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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, FIRST LADY MCCRAY DELIVER REMARKS
AT NATIONAL MEMORIAL TO REMEMBER THE LIVES LOST TO COVID-19**

First Lady Chirlane McCray: Good evening. Sunsets are symbols of peace, promise, and renewal. And this sunset, unites us like no other as we mourn the loss of loved ones and friends to a terrible disease that has swept New York City, and all around the country. Although we grieve, we are honoring our lost ones by lighting up the city and we will continue honoring them as we embrace the promise of tomorrow. A new day blazes with the promise and possibility with the new leadership of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. And I look to the dawn with hope alongside our inspiring mayor, Bill de Blasio.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you, Chirlane. And thank you for fighting for New Yorkers through this crisis, who've grappled had such profound challenges in terms of mental health. We've seen more than ever before. And we are with all New Yorkers as they struggle in this moment. Thank you to everyone gathered here, this powerful moment of unity for our city and for our country. All over America, at this moment, people are gathered in common purpose to remember those who we lost, to feel what their families are feeling, to remember we've all gone through this together. Whatever polarization has occurred in our nation, it is much less than what bonds us together, because this horrible pandemic has touched every one of us, all of our families, everywhere.

So, tonight, in cities and towns all over America candles are being lit in memory of those we've lost and as a symbol of hope. And there's no greater symbol – this is the ultimate symbol right here – the ultimate beacon of hope. And, tonight, the Statue of Liberty is lit in honor of those New Yorkers we've lost. We stand here in the shadow of this statue, which reminds us of something eternal. We all feel something about the Statue of Liberty, because it's always been there. And for generations upon generations of New Yorkers, for so many us, our family members saw this statue as their first glimpse of New York City. Tonight, its warm embrace

reaches all the families who have lost someone. And to the family members, I say, we stand with you. We feel your loss and we stand with you.

But I also feel this moment – in the presence of this statue, it's always suggested there was a better tomorrow. And tomorrow begins a new day for New York City and for America. President Biden has expressed tremendous compassion for the people of this country and, particularly, for those who have lost loved ones. We need that compassion. We need that sense that we're all together in this. And we need to remember our history, because New York City has been through so much, and we've come back no matter what's been thrown at us. This country has been through so much and yet we always find a way back in a moment of renewal, and that will happen tomorrow. In that moment of renewal, remember that history. It gives us hope.

In honor of all we've lost, the good people – every one of us can picture someone in our lives, every one of us can picture the families who have lost someone – in honor of them, this city will light buildings all over New York City. People will hear church bells all over New York City. This city will have one feeling this evening, a feeling of solidarity with those families.

And now, let's honor all who we've lost with a moment of silence.

[Moment of silence is observed]

And to conclude, a message to all the family members – we love you, we will stand by you, and we will never forget the good New Yorkers we've lost. Thank you.

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