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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY ON COVID-19**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Well, everyone, we're starting out a week that we've never seen before – anything like this before. This is going to be a very challenging week, a week where we're going to get used to doing things that are absolutely unprecedented in our lives. So, I think it's safe to say that as we woke up this morning, this Monday, looked very different than any Monday we've ever experienced.

I want to talk about what we all will be doing and will need to do to make these adjustments and to deal with our new reality. But I want to talk about against the painful backdrop of this surge of this disease, the fact that we're seeing milestones in the growth of this disease that are just absolutely staggering. Things we could not have imagined even a week or two ago, we've now passed by quite a bit – 10,000 cases of coronavirus here in New York City. We are as of this morning on the verge of having lost a hundred New Yorkers for a disease that would, most of us had never heard of a few months ago – that seemed to just have the smallest presence in our city just weeks ago – it now has become the dominant reality and we're all trying to make sense of that together. But, suffice it to say that we now – all of us – fully understand what we're up against and we are taking every conceivable action as a city working with the state government and now increasingly working with the federal government, to address this crisis, to try and every way we can to slow the growth of this disease, to help everyone in need, and to get through to the day when this will be part of our history, not the reality we're living. Right now, for so many people it's just a day-to-day adjustment trying to figure out how to live with these new rules, trying to figure out how to adapt. For so many people trying to figure out how to get the basics of life even if you aren't being paid anymore, you don't have a job anymore - so much uncertainty, so much fear, so much anxiety. That's what I hear everywhere I go.

Look, what we all have to do is help each other. But we in government particularly have to help you to understand this new reality and help you navigate it, support you through it. And so, I'll talk about some of the big picture reality, but I'll also keep coming back to the day-to-day reality; how important it is for us all to stay home to the maximum extent possible. To really understand that what we do will affect the overall situation, not just for ourselves and our families, but for everyone else. And that social distancing is so important for all of us.

I will tell you again these very painful facts about the situation. Our city right now, confirmed cases as of the last count this morning already 12,339 New Yorkers have tested positive for COVID-19. I want people to understand that at this point we're about 60 percent of the cases in New York State are here in our City. About 35 percent of the cases in the entire country are here in this City. We are the epicenter of this crisis. No one wants that distinction. Not a single one of

us, but it is true that we are the epicenter of this crisis and that's why we so desperately need help, particularly from our federal government to get through it. As I said, at this, as of this moment, 99 confirmed deaths related to Coronavirus. We know more are coming and that again, those are not statistics, those are human beings, those are friends, those are our loved ones. The breakout by borough, Queens has 3,621 cases, Brooklyn 3,494, Manhattan 2,572, the Bronx 1,829 and Staten Island 817. It's a very tough time, but it is not a time for people to give-up to say the least because this fight has just begun. It is not a time for hopelessness because we finally see things starting to happen and first and foremost New Yorkers are making things happen.

I had the opportunity today to be on Roosevelt Island visiting the Coler hospital facility and there – right this minute – new hospital beds are being created right now so that we will have additional capacity to handle this surge in coronavirus cases and to make sure that everyone else who needs hospital care for other diseases and challenges will have support as well. On Roosevelt Island at Coler, 100 new beds will be available this week, 240 will be available next week. It's just one example of many to come where we're finding new ways to create hospital space for those who need it. And of course, we heard great news today about the Javits Center and so happy to say the Army Corps of Engineers working with FEMA, working with the State of New York, all of us working together, setting up a new field hospital at the Javits Center. This was something absolutely crucial and we've been pushing for the federal government to bring in everything they have, every form of support and everyone knows the great work of the Army Corps of Engineers. This will mean a thousand new beds. That's going to be extraordinarily helpful.

I want to talk about supplies as well, which are absolutely crucial. Equipment and supplies we're going to need to get through not only this crisis over many weeks, but what we need to do to get through just the next days, just the next week or two. And I do want to say on a positive note, I had a long and detailed conversation last night with President Trump and Vice President Pence. And we got into real specifics about the challenges facing New York City. I emphasized to both the President and Vice President that we particularly in our public hospitals are dealing with honestly a day-to-day reality where we have to make sure that there'll be more and more equipment and supplies coming in to deal with a surging demand of people in need. I'm very pleased to say that conversation focused on ventilators - in particular - as the single most important, most urgently needed piece of equipment. And today we received the good news that 400 ventilators from the federal stockpile are arriving now to help New York City. That's going to make a huge difference. Now, our need for ventilators is in the thousands, but we're going to fight every day to stay ahead of this curve. We're going to literally be in a race against time, so even 400 ventilators is a huge step forward to help us get through this weekend into next. So, I'm very grateful the federal government has come through with this first-step.

I also had conversations today with Peter Navarro – several conversations – who the President deployed as the individual he's going to have focusing on specific supply requests from New York City. We've talked multiple times today. We've been texting back and forth and again, the focus that I made clear Mr. Navarro is ventilators, but other supplies as well are part of his purview. And again, we see very productive actions in the course of today.

I spoke with Defense Secretary Esper about an hour ago. Continue to emphasize how much we need the military's help here in New York City. I want to thank the Secretary for the fact that the USNS Comfort is on its way soon to New York, obviously are so appreciative for the presence of the Army Corps of Engineers, but we are going to need so much more going forward and then when New York gets through our crisis the same help is going to be needed from the military all over the nation. So, it is my hope that that military role will continue to expand in the days ahead.

When it comes to supplies, we have been amassing supplies and ensuring that they get out immediately to public and private hospitals across the city and starting today we sent out supplies around the city in total 200,000 N95 masks for our hospitals, 2 million surgical masks and 70,000 face shields. Additional help is coming from both the federal government and the State government, that includes 430,000 more surgical masks, 170,000 more N95 masks, 175,000 pairs of gloves, 98,000 face shields and 72,000 surgical gowns. So, we'll be giving regular updates, but you can see these are substantial quantities. And yet, I think everyone knows we're going to need constantly to get a supply because the number of cases will keep growing and the number of medical personnel that we're going to need will keep expanding, number of facilities will keep expanding, so these numbers represent something good, which is the flow of supplies to where they're needed, but we're going to need a lot more where that came from. And we're going to focus on getting supplies from all over the country from obviously the federal, state government, any private sources we can find, any philanthropic sources and we're going to be manufacturing our own here in New York City, cause we're going to be at this for a while. We're going to need all of that to get through.

There are some companies that have really stepped up. I think it's really important to give credit where credit is due. So, I want to thank the ASO Corporation of Florida who has sent 600,000 vinyl gloves to New York City. I want to thank American Express for putting together 36,000 N95 masks. Merck Pharmaceuticals, sending half a million surgical masks and then companies here that are stepping up to produce right here in New York City; Boyce Technologies, Bednark Studio, MakerSpace, and Adafruit, all local companies that have agreed to help us by producing tens of thousands of face shields right here in New York City. All of this is going to make a difference. Every single one of these efforts matter. And this is how we save lives to make sure these supplies are always available to our brave and heroic health care workers. So, thank you to all of these companies for stepping-up.

I want to make clear as we all get into this new reality. We all have been told, I think very, very clearly to think about the difference between what's essential and what's not essential. At this point since we passed 8:00 pm last night, non-essential businesses, non-essential activities are a part of the past and that is going to be true for weeks to come. At this point since we passed 8:00 pm last night, non-essential businesses, non-essential activities are a part of the past, and that's going to be true for weeks to come. So, non-essential businesses closed down. The things we all used to think were normal. The things we used to do for leisure and fun, the things we used to spend time and money on, we're not doing that anymore, honestly. We're doing something different now. So essential businesses are what are allowed to be opened. Grocery stores, pharmacies, food establishments that provide delivery and take out, obviously, the kinds of businesses that we are going to depend on to get through this.

And another thing we have to recognize that'll be different. We're used to – we're New Yorkers, we're used to crowds, we're used to lines, we're used to being close together. Not anymore. We're not going to allow crowds to form. We're not going to allow lines where people are tightly packed next to each other. We're not going to allow any indoor space to get overcrowded. We're not going to allow outdoor spaces to get overcrowded. From this point on, everyone needs to understand social distancing. Six feet apart on every side. The obvious exception is when you're with the people who live under the same roof with you. The family, whatever the composition of your family, those you live with. Obviously, that's different because you're in close proximity all the time. And if you live with someone else, and you're out on the street, just the same way as you would be living together, close together, that's fine. We understand that. But for people who you do not live under the same roof with, you're going to have to practice the social distancing and we're going to help, the city of New York, all our agencies will be there to educate people, to remind people, to warn people, sometimes to step in and help people create more separation. We're going to be doing that very, very energetically from this point on.

And we've made clear that everyone we understand who has to go out for groceries or for medicines or for a little bit of exercise or walk the dog, that's okay. But for as little time as possible. And there are some people who should not go out. And those are the folks who are the most vulnerable, the folks who really have to avoid any other contact with other people. And that means, especially outside their family obviously, and that means folks over 70 and folks with those serious preexisting conditions, medical conditions.

So now, to the question of our parks and the places that we are used to going outside. We want to get some exercise, some recreation, as Commissioner Dermot Shea, and I said yesterday, we're going to focus in the first days on education and warnings and a lot of NYPD presence and also the presence of many other city agencies, obviously the parks department included. We're going to focus, we're going to have signage out to help people understand, lots of messages that you'll hear constantly letting people know how this is going to work, and you have to practice social distancing. And that if we see people in groups, we're going to break them up. If we see a place that's too crowded, we are going to get people to disperse.

And also, I want to say to my fellow New Yorkers, this week's going to be decisive. We want to see how this is going. We're going to work with the State of New York to figure out what the law, the rules I should say, will be for the longer term. This week is our chance to test different approaches. We need to make sure people will practice social distancing in our parks and playgrounds. And if we don't think it can be done, we're going to have to come up with tougher rules. So, it really is incumbent upon all New Yorkers to do your damndest to live by this new reality.

As our officers go around monitoring and enforcing, the more we see people practicing social distancing, the more we see people avoiding crowds and really greeting some space, the more we can allow folks the opportunity to use parks and playgrounds fully. If we see that we're just not seeing enough evidence that people are getting the message, we're going to be tougher about getting that message out and more enforcement. If that's still not working, we could easily get to the point soon where we say, you know what, we're not going to be allowed to be able to allow

playgrounds to be open. I don't want to do that. I don't think a lot of New Yorkers want to see that happen. But the only way we keep playgrounds open is if people really honor the rules. Don't overcrowd them. We don't need family groups mixing with each other. We don't need kids playing with kids outside of their families. I know it's strange. I know it's difficult. I really do. But this is the reality we have to make sense of. So, if everyone is tough and strong as New Yorkers are, we can find a way to strike that balance.

What will not be allowed in parks at all is any larger gatherings, and no team sports activity, which again pains me as someone who loves sports and still plays team sports. It's just not going to be possible. Team sports, pretty much in every case, involves close contact. It does not allow for social distancing. So, this has to be something that we've just let go for now. But hopefully in the months ahead we can all get back to. We're also not going to allow barbecues, which obviously are social activities. We know that's going to be tough as the weather gets warmer. But again, that's just for the duration of this immediate crisis. And then when we get through it, we can go back to normal.

So, you will see a lot of enforcement, a lot of personnel. You'll see first and foremost the NYPD that is going to make this a high priority to be present around parks and playgrounds. But you're also going to see teams from the FDNY. You're going to see teams from the Sheriff's Office, from the Office of Special Enforcement, from the Department of Buildings, you're going to see teams from the Sanitation Department, our Community Affairs Unit here at the Mayor's Office, our Office of Neighborhood Safety at the Mayor's Office. And of course, from the Department of Parks and Recreation, you're going to see in every case a lot of presence. And please, I'm going to state the obvious to my fellow New Yorkers, when an officer asks you to move along, move along, they ask you to disperse as part of the crowd, disperse. If they remind you that you've been out exercising, and it's time to go home, go home. We really need people to recognize our officers are simply telling us what we need to do to keep safe and to stop this disease from continuing its extraordinary growth. That's the whole mission will be to keep people safe now and in the future. So, please follow the instructions of our officers.

Some other updates. And I will go through different items quickly. And then we'll hear from the chancellor, and then open up to questions from the media. You know, I've been calling on the federal government and I talked to President Trump and Vice President Pence about this last night. I've mentioned, I talked about ventilators. I talked about the need for medical personnel, including from the armed forces. We went into detail about that.

But I also talked about the situation that our public and private hospitals are facing where right now they are dealing with huge new surges of cases and it's tremendously difficult for them and it's costing them so much in human terms, but also in financial terms. Public and private hospitals need help from the federal government. Cities, towns, counties, states all have been constantly stressed over these last weeks and we'll be much more stressed in the weeks ahead. Massive new expenses, plummeting revenue. I've made very clear, we've got to have help in the legislation as being discussed right now in Washington. Hundreds of billions of dollars we need for localities and States, hundreds of billions to help our hospitals get through this everywhere in the country. I'm hoping and praying we'll see that support from the federal government. We're certainly fighting hard and I know our senators and our house delegation are as well.

But while we're hoping that some relief may be coming, the size of the deficits ahead are huge. We again, you cannot have billions of dollars in new expenses while simultaneously losing billions of dollars in revenue without having a massive problem. So, knowing that we're going to have severe challenges with our city budget, I have instructed our office of management budget to initiate a peg program immediately. That means a mandatory initiative requiring city agencies to cut their spending. This is going to be a very difficult exercise. Given the backdrop of this crisis. I want to be very clear, we will not cut spending related to COVID 19 response. If it has anything to do directly with stopping the spread of coronavirus, of course, that's where we're going to prioritize spending. That's where a lot of our new spending is. But outside of that area, every agency will be asked to help. All in different ways. But the specific goals that will be given to each agency by the office of management budget will be obligatory. We have to make these cuts in light of an ever-worsening budget situation. And I say that with no joy, but I know it is time for us to do this. Looking ahead, just weeks until the next step in our budget process, the executive budget.

Another important topic, our jails. I'll be updating New Yorkers daily on this situation. We continue to ensure that there's additional healthcare capacity for our jail population. We continue to ensure that there's ample space for any inmates who need to be isolated. One thing we have, particularly on Rikers Island, is space because our jail population is less than half of what it was six years ago, thank God. Today, through the combination of efforts by the city and the district attorney's, 75 individuals have been released from our city jails. There are more being immediately reviewed that are under state jurisdiction, but in our city jails. We'll have an update on them shortly.

In the course of this evening, I will be given results of an effort by the Department of Corrections and NYPD and our Mayor's Office for Criminal Justice to review a list of approximately 200 inmates for potential release. From that list, a number will be determined, and we will make the decision this evening on what that exact number will be and then they will be released. Whatever that specific number of inmates, those individuals will be released tomorrow. Then starting in the morning, an additional group of between 100 and 200 will be reviewed quickly. We hope to make decisions on them very quickly. But I think to be safe, I would say those decisions will come Wednesday. But this process will be ongoing. It will be constant to determine what is the right number of people and who are the right people to release, and under what conditions to make sure everyone is safe, but also to make sure we look out for the health and wellbeing of all. So, we'll have constant updates on that.

Two more points, then I'm going to just give you a quick summary in Spanish. Been a lot of questions about city services that we normally expect and city offices that are normally open and obviously a lot has been suspended, a lot's been altered. A lot of things we depend on aren't there right now. Anything you want to check on for City services or offices to know if they're open or if they're operational, you can go to [nyc.gov](https://www.nyc.gov). Right there on the homepage, you can click into a list and see exactly what is still available and what isn't. And anytime you have a question, you can always call 311— to get a clearer picture. I want to take one moment before I close to talk directly to New Yorkers with disabilities. I know there's tremendous concern in our disability community dealing with all the unknowns everyone else is dealing with, but needing to make

sure that there'll be sensitivity and concern in our City government and all the institutions of our society – that there'll be information flowing and messages that will be helpful and necessary information for the community, that everything that we do takes into account all New Yorkers, including so many fellow New Yorkers who have a disability and who needs support at this moment. The fact is we are focused on making sure that every New Yorker gets the support they need during this crisis and anyone who has a specific concern and needs help can reach out to our Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. And I want to thank Commissioner Victor Calise and his whole team in that office who do extraordinary work all the time, but have really risen to the occasion in this crisis. Anyone who needs more information or needs help can call 311 or visit [nyc.gov/disability](http://nyc.gov/disability) for more information and deaf New Yorkers specifically can connect through video phone at 646-396-5830, I'll say that number again, 646-396-5830.

Quickly in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, I want to talk— I want turn to, I should say, our Chancellor. And Chancellor, you and your team, I know you have not gotten a lot of sleep these last days because you've been trying to recreate the nation's largest school system – virtually something that's never been done before on this scale. But I can tell from the smile on your face that you've had a good start today. So, really want to thank you and your team for the extraordinary effort. We look forward to your update. Chancellor Richard Carranza –

**Schools Chancellor Richard Carranza:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and thank you for your leadership in these very trying times. Just to give some context to what happened today in New York City, if you took all of the public schools in Los Angeles, you added all of the public schools in Chicago and you threw in the public schools in Boston. All of those schools today converted to a new way of learning and teaching in the— in America's largest City. We converted how students learn and how teachers teach with only days to be able to do that. So, I am here this evening to give thanks and kudos to our incredible educators, our leaders, our students, our parents who have taken on this challenge to make sure that students in this very difficult time period will continue to be engaged academically and we'll continue to be able to add to their knowledge base for however long we go.

Today is day one of a new reality for the 1.1 million students and families in New York City. And although these days are uncertain and, at times, frightening, we must all pay attention to the work of our administrators, staff, teachers and families. That's what's been the focus today, and what I saw today was nothing short of incredible teachers rising to the occasion, administrators rising to the occasion, parents rising to the occasion, students rising to the occasion. So, the two operative words as we go forward are flexibility and patients; those are the two words to keep in mind, flexibility and patience. We are literally flying the plane as we're building the plane. So, not everything is going to go 100as we plan, but that's okay because we'll figure it out together. There were thousands of teachers today that logged into their Google classrooms and they were recording welcome videos and lessons and getting to work with their students.

We had chat rooms where students and their teachers were reconnecting. I saw evidence of kindergarten teachers that sang songs with their students on a video classroom. A myriad of wonderful learning experiences were happening today across our City and we know that many families and students were going to [schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home](https://schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home) to access the resources that we have available online not only for educators, but for students and for families. Teachers are making use of the professional learning opportunities that are being offered multiple times throughout the day and throughout the week. And I also want to acknowledge again our parents who we know are managing a myriad of challenges, not only working from home. Some folks are not working right now, but they're helping their children through remote learning opportunities. We promise to continue to work with you to give you the support that you need to help your students stay connected.

We also cannot talk about remote learning without acknowledging that there is a technology gap that exists among our school communities. And I want to start out by saying we are working quickly to make sure every family that needs a device gets a device. If you filled out the – remote learning device survey, I want to say thank you. If you have not yet filled it out, I want to say you need to fill it out and I'll give you the web address and the phone number, in just a minute where you can do that. You can expect if you've already filled out that survey to receive an email in the coming days on the next steps and if you haven't yet received a device, don't worry, you will receive a device. So far including school-based devices, we have handed out approximately 175,000 laptops, iPads and Chromebooks and we have New York become a little blasé when we think about the 1.1 million students, but 175,000 laptops, iPads and Chromebooks are bigger than most school systems in America. Yet, we've distributed that quantity of laptops, iPads and Chromebooks already and we are on pace to continue to distribute the 300,000 iPads to students in the coming weeks.

You'll also be happy to know that I have good news to report from day one of our 93 regional enrichment centers, our recs. About 4,500 students, children of first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential service providers were confirmed to start attending one of our recs as soon as today. Now these are the children of the men and women who are keeping New York City running and safe during this crisis. This is an important service to New Yorkers. Each one of these 4,500 students represents a family of a first responder or a critical care worker that does not need to worry about childcare and continue— can continue to support our city during this critical time. We also had Mr. Mayor and I'm very proud to tell you about 5,000 DOE employees and employees from the community-based organizations that we partner with that stepped up to volunteer to staff our regional – enrichment centers. That's 5,000 volunteers. I want to say to you, thank you, for your service to the children and to our City during this unprecedented time. I'm absolutely blown away by the dedication of our staff and our partners and the sheer number of people who have stepped up in a matter of weeks to ensure that on the front lines, our first responders to COVID-19 have the backup childcare they need to continue to serve the citizens of New York.

Our commitment is to make sure that every student who wants a meal can also get a meal and can continue to get a meal. And while we were serving breakfast and lunch today, we were serving three meals a day to the children of New York City. So, for – at 449 sites across the City in every borough, we served approximately 78,000 meals, breakfast, lunch, and dinner for



anyone that wanted them. And through our partnership with Door Dash, we delivered 246 meals to our medically fragile students. So, we're serving all of our students in New York City. And as a reminder for anyone that needs a meal, it's very easy to find a site – go to [schools.nyc.gov](https://schools.nyc.gov). on the homepage, you will be able to see a link where you'll be able to find information as to where these hubs sites are. Or you can text food – F-O-O-D – or *comida* – C-O-M-I-D-A – to 877-877, it's just that simple.

As we continue to say the situation and the situation continues to evolve, we'll continue to monitor all of these services day to day, hour by hour to make sure we're meeting the needs of our students. We know there's a lot of unknowns, but what we do know is that we have each other and we do know that if we work together, if we heed the call of our Mayor and all of our Commissioners that are asking us to maintain social distancing, that are asking us not to congregate, we know that we can, as New Yorkers, take this on and as we've done in our history. There's no challenge too big for us to take on.

**Mayor:** Well said, Chancellor. And thank you to your team. Thank you to all the educators. I want to say to all the educators who are out there making these enrichment centers work. Thank you to all the food service staff, the custodians to the crossing guards, everyone who's making sure that young people who are children of these essential workers are getting this support and everyone's making sure that those food distribution centers are working. Thank you to all of you. It makes a huge, huge difference. Okay. That concludes the opening remarks here. We're going to take questions from the media and I want to just say several of my colleagues from different agencies will be on the phone. So, we will bring them in audio if we get questions pertinent to them. And with that we'll take the first question.

**Moderator:** Yoav is up first.

**Mayor:** Go ahead, Yoav.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor [inaudible] for Dr. Barbot. I'm just wondering [inaudible] kind of science the city is following as far as whether the virus hangs in the air and how long it lives on surfaces. The reason I ask is because there seems to be different statements coming from Governor Cuomo and while it does tend to impact people's behavior, if they think something does kind of survive in the air for a little bit such as taking an Uber or Lyft, and also for kind of folks who rely on handrails to get up the stairs. You know, I had a concern about how long it lives on surfaces. So, has the City's, kind of, science, on those two things changed in, you know, recently –

**Mayor:** Yoav, let me start and then let me also confirm, is Dr. Barbot hearing us?

**Commissioner Oxiris Barbot, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:** Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** Yeah. Okay. So, let me, let me –

**Commissioner Barbot:** The science [inaudible] –

**Mayor:** Can she hear me? Oxiris, can you hear me okay?

**Moderator:** Dr. Barbot, can you hear the Mayor?

**Commissioner Barbot:** [Inaudible]

**Mayor:** Okay, does she have feedback?

**Commissioner Barbot:** [Inaudible] this virus is transmitted through what we call droplets, which means someone coughs, sneezes, and that droplet then makes contact with someone else's hand or mucus membrane such as the mouth, the eyes. And that's how it gets into the body. So that has not changed. This is not an airborne virus such as measles. This is a virus that's spread by droplets. The other thing is when we talked about this before, you know there are studies that have shown that you can make a virus live as long as you could possibly make it live under laboratory conditions, which is very different from what we see in real world scenarios. So I think the important thing is the [inaudible] to New Yorkers and how it applies to their everyday life is, it really shouldn't matter if a virus lives 10 minutes, two hours, two days because the important thing is the guidance that we're giving to New Yorkers hasn't changed, which is the importance of frequent hand washing, the importance of covering your mouth and your nose when you cough in your sneeze, and by all means if you're sick, stay home.

So, while there are studies that have indicated you could make the virus live long under laboratory conditions, the real-world consequences to New Yorkers is the importance of hand-washing. That's number one.

**Question:** Okay. Thank you. Unrelatedly another question is, you know, there's been quite a bit of focus on the Department of Correction, but a little bit less attention to the youth detention facilities and we understand that there are some staff who work with kids who have tested positive. Is there any kind of similar effort to get some of the youth out of detention like there is at the DOC?

**Mayor:** We're going to look at, obviously, every situation from a health lens. Huge difference immediately is what we've seen with this disease, the impact it has on older people versus younger people, on those who have those preexisting conditions versus those who are healthier. So, I think it's a very, very different dynamic immediately when you're talking about a youth facility. But we still want to be careful. We want to be mindful. So, you know, we are looking at and will look at it through a health lens, but I don't think it is the same level of challenge as what we're facing with the adult facilities.

**Moderator:** Sean is up next.

**Question:** Yeah. Thank you, Mayor. Just wanted to get a few more details on supplies. You originally called for 15,000 ventilators, [inaudible] N95 face masks and a bunch of other things. Did you get a specific commitment from either the president or Peter Navarro to help meet those goals? And do you still want the president to basically enforce the Defense Production Act?

**Mayor:** No. And yes. It's an excellent question. I appreciate both questions. Look, I appreciated that last night's conversation was a substantial conversation. We, literally – you know, the president and vice president went over the information they had, how they were dealing with things. We talked about a couple of different issues, but then I went to my agenda, which was ventilators, medical personnel, including getting military personnel with medical training here, and of course, the stimulus legislation needing to include funding for public and private hospitals as well as for localities and states. It was a very substantial conversation. I made clear that we were in immediate need, particularly in our public hospitals, and the president specifically designated Peter Navarro as one of the people who would do follow up. And he has been very, very focused today. I want to thank him – been calling up consistently directly with me multiple times in the day, lots of detail.

But what I would say is we appreciate every step forward. Every additional shipment literally could mean the difference between life and death for some New Yorkers, but we're nowhere near, of course, where we need to be. And my job is to fight for this city and to advocate for our people and make sure we get literally everything we need for a crisis that is really in its infancy at this point compared to where we're going. So, I am very happy to have the conversation moving forward and I'm very happy that something's starting, but we're far from that larger goal of like really seeing the kind of equipment and supplies we need. And that is not any lack of appreciation on my part. I am truly appreciative, but I just know we're in it for the long haul.

And then on the question of the Defense Production Act – no, I fundamentally believe it needs to be fully activated to ensure that we'll have the kind of quantities you're talking about and producing ventilators is not a minor matter. It will take a national effort to ensure that the number of ventilators we need in New York and beyond – this disease is starting to grow in many other places. So that Defense Production Act should be used to the maximum right now for the good of all Americans. I just don't understand why it isn't being done. But right now, you know, there's – I know what my position is and the president still has not made that decision and I'm going to certainly keep pushing him to do so.

**Moderator:** Mark Morales from CNN is up next. Mark?

**Question:** Hi, everyone – how are you doing?

**Mayor:** Hey.

**Question:** So, I wanted to ask more about the incarcerated folks who were going to be leaving over the next couple of days and the ones that have already left. What is their process to be going – to be released as far as testing, whether or not they've contracted the virus while they were incarcerated? Like what measures, what steps are in place? How do you make sure that you're not releasing people into the population that have – that have this virus?

**Mayor:** I want to get you the exact answer because it's something that's being worked on by a task force of people between the Department of Corrections and NYPD and our Office of Criminal Justice. And I want to make sure I give you the exact specific facts and I don't have it at my fingertips here. So, we will make sure to get you that answer later on today. But clearly that's

being considered and everything else is being considered – the health of the individual overall, the age, the health status overall, obviously on the public safety side what the nature of their offense has been and, you know, the likelihood of a recidivism, a lot of different things are being looked at in the equation. But it's a very good question. We will get you the details on that later on.

**Moderator:** Julia Marsh is up next. Julia?

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor. Hi. Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** Yep.

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor on the 400 ventilators, when did you find out about New York getting those because this morning, you know, you were saying, we're a week away from running out.

**Mayor:** Yeah, in the course of the afternoon.

**Question:** Okay. And did you learn that from someone – from who in the federal government?

**Mayor:** I learned that almost simultaneously from my own team that got information simultaneously hearing it from Peter Navarro.

**Question:** Josh from WABC is up next – Josh?

**Mayor:** And I'm sorry, can I just, can we hold on with Josh? I assume Julia can still hear me. That 400, tremendously helpful and it's going to help us get through this week into next week, particularly in our public hospitals, but I don't want Julia or anyone else to imagine that, that is going to take us too far. Again, our request is for 15,000 to get us through April and May. So I want everyone to understand, you know, from now to the end of May, let's call it 10 weeks for a nice round number, 15,000 ventilators is what we think we need. So I'm very, very appreciative for the 400. That will buy us days for sure. But we have a much bigger need we have to fill. Go ahead. I'm sorry, Josh.

**Question:** Hey, Mr. Mayor. Thank you. Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Question:** Okay. I'm not sure if you're aware, I think just while you've been speaking, the Governor of Florida announced that he's either about to sign or has signed an executive order requiring anyone traveling from a New York area airport to Florida – that's like almost 200 flights a day – to self-isolate for 14 days. And I guess I'm wondering your reaction to that. Obviously, it reflects what you've said, that we're now the epicenter of this. Do you think that's – I mean, I'd love to hear what your reaction is – is that good policy, should we be doing something similar for people flying here from say, Seattle?

**Mayor:** I have to be honest with you, Josh, I have always had mixed feelings on travel restrictions. I think some have been intelligent, are intelligent – I think the initial restrictions, for example, related to travel from China when we were at the very beginning and we were hoping to be able to stop this disease from asserting in the United States, I think there was real logic to that. I think at this point, the truth is this disease is in all 50 States. You're going to see community spread eventually all over the nation. It's just a matter of how much we deal with it and try and get ahead of it. So, my sense is it's a different reality when you already have this kind of spread around the country. I understand it. We are the epicenter.

But I think right now, an answer to your part about our city right now – you know, the challenge we have is not people coming in from outside. It's the fact that it's well – very much has asserted itself throughout the five boroughs. As to the Governor of Florida, look, I'm not sure it's the most enlightened approach. I understand it. I think for a lot of people in Florida, their connection to New York City is very, very deep. And I'm sure a lot of people in Florida are going to be put off by that. But I also have to be honest that I understand if any governor, any official who's trying to grapple with this moment. So, I can't give you an easy, you know, yes or no answer on that one.

**Question:** Thank you.

**Moderator:** So, we're going to go back to Julia who had a follow up question. Julia?

**Question:** Hi. Thanks so much. Mr. Mayor, I'm wondering what your response is to New York Presbyterian Hospitals not allowing partners in the delivery rooms.

**Mayor:** Yeah, I just heard about that a short while ago and I'd like to understand that better, Julia. I'm unclear what the rationale is. I have a lot of respect for that hospital system for sure. And obviously I understand it is in relationship to this crisis, but at the same time we're talking about an irreplaceable life moment. I mean, I – you know, the moment I was in the delivery room when my kids were born is sort of one of the most important moments in my life, for sure, unquestionably. So, I'm concerned about that because I think it means so much to people, but I'm not a doctor. I'd like to hear more from them on why they think that specifically is the right thing to do before I can give you a better comment.

**Moderator:** Jennifer, from the AP is up next.

**Question:** Thank you. Can you hear me?

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Question:** This is actually a question for the Schools Chancellor. I wondered whether he has attendance figures for today and also on the device issues since I know that he included the school [inaudible] devices along with the ones the City ordered. What is the [inaudible] the need estimated to be for the additional devices?

**Chancellor Carranza:** I didn't get the last part of your question. What is the, what?

**Question:** Since, as you noted the schools have also given out some laptops [inaudible] how many more do you think you'd need all together for all the students to have what they need?

**Chancellor Carranza:** So first of all, with the attendance issue – so we are in the process this week, because this is a new normal, of developing guidance for all of our staff members out in the field and at home on what attendance will look like. Obviously, you don't go to first period, second period, you don't have the morning checking. So, we want to have attendance procedures that make sense. It could look like a myriad of things. When a teacher posts an assignment, when a student is able to then enter Google Classroom and access the assignment, that counts as engagement. That could be attendance. So, we're in the process of working through that along with the New York State Education Department. So, we'll have guidance throughout the course of this week that solidifies what that attendance looks like. That being said, we can't really tell you exactly what it looks like because we know that some schools are still collecting what they think is attendance from self-reporting from the field and then entering it. Again, all of this is in flux – and remember my two operating words, flexibility and patience.

Now, as it pertains to devices, we have done a survey. We've asked parents to submit their answers. We've extended the deadline for that survey. So, we're in the process of actually getting some concrete numbers as to what that gap is in terms of devices and devices that are in the hands of students. We hope to have a little bit more clarity as this week goes by. We do know that there are a number of schools that have actually assigned their in-school technology. So that looks like computer carts or iPad carts that usually stay in the school. Principals and teachers have started assigning those to students to take home so that they can have them for the duration of this stay at home order.

That being said, we also know – I retweeted a picture of a principal who knew of a student that did not have a device. The student's parent called the principal. The principal got in her car, went to the student's home with appropriate gear, and delivered a device to that student. Those are the kinds of unsung heroic acts that are happening across our city as we speak. So, again, as we have more definitive numbers, we will share those numbers. But the ballpark figure based on a number of analyses was that – the realm is around 300,000, and we hope that it's less than that. We are planning for 300,000 devices.

**Moderator:** Okay. Jeff Mays is up next.

**Question:** Hey, Mr. Mayor, I wanted to ask about the PEG program. Is the \$1.3 billion, is that just the beginning of the cuts? You know, the Comptroller came out with an estimate today that there will be \$4.8 billion to \$6 billion in revenue lost. So, are you looking at further cuts or is this just the beginning?

**Mayor:** We're going to be – Jeff, it's a great question, but the fact is we're going to be determining that literally week by week as we go along. None of us have ever been through anything like this. The one thing I think I can say is when you really total up the impact of this crisis, it will far surpass the Great Recession, and it will look closer to the Great Depression in terms of the shock to the economy, certainly the shock to employment, but a radical negative



impact on City and State budget. So, we're going to have to make a bunch of tough decisions. This is a first step. I'm certain there's going to be a lot of other things we're going to have to do over time, but this is a first step.

**Moderator:** Gersh is up next.

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

**Mayor:** Hey, Gersh.

**Question:** So, you went through a lot of very important information, which I know we all appreciate, but I did not hear anything about Governor Cuomo's demand that you come up with some sort of plan to ban cars on some streets to create more social distancing space. So is there a plan?

**Mayor:** I spoke to this yesterday in detail, Gersh, and nothing has changed between yesterday and today. I have talked about what I think makes sense to do as a first step. I've talked to the Governor about it. Our teams are going back and forth on details. We'll have a plan worked through in the course of the evening to get started with. But I've also said really clearly that how we start this week in this whole new reality is just the beginning and I'm reserving the right in the course of the week and the weeks ahead to say, hey, we might want to do more of something or less of something or something different. And that'll be an ongoing conversation with the Governor as well.

So, the first point, which I said I think real bluntly yesterday, is we need to determine how and where we can enforce this new reality effectively. And that begins with the places that people already do go to. And that any new places we create, even though it's meritorious in many ways, if we create them, we then have to ensure there's an enforcement mechanism to go with them. We already have that when it comes to parks, for example, we don't have that when it comes to new streets being designated separately. So that's going to be something we only consider one step at a time. And I understand again, respect absolutely advocacy journalism – you're looking at this from one prism and it's a good prism, but I'm looking at this through the prism of how do we enforce these challenging new rules and a whole new reality. That's what I care about first here, it's getting that part right.

**Question:** Fair enough. I totally understand that, Mr. Mayor, just thought there might've been an update today. So, let me ask a second quick question, which is, you mentioned enforcement – there is incredible anecdotal evidence of lot of drivers speeding out there. Now, certainly the NYPD is aware of it. So, is there a plan to address it?

**Mayor:** Well, for sure, Gersh. It's not acceptable anytime and we are clearly not going to allow it going forward. There's a lot the NYPD is being asked to do right now and a lot of new things the NYPD is being asked to do, but we do not want a situation where people, because, you know, our lives have changed, they start doing things that are reckless and dangerous. NYPD has been brought into Vision Zero from the very beginning. We will be very tough on people who are speeding, for sure, and I'm going to certainly insist on continued enforcement on that front.

**Moderator:** Erin Durkin is up next. Erin?

**Question:** Hi, another question about the enforcement. You talked about police officers being out there, you know, dispersing groups of people, but is there – will there be ticketing, arrest or any other form of enforcement beyond just telling people to move along?

**Mayor:** Well, Erin, again, Commissioner Shea and I talked about this in detail. I think the Commissioner is on the line with us.

**Moderator:** Yes, he is.

**Mayor:** Yes, is. I'll start and then, Dermot, if you'll jump in. We spoke about this, Erin, yesterday in some detail. I think the fact is, the NYPD is very good at telling people the way things have to be. They're very good at educating. They're very good at warning. And this is different from almost any other situation we've been in, because there's near universal information being projected all the time by all of you in the media in a way that's very, very important, very helpful. So, I think folks aren't getting the message in so many intense ways that when an officer goes out there and says, hey, guys, you know, you're not six feet apart, you need to be – or, hey, sorry, this is a crowd, we can't have that. It's not like it's going to be a shock to people, I would argue. But no, at this point we were focused on the education, the warnings, the communication, the use of neighborhood policing, not the sanctions yet. It's a conversation we're having with the State right now, how and when and if we want to use sanctions. But our first impulse is to go out there and educate people and do what the NYPD does so well in terms of communicating. Dermot, why don't you jump in?

**Commissioner Shea:** Certainly, we'll use any and all laws available to us, but I would just caution everyone that no two incidents here are alike and we are always going to default to what the Mayor said. We want to gain cooperation with compliance. We want to educate people. We want to talk to people. And we want to – and that's what we've been seeing throughout New York City. Listen, this is a very important matter when you talk about social distancing, when you're talking about the spread of this disease, and whether it's the Mayor or Dr. Barbot, all up and down leaders – we are trying to spread the same message that we were all in this together and, really, looking to – I had calls with members of the City Council today, other elected officials throughout New York City, we all want the same thing here and we're all working together to spread that message that all New Yorkers seem to step up. It's literally a matter of life and death and we need to practice this social distancing. So, we expect for other compliance, but the shorter answer is we'll use whatever is in our toolbox to make sure that that happens.

**Question:** Okay. And then, the patrols that you're talking about, are those additional patrols that are being added over and above, you know, what's normal?

**Commissioner Shea:** Yes, absolutely. We met with – had a long conversation today with members of the executive team, including Dave [inaudible], who heads up our housing bureau; Fausto Pichardo, who's the Chief of Patrol throughout New York City. So, what we're trying to do is boost up patrols and we are able to do it throughout New York City to locations that we



think needs a little extra attention, and certainly public spaces and parks falls into that and this environment. And what we're looking to do is increase those patrols without having any negative impact on the day-to-day operations of the NYPD when people are encountering situations and 9-1-1. And right now, we can do both of those things. We are very well resourced. So, you can expect to see in the days to come throughout New York City members of the New York City Police Department in parks. Certainly, it's a cool day today, a little rainy, but as the weather warms up to the end of the week, you'll see increased patrols throughout the New York City parks. You'll see marked police cars driving through. You'll hear audio messages playing for people, just reminding them of the importance of social distancing. You know, it's all hands on deck. You'll see our community affairs officers in those parks as well. So, it's all hands on deck at the NYPD, but you will absolutely see an increase as we move forward.

**Moderator:** Christian, from Bloomberg is up next. Christian?

**Question:** Withdrawn – the Mayor answered my question earlier.

**Moderator:** Got it. Brigid is up next. Thank you. Brigid, you're up next.

**Question:** Thanks. Hi, Mr. Mayor. Just a couple questions about elections. I know you've been dealing with more existential issues, but State lawmakers right now are considering some legislation that could potentially move the April presidential primary to June. Are you having conversations with the Governor and State lawmakers about moving the April presidential primary and what's your message to them?

**Mayor:** First, on a pure answer – no, because I've been dealing with more existential issues as you said. A second answer, I think there's two good alternatives. I think if there's some way to create a mail-in system, which some States have. And, you know, that's a big endeavor, I'm not belittling the challenge, but if that's something that can be put together in the short-term as an alternative to in-person voting that would be appealing. If it can't be, I think you have to figure out a delay because I don't think it's realistic to have it in April under these conditions. So, we either need a new alternative or we need a delay. I haven't had the conversation, but I'd be supportive of either of those options.

**Question:** And are you hearing any concerns from the City Board of Election that their ability to both run an election and to get voters registered while this virus is still peaking?

**Mayor:** Again, I have not engaged them compared to all the other things we're doing. I haven't heard from them. Maybe my colleagues in the administration have. I am certain this – the first question, even before you get to registration is, can you do an in-person election in April under these conditions, which will only get worse between now and that election? I don't think it's realistic. So, I think if we're not talking about some new kind of voting system that can be used at least temporarily, maybe as part of, you know, a different future where there's more voting options, if you don't have an alternative, I think immediately that April is unrealistic and that immediately affects the registration – question two, obviously. I don't see how they could do what they normally do, you know, in this kind of environment, even in terms of registration. So, I think that's another, another reason why we got to figure out an alternative.

**Moderator:** Ashley, from the Times is up next. Ashley?

**Question:** I have two questions. My first is about enforcement for the Police Commissioner. My colleague who – media are essential workers during this time – was ticketed this morning for turning down the street that is trucks-only from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. And it seems like, given the public health mandate to keep distance and the state of emergency, that that might be something unnecessary. So, I'm wondering if you have given any more thought or guidance to whether some enforcement is dismissible, especially given the new duties that the Police Department is taking on and also the hit it's taking from the spread of coronavirus?

**Commissioner Shea:** Yeah, we exercise discretion at all times, whether it's during a crisis or not. The first part of the question – did you receive a summons? Is that what happened?

**Question:** No, of course not. I don't drive. But my colleague, received a ticket for turning down the street that's trucks-only from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, and it just seems like, you know, they're – they're in close contact for the time that she's receiving that ticket. So I just wanted [inaudible] you give it any more thought or guidance about that.

**Mayor:** Yeah, Ashley, I want to just ask for both Dermot and I, are you saying a colleague in a regular car with press plates, is that what you're saying?

**Question:** Yes.

**Mayor:** Okay. Go ahead, Dermot.

**Commissioner Shea:** I would just say, you know, if you listen to the questions for this press conference, two minutes ago, it was Gersh calling up about cars speeding. We handle and juggle a lot of balls. So, obviously, Ashley, there's always discretion in what we do in terms of – you know, during crisis. But we're also balancing the public safety needs and Vision Zero and other matters. So, beyond that, I won't comment on a summons that was written.

**Mayor:** Yeah. Let me make the broader point. Ashley. Obviously, you know, the media, playing a crucial role right now. People desperately need information. The information is changing constantly. This is one of the fastest-moving crises we've ever lived through. So, we want to make sure all of you in the media can, can do what you need to do and get where you need to go. We all need to be cognizant – absolutely considered essential workers at this point. Again, I'm not going to comment either on a specific incident, not knowing the details, but I do want to affirm that part of the equation. We have to make sure that you guys can continue to do your work.

**Question:** My second question [inaudible we've learned – my second question is just that we've learned that more than 2,000 police officers or civilian aids have called out sick, reporting, flu-like symptoms. So, I'm wondering, for the NYPD, what's the current caseload? I may have missed that earlier in the call. If you, the Police Commissioner had been tested, and whether the NYPD has a reserve corps of officers to call up if things get worse, as you did during 9/11?

**Commissioner Shea:** Yeah, Ashley, we are – when you look at the numbers, we are definitely spiking someone on people reporting sick in the midst of this. And I want to just take a moment to thank everyone. I've literally been receiving calls from across the country, spoke to Charlie Beck today from the Chicago Police Department, and Buffalo Police Department, and many others offering their words of – you know, patting us on, if you will. We are, as I said many times, we are very well resourced. We have the greatest police department in the world and we have the ability to rise up to any and all occasions and we intend very much to do exactly that here.

**Mayor:** And Ashley, to the of testing – this has come up for different officials at different points. What our health commissioner has told us – and she's on the line – is, no one should get tested unless they're symptomatic. So, unless a Dermot is symptomatic and it hasn't mentioned it, there's no reason that he would have been tested. Dermot, are you symptomatic?

**Commissioner Shea:** Just overworked, Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** Just overworked – very funny. Okay, I'll take that as not symptomatic.

**Commissioner Shea:** Yeah. Not symptomatic, feeling perfectly well. But my heart goes out to everyone in New York City. We'll get through this one.

**Moderator:** Alex, from Chalkbeat is up next. Alex?

**Question:** Hi, this is probably a question for the Chancellor. In just talking with some educators today, it sounds like there hasn't been a ton of clarity yet on whether – like, sort of, what the grading policies are for students and online coursework, like whether teachers should be grading this stuff, whether it counts as credit? Like, has the DOE come up with a framework for thinking about that yet?

**Chancellor Carranza:** Yeah, so really good question. As I mentioned, right up top – flexibility, patience. We cannot obviously put a traditional classroom schedule in a virtual environment and then expect to have the same processes, including grading. We also have talked about there being a gap in terms of how many students have technology – they have the device or they have internet connectivity. We're still working through all of those issues. So, it's not surprising that there are some questions about grading. I think what I'm going to say to folks is, continue to pay attention to the guidance that is being developed. We're working very closely with lots of focus groups that include teachers and principals. We're working with the unions as well, because they have a really good pulse of what's happening out with their members out in the field as well. We want to be practical, but we also want to be rigorous and that means that we're doing a new way of teaching and learning that's never been done before. So, that guidance will continue to become clearer and clearer as the weeks go by. For right now, what I'm going to ask all educators to do out there is to think about how do we engage students to the maximum ability possible, giving them a really robust kinds of experiences. Unfortunately, the alternative is to just let kids sit at home, do nothing. We'll see you when we see you again. I don't know of one educator that wants that for their students. So, as we figure this out together, let's not worry about grades. Let's really

worry about how do we keep kids actively engaged and we give the educators what they need to actually craft lessons and experiences that will keep students really, really engaged.

**Question:** At the enrichment centers, it sounded like you mentioned there were about 4,500 students who are – not students who actually attended today, students who are eligible to attend?

**Chancellor Carranza:** Yeah. So there are about 4,500 students that registered. Now, again, this isn't an open registration. It's very specific for the children of first responders, health care workers – I've read the list before. So, these students have actually registered to attend. Now, it's also important to understand that as families are adjusting to their new reality it's going to be a gradual uptick in the number of students that are actually taking advantage of this opportunity. So, they've registered and we understand that life intercedes sometimes with the best laid plans. So, we expect that we will have an increase in actual children showing up at these sites over the course of this week, so we'll hit our maximum enrollment.

**Moderator:** Paul, from the Wall Street Journal's up next. Paul, can you hear us?

**Question:** So, I just wanted to clarify something. I may [inaudible] Mayor said earlier on, that, in addition to police officers, some of the other city workers from the Parks Department, Sanitation Department and other departments that would go out to try to talk to people and get groups to disperse and to follow the social distancing rules.

**Mayor:** Correct, go on.

**Question:** The full question – tonight, do you anticipate that perhaps while people would ordinarily listen to a police officer or even a firefighter, but they may not take direction from other City workers? What powers – or, how would you help City workers for enforcement?

**Mayor:** Well, so let's go over what I said here. Again, you're talking about enforcement agencies, so NYPD, Fire Department, Office of the Sheriff, Office of Special Enforcement, and Department of Buildings, all which do enforcement anyway, they're pretty familiar with how to talk to people, including people who may not agree with the notion of being enforced. But again, I think a massive X-factor here is, this is a global pandemic that everybody knows about. You know, anyone who doesn't know about the coronavirus is living under a rock right now. So, I think you're talking about different reality when so much has been established publicly in such a clear imperative here. But again, these are folks who do know a lot about how to engage people on enforcement matters. I mentioned Department of Parks itself, which obviously knows its constituency and the people they deal with all the time and folks from the Mayor's Office who deal with communities all the time. I think people will be fine. If there we find there's something particular that has to be dealt with, we'll deal with it. But I think in this environment, again, education, reminders, warnings, all of that's going to be a really, really valuable. And if there's a situation that needs more sophisticated, if you will, or more intense follow up, they'll know to call in the NYPD, who obviously will never be far away.

**Moderator:** Last two, Mike Gartland is up next.

**Question:** Hey there, Mr. Mayor. Can you hear me okay?

**Mayor:** Yes, indeed.

**Question:** Hey, how you doing? So, I had a question about the playgrounds and I was wondering if you could talk about the rationale behind keeping them open, given that there's so many surfaces for kids to put their hands on. I get the social distancing aspect of it, but you know, as far as that goes, it seems like a place where the disease can be spread pretty easily.

**Mayor:** Yeah. Mike, this is about a couple of things. One, you know –

**Question:** [Inaudible]

**Mayor:** Wait, we lost you for a minute. Hold on. I heard you, you raised the point about – your concern about the disease being spread and then we lost you all together.

**Question:** Yeah, that was it. It was just the rationale behind keeping playgrounds open given that the surfaces seem like the way the disease would primarily be spread rather than the social distancing aspect of it.

**Mayor:** And so, again, the first point I would make is the social distance, which is, and our health commissioner has guided us throughout all this, that the – the central concern here is the social distancing, that is the strategy. Absolutely, what we're all working on in unity is social distancing and that directly relates to the manner in which the disease is clearly spreading most prevalently, which is the droplets. So, that's entirely consistent and that, to our point of view, you know, again, if a family goes to the playground as a family unit, if a parent goes with their child, this is, again, a parent who's already under the same roof with that child, it's a different reality. You're not seeing the same social distancing concerns because those folks are already constantly exposed. So, from a social distancing point of view, the question will be can we create the kind of balance in the playgrounds where they're not too crowded, where social distancing is respected as people enter a brand-new reality this week that they've never experienced before in their lives? There will be a lot of information. There'll be a lot of enforcement. If we can do that effectively, I'd certainly prefer see the playgrounds open. If we cannot do it effectively, then it becomes a real option to close them. And I said that yesterday, we're going to give it a week to see how it goes. But I'll make the point about the underlying rationale, which is – and I'm saying this as a parent who spent, you know, years and years taking my kids to the playground. You know, I used to take my kids to the playground when they went to school during the week. They had afterschool activities, they had little league, they had basketball, you know, they had all sorts of things. None of that is there anymore, Mike. We really have to understand the amount of dislocation here where all children will have and families will have is being home in their apartment or their home, limited time outdoors each day and limited options. And in a lot of neighborhoods in the city, the playground near your home may be one of the only open areas that you can go to, to run around and do anything. So, you take that out of circulation, certainly in a lot of our lower income neighborhoods that's true, where there's just, unfortunately, nowhere near the amount of park space there should be. So, I'm very reticent to take away one of the few alternatives that a family may have for any exercise at all, during a time when everyone's going

to be limited in how much time that can be outdoors. But if we find it cannot be monitored properly, then we can do something very different.

**Moderator:** Last question goes to the Yasmeen from WNYC. Yasmeen?

**Question:** Hi, Mr. Mayor – a few questions related to the jails. One, I was wondering if you could speak a little bit more about expanding [inaudible] –

**Mayor:** Yasmeen, we're losing you. Hold on, we lost you mid-sentence.

**Question:** Okay, I'll repeat the sentence –

**Mayor:** Yasmeen, are you near a window or something? Because you sound like you're coming in real sketchy.

**Question:** I am near a window.

**Mayor:** Good, try again.

**Question:** Thank you. Can you speak a little bit more about expanding [inaudible]

**Moderator:** Yasmeen, it sounds like you're coming in and out. Could you repeat your sentence again, one more time?

**Mayor:** Wait, let me ask. Yasmeen, do you have another phone you can call on, by any chance? Try that, we'll give you one last chance. You can call in again or call from another phone, because we cannot hear you.

**Question:** Okay –

**Mayor:** Last chance –

**Moderator:** Yasmeen?

**Mayor:** Well, so much for technology.

**Moderator:** [Inaudible] we'll get back to her.

**Mayor:** Alright, we will get Yasmeen an answer tonight and we'll give her a special role in the lineup tomorrow.

**Moderator:** Yes, we will.

**Mayor:** Okay. With that, everyone, thank you very much. We'll continue to make technology work in this new age and thank you, everyone, for being a part of this.

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