

THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON CNN'S THE SITUATION  
ROOM WITH WOLF BLITZER**

**Wolf Blitzer:** The Mayor of New York says the City's battle against new COVID clusters is entering a decisive week as it limits gatherings and closes down essential businesses in those areas to prevent a much-feared full resurgence of the coronavirus. Let's discuss with the Mayor of New York, Bill de Blasio. Mayor de Blasio, thank you so much for joining us. I know you have a lot going on. When you say this will be, in your words, a decisive week for New York City, explain precisely what you mean.

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Yeah. Look, Wolf, the most important thing I can say is there's a threat of a second wave, but I am absolutely convinced we can stop a second wave from happening here in New York City. We've had a set of neighborhoods where we've seen increases. We've put really strong restrictions in place, a lot of outreach in those communities, a lot of testing, a lot of enforcement. I believe we can contain the situation, and even if we see it crop up in some other neighborhoods, we have the pieces in place to contain it. But this is the week we have to do it. This is the week where we have to turn the tide and make sure there is not a second wave, because, Lord knows, this city was the epicenter and we will not let that happen again. So, it's really about everything we're throwing at it this week, coming to its full impact and engaging the people intensely. That's what we keep learning, if the people are brought into the solution, that's what makes the difference. And I really think New Yorkers realize everyone has to participate at this point to stop a second wave.

**Blitzer:** These are life and death decisions. Mayor, what's the situation like now in what you call those red zone cluster areas?

**Mayor:** Well, we've seen some leveling off in the test data. And, you know, we are very devoted here in New York City to the data and the science. This is what helped us fight our way out of being the epicenter. We had, you know, three or four very good months, because we stayed devoted to the actual facts, and we're doing it again now. So, the facts tell us, Wolf, that a week or so ago when things were trending very much in the wrong direction in a set of neighborhoods – not by any means the majority of the city, a small part of the city, but still a very, very big area of concern – the last few days, the data – we see some leveling off, we see some improvement. We are not out of the woods, but something is starting to work, and people are coming out and getting tested in much bigger numbers, and that's a crucial piece of the equation.

**Blitzer:** The City, I understand, handed out – and you can correct me if I'm wrong – about \$150,000 in fines over the weekend. Is that the type of enforcement it's going to take to keep things under control through this fall surge?

**Mayor:** Yeah. Look, it's never something you want to do. Everyone's been through a tough time humanly, economically. We don't want to give fines if we don't have to, but people have to see there are consequences. So, we've had some very powerful enforcement efforts. They are being duly noted in all the communities affected. And hopefully by showing that that is a real possibility, the vast majority of people are never going to get to the point where they need a fine. What we are seeing is many more people now wearing masks and taking social distancing seriously. And we need to make sure that sticks, because we've got to stop a second wave from happening and then keep it at bay for the long-term until we have a vaccine.

**Blitzer:** You say, Mayor, that the testing across New York City public schools is very encouraging, but the school year got off, I understand, to a rather rocky start. What are you hearing from administrators, from teachers, from parents right now?

**Mayor:** So, first of all, the testing is a very good story, Wolf. A week ago, in New York City, we had the highest week of testing in the city's history since this began. Over a quarter-million New Yorkers got tested, that number I want to keep going higher and higher every week. In the schools, we've had a huge testing effort. And what we've seen consistently is very, very low numbers. We had almost 2,000 folks tested on Friday in 56 schools. We got one positive back. So, that's really encouraging. It did take us a few weeks to get the school year going, but now it's going full bore all over the city. You know, we have 1,600 schools and except for some temporarily closed in those particular zones, the vast majority are up and running, and running well. So, the schools have been a positive point, very few examples of tests that are giving us the wrong indicator in school. We're getting overwhelmingly good results from testing in schools.

**Blitzer:** That's encouraging to hear that. As you point out and as you well know better than anyone, New York City was the epicenter of this crisis back in April. How confident are you – big picture right now, Mayor – that your city will avoid a repeat this fall and winter as the weather gets colder and colder and the regular flu season begins to really disrupt things as well?

**Mayor:** I am confident, Wolf. We have a huge campaign to get everyone to get the flu shot, we have the strongest Test and Trace Corps in the country. That's a huge X-factor in our favor. The vast majority of New Yorkers really are observing social distancing and wearing those masks. So, we have a challenge ahead, but I feel very good that if we keep doing what we're doing, we can contain this current outbreak, push it back, stop a second wave now. And then, you know, with everything we've learned, hold this virus at bay during the cold weather months. New Yorkers are ready to come back and make the city strong and vibrant again. And so, I think people really bought into the fact that it's up to all of us to follow these rules, to be governed by the data and the science so we can get out of this challenge once and for all. But right now, I see people doing the right thing to help us beat this back and avoid a second wave.

**Blitzer:** So many people are suffering in New York City right now. The unemployment rate is huge. People are desperate. They can't pay the rent, they need food. They got to put food on the table for their kids. How important is it that the Democrats and the Republicans in the House and the Senate get their act together and pass an economic stimulus package that will help all those folks in New York City right now?

**Mayor:** Wolf, it's the only way we truly restart this city and restart our economy and bring people's livelihoods back. We must have that stimulus package. Right now, we are depending on

what little we have to keep basic services going for people and to give us the possibility of the restart people need. But at some point, if we don't get that federal support soon, we're not going to be able to provide the basic services as a City. We're not going to be able to give people what they need to be able to restart their businesses. There are so many people that have suffered, but with a little bit of timely federal help, this could be a very different story. This could be the story of rebirth. And I got to believe at some point, maybe it's going to take an election to do it, Wolf, but at some point soon, Washington will focus its energies and get us the support we deserve.

**Blitzer:** It's a critical moment, indeed, for so many millions of Americans out there. Mayor de Blasio, thank you so much for joining us. Good luck to everyone in New York.

**Mayor:** Thank you, Wolf.

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