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**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO ADDRESSES CRIME TRENDS, HOLDS Q&A**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** We are in a moment going to start the hearings related to the number of pieces of legislation, but I know several of our colleagues the media were interested in yesterday's briefing by the NYPD and I wanted to make a few comments on that – first in English, then in Spanish – and then I'll be happy to take a few questions related to public safety. You heard from the NYPD monthly briefing yesterday, through May 31st of this year, overall crime in New York City is down 6.6 percent. This is very important for the people of this city to understand. Overall crime is down 6.6 percent in this city compared to the same point last year. In specific terms, that means there have been 2,700 fewer crimes at this point this year compared to the same point last year. That is a remarkable achievement, and the credit goes to the men and women of the NYPD, and to their leaders who have been constantly improving their strategies and their deployments to achieve this result. This is a striking result, and one that is worthy of a lot of praise, and one that means that for 2,700 New Yorkers – they have not experienced crime, even compared to the record-low year of last year. And I remind you, last year we set records for crime reduction compared to the year 2013, which was considered by many a year that was unbeatable.

So, the NYPD has proven in recent years that it can do extraordinary things to reduce crime. In fact – over 20-plus years – the NYPD has been consistently driving down crime in this city. And we will continue that progress. There has been obviously an uptick in homicides and shootings. It is something we take very, very seriously. It's something we're addressing right now. There is no more important priority for me than public safety. And every day I review the numbers, and every day we're working with the NYPD to make sure our strategies and our deployments are having the maximum impact. There's no question that everyone at the NYPD takes it seriously, as does everyone here at City Hall. That being said, we know for sure that the increase in both murders and shootings has occurred in a small number of precincts, and has been primarily because of gang and crew-related activities. That does not make it any more acceptable. It says that we can fight it because we have the knowledge of where the problem is, and who the perpetrators are, and what kind of patterns we are dealing with here. It's quite distinct. It's quite clear. And that is why NYPD is moving, as we speak, resources and energy toward the problem areas. As you heard yesterday, we announced the Summer All Out program, which was extraordinarily successful last year. Summer All Out begins next week. We will move 330 officers to high-crime locations. We saw last year what a profound impact that had. We know it will have the same profound impact this year.

If you recall last year, we were at a point just around this time of year – at the end of the spring – beginning of summer – where we saw an uptick in crime. There was tremendous concern in communities around the city, rightfully. And then you saw as a result of Summer All Out, and other initiatives, we turned those numbers very quickly and intensely, so that by the end of 2014, we had had the safest year in decades. We have the lowest murder rate in almost 50 years. That's something to remember. NYPD has seen challenges before and has overcome them. I have a lot of faith in the men and women of the NYPD. I know they will turn the tide this time, just like they did last year.

I also want to say that Commissioner Bratton and his team are constantly refining their strategies. By the way, Commissioner Bratton – the father of the CompStat approach. The whole idea that he brought to this department first 20 year ago – and he is reinvigorated it now – is to constantly improve strategy and tactics, to constantly make the moves that'll allow us to fight crime more effectively. He is doing that now, as is his leadership team, and I have great, great faith in them.

New York City continues to be an extraordinarily safe city – the safest big city in America, that is clear. And we will continue that tradition, and we will improve upon it. Let me just say a few words in Spanish before taking a few questions on this topic.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we welcome your questions. We're going to take just a few questions on this topic. Dave?

**Question:** Mayor, you mentioned gang activity, but what do you say to the Pat Lynch's of the world who are looking at the homicide and shooting numbers and say this is what results when you reform police, reform stop and frisk, put a lot of new rules on the police – that because of that there's a correlation to an uptick in shooting and homicides.

**Mayor:** Well, I'll say a couple different things, first of all, I'll remind you that the PBA also believe that the stop and frisk effort was the wrong policy, and that's a matter of fact. Stop and frisk was applied with such a broad brush as to be unconstitutional. That's what federal court found. We came up with a better approach under the leadership of Commissioner Bratton. We stop people who have done something wrong, and you see that in the statistics. The bottom line here is, what's clear is that last year we faced a similar challenge and we overcame it. How? By applying our officers where the need was greatest, and by improving our strategies, and by using the leadership we had in the NYPD to make the right strategic decisions. And I would say, since last year a lot has changed for the better. We have more technology at the disposal of our officers today than we did a year ago. We have ShotSpotter now online in some key precincts. We have now coming online the smartphones and the tablets in the vehicles. That means officers are going to have instantaneously the information they need to find perpetrators. We have better training than we had a year ago. We have – you can see now from the CCRB records, improved relationship between police and community. You can tell because complaints about police are down 25 percent. We have time and energy that's been freed up by getting away from the inappropriate stops and getting away from low-level marijuana arrests, and putting that time and energy into going after violent crime. So, I am confident that all these pieces are going to come together, and turn the tide just as we did last year.

Jonathan?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, does this uptick of violence influence your thinking at all in terms of hiring more police officers [inaudible].

**Mayor:** Yeah, I remember last year very vividly, we went through such a similar situation. And Commissioner Bratton was quite clear with me – he had great faith that the men and women of the NYPD can get ahead of the situation, and they did. They didn't just match the 2,000 numbers – excuse me the 2013 numbers, they surpassed the 2013 numbers. Now, I would say it's quite clear they have a lot more tools today than they did last spring and last summer. And I know that that's going to make a huge impact. So, my argument has been simple all along, if you take the finest police force in the world with the finest leadership of any police force, and you give more time to officers to focus on serious crimes – because that's what we've done. We've taken time away from the needless stops. We've taken time away from the low-level marijuana arrests. We've put that time into going after serious crime. You're giving them better technology, better training. That will clearly turn the tide. So, my answer is the steps are already being taken to turn the situation around. But here's the other part of the equation, and we have to be clear about this – I – look, every single day I'm going over those numbers,

and I feel them deeply. But at the same time we see an overall reduction in crime. We have to recognize that that trend speaks volumes too. The NYPD is getting more effective all the time, and working more closely with communities to lower crime.

Erin?

**Question:** Just to follow-up on that, is that a no? Does not mean that you still [inaudible].

**Mayor:** I believe what I've said all along.

**Question:** Do you have any specific tactics to get guns off the street? Do you see any [inaudible] connection at all between more of a difficulty getting guns off the street with fewer stops?

**Mayor:** Look, we have a problem in this country with guns, there is no question about it. I'm wearing this flag symbol today because today is a day devoted to awareness about gun violence all over this country. And we need stronger laws, and we need, obviously, a number states in this country to stop allowing guns to flow so freely that so often end up on the streets of New York City. With that being said, the efforts that we are undertaking – and last year is great evidence of this – drove down violence markedly. We had the lowest number of homicides in half-a-century last year. Obviously, that means our approach was working. And I think the approach will deepen this year and be ever more effective. So, to me it's simple, we have in this nation a gun problem. We have in this city a challenge to get these guns off the streets. But we have the right approach for driving down crime, and we have factual evidence of that. We have the right approach for turning the tide, and in that we will get a lot of guns away from the bad guys. And that work continues to be refined all the time. What we know is assertive policing done with the right kind of training and the right kind of technology can get the guns off the street. We haven't had until now some of the technology we needed. We haven't had until now the retraining of the entire police force. We've had a lot of energy put into the wrong priorities. When all of these new factors come into play and are felt for a sustained period of time I guarantee we're going to get a lot more guns.

Thanks, everyone. We're going to the hearing now. Thank you, everyone.

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