New York City always finds a way. We're going to overcome these challenges, and we can be very proud of the fact that the biggest challenge we've ever faced, COVID, is now on the run because the people in the city have done so much to turn the situation around. That's something to be proud of. Thank you everybody.

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