



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO APPEARS LIVE ON THE BRIAN LEHRER SHOW

Brian Lehrer: It's the Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC, good morning everyone and we begin as we usually do on Fridays with our weekly Ask the Mayor segment, my questions and yours for Mayor Bill de Blasio. You can call up right now at 2-1-2-4-3-3-WNYC, if you want to ask the Mayor something 2-1-2-4-3-3-9-6-9-2 or tweet a question, just use the hashtag #AskTheMayor. And good morning, Mr. Mayor, welcome back to WNYC.

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, Brian. How you doing?

Lehrer: Good. Thank you very much. First question about Amazon, I saw you say on NY-1 on Monday that while the deal is done to come to Long Island City, talks are ongoing with respect to some specifics. I assume this means some kind of community benefits. My question is, what specifically is still being negotiated with Amazon and with what leverage, since you already committed to the subsidies?

Mayor: Well let's be clear, Brian, a couple of things. I mean the reason we wanted to achieve this outcome is we want 25,000 new jobs for New York City. We want them for folks who live in Queenbridge Houses nearby this site for folks who come – young people coming out of CUNY or coming out of our public schools. Almost half the jobs in tech companies do not require a four-year college degree. We want a lot more of those jobs for New York City. So that's the core reason we wanted this here. But the specific incentives that Amazon got were overwhelmingly the automatic ones that any company would get in similar situations. We have to, I think, continue to look at what we want going forward in terms of that approach as a city, as a state. But this was a situation where Amazon was able to tap into incentives that any company would have gotten. The bottom line on the additional things we can achieve. So first of all, my job is to hold them to every element of what's been agreed to so far. Public space that they'll make available, promenade, a public school building, training programs for folks in public housing, recruitment efforts, all of that. Remember if at any point they do not keep to any element of the deal then all of the incentives are suspended. So job one is make sure that they keep their end of the deal. The second is to go farther, to look for opportunities to get Amazon to do more for the people of Queens, and the people of New York City. More job opportunities, more training, any other community improvements we can make. I think there's a lot they could do for the community. Our job is to push them to go farther.

Lehrer: And what leverage do you have to get something on paper? And are you planning some kind of additional announcement with some other binding commitments from Amazon as a result of these talks?

Mayor: Again, what's been agreed to, it's all public. All the elements of the agreement are out there. Again, my job is to now push farther. So the agenda is straight forward to me. I want to see a maximum investment in the community by Amazon. I want to see the maximum opportunity for residents of that community, residents of public housing, residents of Queens more broadly. We're going to be pushing to get that. When you come to a basic agreement it doesn't mean the larger discussions are over. I am going to push them to be a positive part of the community. I am going to push them to use their capacity to open up opportunity for people. That's an on-going reality. Look, this is a company as big as they are – they clearly have responded previously to public pressure. Look at the fact that they agreed to do a \$15 minimum wage nationwide, including in a lot of places that don't have a \$15 minimum wage or anything close to it. That was a result of public pressure that was a result of political leaders telling them they had to do better. So we're going to keep doing that.

Lehrer: Also, you pointed out this week that right next to the Amazon HQ2 site in Long Island City, the State had done a similar project, Queens West, where it took over control from the City. But the justification for these projects is that the area is blighted or was. Queens West was started in 1990. Is Long Island City still blighted if this kind of arrangement is going forward with Amazon?

Mayor: You know, that's not the only – the answer, of course, is no. But that's not the only condition under which there are these State, City agreements. Besides of this effort – there's never been an economic development deal in the history of New York City or the history of New York State that would bring in 25,000 jobs minimum – good paying jobs, plus a potential to go up to 40,000 jobs. No one has seen anything like that before. I think it will be decades before you see anything like that again.

Lehrer: But it means you have to have a different justification this time for the state taking control of the site from city to bypass City Council?

Mayor: Again, I am not someone who understands all of the intricacies of how it's been used in the past, but I just want to note this approach, the general project plan has not just been used in Long Island City with Queens West, which by the way was a great success in terms of creating housing, including affordable housing. Also, it's been used in other parts of the city, including in Midtown, Manhattan. So it's not – as far as I understand the history, it's not just for one thing or other. The size of the project, the complicity of the project, the fact that City and State priorities align. That there is agreement, remember this only works when the City and State governments agree. And a lot of times as you know there's natural differences between the City and the State. But this was about bringing in this many jobs and the only way it was going to happen was with this kind of planning approach. If it went to a ULURP approach there's a very good likelihood these jobs would not have come here.

Lehrer: Let's take a call, John on Staten Island, you're on WNYC with Mayor de Blasio. Hi, John.

Question: Hi, good morning, Mayor de Blasio, and Brian.

Lehrer: Good morning, John.

Question: My question is [inaudible] my daughter is in a high school on Staten Island and she was preparing for the exam for the [inaudible] exam and the day before –

Mayor: John, John which exam, John?

Question: AP Euro.

Mayor: Advanced placement?

Lehrer: Advanced placement European history?

Question: Yes.

Mayor: Okay.

Question: Yes, and the day before the exam the teacher told the kids that he doubt anyone of them would pass because the exam is so hard.

Mayor: Well, John, I am very glad you told me this. I don't – let me say when anyone calls the show, Brian, I take what they say on face value, and obviously I am a parent, I was a public school parent the whole way through with my kids' education. When I hear that, I don't like what I hear. And I am glad John is reporting it. I don't know what happened specifically, I wasn't there. We obviously want to hear all sides of the story. But that specific idea of anyone discouraging young people from trying to achieve what they hope to achieve, that troubles me. We'll go, John – if you'll give your information to WNYC, we'll pursue this. I've said publically before that some of what I understand about this reality comes from the stories I've heard from my own wife and what Chirlane went through in her high school. She happened to go to a primarily white high school in a community in western Massachusetts and she felt a lot of times that adults were trying to discourage her and not see her potential. That's not something we're going to accept today in New York City. But if you give us your details of how to reach you and all, I'll have people follow up and we'll look into what happened here.

Lehrer: John, hang on, we'll take that if you want the Mayor to follow up. And Mark in Manhattan, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hi, Mark.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor and hi, Brian. And Mr. Mayor, thank you very much for all your work. I work on the issue with homelessness and housing, and I've been a big supporter of yours and all the things you've done but I have to say I am little disappointed because I think your plan to include this five percent of the units in your new housing plan for homeless families is not sufficient, and particularly with new resources coming into the city with Amazon and some other ideas that have been put forward. I know we can do better, I know that you have a commitment to do better to really turn around the tale of two cities, and we appreciate all you've done but we need to dig deeper – the 62,000 people who are homeless now need you to dig deeper and people of faith and people of good will in the city need that you do more and I know you can and it

would be a terrific legacy. This is not an easy problem, you didn't sign onto a problem that was easy.

Lehrer: And Mark, forgive me are you asking the Mayor for a particular solution or –

Question: Yes, yes, I am. Thank you. Yeah, so we're asking – I'm asking for you to reconsider your commitment to have five percent of the units in your 300,000-unit plan set aside for homeless households. We think it should be 10 percent, five percent won't really move the needle, 10 percent will. Over 10 years, 30,000 new units for homeless households along with everything else you're doing can really make a difference. And I know you want to make a difference, we just need you to do more than you can.

Mayor: Well Mark, Mark, thank you. First of all, appreciate the spirit of the question. Obviously I appreciate that you're focused on the needs of homeless and I appreciate that you understand we are trying to always come up with additional solutions. So, you know, we have an affordable housing plan that we have built over time. We've listened to people who have said that things needed to change and that we added to it, it started 200,000 apartments, now it is 300,000. We added more apartments for seniors, more apartments for veterans, you're right there is also an important element to plan for folks who are homeless, but we feel that the balance we are striking in the plan is still the right one.

The fact is that folks who become homeless in this city we get to housing solutions – not all the time obviously and that's – we want to make sure every single person is served, but I want you to understand it's been 90,000 people over five years who went into our shelter system and we got to an ongoing housing solution, got them out of shelter, 90,000 people. We think that piece is working the way it is and that what we need to do is to create an affordable housing reality for every element of the population of New York City. So folks who have become homeless need to be served, when you say 90,000 people have been served, you can see immediately that that's a very, very substantial number of people. We also have stopped folks from becoming homeless, particularly by driving down evictions giving folks free lawyers to stop illegal evictions. We're going to keep doing that, we're going to build on that. But I want to caution, because I talk to New Yorkers of all different backgrounds, all different realities, there's a whole lot of folks who are working – low-income New Yorkers working – they need affordable housing. There's a lot of people who are everyday New Yorkers, bus drivers, janitors, teachers, they need affordable housing. Our job is to serve people across the spectrum and we think this plan does that and we want a city that is economically diverse and we do not want this ever to become an exclusive city. We've got to protect a city that has affordable housing for a whole range of everyday New Yorkers.

Lehrer: So to his question about 10 percent versus five percent set aside?

Mayor: I said it literally a few weeks ago on this show, I'll say it again. I believe our current plan is the right balance and it's not just that five percent set aside, it's the total impact of everything we are doing. I think there is a little bit of an over focus on this numerical disagreement because what's actually happening goes beyond the numbers we are discussing. In other words I understand people say they would prefer – some people believe ten percent's better than five percent. I say we have a five percent commitment and look at what's happening on the

ground, if 90,000 people have already been served, that's the thing that people should focus on, the actual reality, the actual product.

Lehrer: Comptroller Scott Stringer proposed this week that to fund more affordable units for the lowest income New Yorkers, the City should end its mortgage recording tax which wealthy buyers can avoid by buying real estate in cash and replace it with a simple transfer tax which every real estate buyer would pay. Would you support that proposal to raise more money for affordable housing for the lowest income New Yorkers?

Mayor: So, it's an interesting proposal for sure. The fact is as I understand it, you know the vast majority of areas of taxation for better or for worse have to be decided in Albany by the Legislature. It's a much bigger discussion we should have someday about why that is still true given that New York City is 43 percent of the state's population and the core of the state's economy, why you know so many things have to still get approval in Albany. But my presumption on this is that would be required. I think it's true that there's a whole new set of possibilities in Albany now that we have a Democratic State Senate which I think is fantastic for the state and for the city. I proposed a mansion tax, not exactly this model but a similar concept of trying to get more out of these transactions and my goal was to use all the money we would get from that for senior affordable housing. And I still think that is a very good idea. I'm certainly going to look at the Comptroller's idea. It's an interesting one and anything that will help us create more affordable housing, we are going to take seriously. But I do want to note, my, I think when you look at what's happening in the city and the future of the city, one of the most central needs we have is for more affordable housing for seniors. And since we already have a proposal on the table that a number of people in Albany are interested in, you know I do want to say the mansion tax is a thing I'd be looking at while evaluating what the Comptroller has put forward.

Lehrer: Before we get off this housing thread, on lead paint in NYCHA – I understand that several cities in California have successfully sued lead paint manufactures for paint they made 50 years ago and the cities got \$400 million for remediation. Do you know about those cases since NYCHA needs so much money for remediation here, would you consider filing a similar suit?

Mayor: Oh absolutely. I mean look the, first of all I'm very happy that those – the folks in California were able to get that money because there's no question. This is just like the tobacco industry, it's just like the opioid manufactures, the pharmaceutical industry and by the way, the petroleum companies too. They all knew the horrible impact they were having. And right now we are suing the opioid manufactures. We are suing the petroleum companies. Obviously in the past the City sued the tobacco industry successfully. Now what we have to figure out is how California pulled it off and achieved it and our Law Department is looking at that right now. If we can do a similar strategy, we certainly will. There may be some differences of law, one state to another. The City did attempt a lawsuit, broadly on this line back in the 90's and did not prevail. But if we can find a new way to go at those companies? Absolutely we will do that.

Lehrer: Eida in Brooklyn you are on WNYC, hello.

Question: Hi. Thank you for taking my call. Mr. Mayor, I truly appreciate all you do for our city. And I wanted to ask if there's a possibility that you can send police patrols or something, traffic patrol right on Prospect Park Avenue as it becomes [Inaudible] Parkway and the entry into

the Belt Parkway because what is happening is that every day during my commute I spend about 15 minutes because all the people that are mandated by the signs to turn left going into Third Avenue, they start merging into the Belt Parkway, I mean into the BQ – highway and it happens every day and it is demoralizing. It really is. That's all I wanted to say and I will take my answer off line.

Mayor: Thank you Eida, thank you for the question. I know that location, I can, that's you know my home in Brooklyn is very, very near there so I know that location and you're right there's been problems sometimes and we should take another look at that. Sometimes the solution is to put a traffic agent there to make sure things are addressed smoothly so I'm glad you are raising it Eida. Please give your information to WNYC so we can follow up but yes we are going to see if we need more of a direct approach there by putting a traffic agent there.

Lehrer: You know, I'm glad she asked that question because I think this happens a lot where people in particular communities around particular intersections where they want a left turn lane or they want a traffic light where there's only a stop sign, whatever – sometimes don't know how to petition the City. What's the best way to go about it on that particular kind of issue?

Mayor: Well, I wish I could give you the perfect answer of the mechanics of it but I do think you know, let's go with the basics, reaching out if it's something like a stop sign, a stop light, reaching out to the Department of Transportation which has borough offices. That's one way to do it. I don't know enough to say if 3-1-1 can transfer folks directly to those offices but they can certainly get the information of how to reach those borough offices for Department of Transportation. Going of course to City Council members to let them know is helpful just in terms of getting focus but we constantly, Brian, we're constantly looking at where's a place that needs a new stop sign, a new stop light, a no left turn, whatever it may be. Everything about Vision Zero requires us to constantly assess where there is safety problems. And a lot of times it's everyday people. You know I've had, I think it's 58 town hall meetings now and I got to tell you, there's been a number of times where everyday New Yorkers at the town hall meetings that say here's a site that is not safe enough that needs an action. And when DOT looks into it they come back and say we agree, you know that's something that we should do an additional measure. So I think it's really important for people to speak up. When it comes to traffic agents, sometimes that's the right solution, sometimes it's not, obviously you know we only have so many. But it is important for people to say, if a problem might be one that would be solved by a traffic agent, we need to look at it and make sure we are sending the traffic agents where the need is greatest.

Lehrer: Politico New York has a story this week about health care costs for City workers rising faster than your projections in the last contract. So it seems like it's costing the City more than you thought it would. So with new negotiations for the next contract, the article raises the question will you propose additional ways, or it suggests the question, if you'll propose additional ways to ease the taxpayers' burden for that like reducing Medicare Part B reimbursements or limits on early retirees or anything else? Is that on the table?

Mayor: Well, I would say something bigger and broader is happening which is as part of the agreement that we came to with the Municipal Labor Council, the idea was to not only add to the healthcare savings we had put together previously which is now billions and billions of dollars and growing – and by the way this is something that has never happened before on this scale in

the history of New York City where you know, the city government and labor, municipal labor came to the table, agreed that it was absolutely mission critical for the future of this city to bring down the healthcare costs of our employees while serving them well and came up with billions of dollars in savings. But when we made the most recent agreement a few months ago, there was an agreement to also put together a working group to find additional reforms because we knew we had to save more money, of course the cost of healthcare keeps going up. We all understand that but beyond that healthcare savings is one of the areas where we can best reduce costs in the future but we need to do it cooperatively. So there are a lot of ideas of there that labor's proposing and the City is proposing and we have an ongoing process to get to next agreement.

Lehrer: And we also saw the city workers unions object to the New York State's single payer health bill because they prefer their union health funds. That's interesting to see public sector workers oppose single payer which you support because they prefer their private insurance. What do you say to them?

Mayor: Look, I think this is actually quite straight forward. Single payer is the way to go for the future. We have a healthcare system that doesn't work for a huge number of people, we have a healthcare system, that's you know bankrupting families, there's folks who can't get access to healthcare in a meaningful way and can't afford it, makes no sense. So I'm a believer in single payer. I think it's amazing that we look around the world at other countries, Canada is a great example, that are doing it in a very coherent way and this country still isn't. But there are examples where there need to be exceptions and there needs to be flexibility. Look, God bless the unions that they have over many years fought to make sure their workers got good healthcare. And that puts them in a very different place than a lot of other people in this state and in this country. We need to – if we, you know get to a plan in New York State which I hope we could get to as early as this year, for single payer, we need to accommodate union members who have plans that work for them now. We have to figure a way to create that flexibility because it does not make sense for people to go backwards.

Lehrer: That's different than the pure Bernie Sanders, let's say, model, which would be like Canada – everybody is in the same plan because once you start carving out privileges for this group, privileges for that group, we might wind up with the same multitier system that we have today that is unfair.

Mayor: Look I don't for a moment purport to be an expert on all the nuances but I would say this – if we are talking about a national plan? I think that is an important question that obviously has to be addressed, what's going to work on a national basis. But if you are talking about the State of New York, which is either the most highly unionized state in the country or one of them and we got plans that work for people. We have to be sensitive for that. So I don't know enough about the different models but I know the common sense point, we don't want to diminish people's healthcare, we want to improve people's healthcare and I have to believe we can find a balance point that respects what organized labor has achieved so far but also extend healthcare to a lot of people who don't have it or can't afford it right now.

Lehrer: Tashawn in Brooklyn, you are on WNYC with the Mayor, hi Tashawn.

Question: Hello, how are you?

Lehrer: Good thank you.

Question: Yes, I have a question. I was trying to find out – do you know that myself and 79 other families over here in East Flatbush, Brooklyn are facing eviction? That came out of the shelter system under the –

Mayor: Which address? Tashawn, which address are you talking about?

Question: 250 Clarkson.

Mayor: 250 Clarkson, because I have heard about several locations lately in Brooklyn that we are working on. Do you know Tashawn if our Department of Social Services is providing legal assistance or Legal Aid is providing assistance at your building?

Question: Yes, we do have legal aid but we're also trying to reach out to you for help because we know that a long time ago that you promised that you were going to help the rent stabilized people stay stabilized by doing anything such as eminent domain, and we want to know if you're going to keep your word and help us out because we're in a predicament right now. We need your help as well as legal aid.

Mayor: Tashawn, if I'm remembering the details properly, and I hope am, we think there are several different things that we can do. Eminent domain works in some cases, it doesn't work in others but we start with providing the legal support from the City and then there's a number of things we can do as well to push landlords to make sure we're protecting affordable housing.

So, please give your information directly to WNYC. I believe, if my memory is serving, that there's a couple of different steps we've already put in place to protect you and your fellow tenants. But I want to make sure we're doing everything we can to help. If you give your information, I'll make sure someone follows up with you today.

Lehrer: Tashawn, hang on. We'll take your information off the air so you can take this further. Mr. Mayor, I want to ask you about some deleted emails of yours that showed up in a police corruption court case this week from the real estate developer Jona Rechnitz who was a donor to you, as you know. One was Rechnitz inviting you to sit courtside at a Knicks game with him and you replied immediately by declining but thanking him for all his help. The other asked you not to accept the resignation of former NYPD official Philip Banks, who Rechnitz now says he gave bribes to, and a meeting came out of that with Rechnitz, I gather. But those emails showing aspects of your relationship with Rechnitz were not among the emails you turned over in the Freedom of Information request about your relationship with Rechnitz going back a few years. Work-related emails are supposed to be kept by City officials. Did you delete those emails?

Mayor: Brian, we turned over thousands of emails. We turned over everything that we had, everything that was pertinent. What I do is, as much as humanly possible, move email discussions that are anything about the City over to the government email. It's not a perfect process but I think it works the vast, vast majority of the time.

So, look, this has been looked at a whole lot of times. We provided everything we had. I've been very transparent about the fact that this individual, when we understood who he was, we stopped

dealing with him in every way, shape, or form. Obviously, he's a very troubled person who has committed crimes and has lied incessantly. But we gave over everything we had.

Lehrer: When you say everything you had, how did you not have these?

Mayor: Again, I get lots of emails and anything consequential, anything that has to do with government business we try to move it over to the government side, preserve the ones that need to be preserved. There's nothing that happened here that was consequential. That's the bottom line.

Lehrer: Do you think that an email from a major donor asking you not to accept the resignation of an NYPD official is not government business?

Mayor: Again, I think what's important to recognize here is this has all been looked at. We do our best to be transparent. We've given out thousands of emails. I don't know why people keep coming back to it because it's been covered and covered and covered. That's all I got to say.

Lehrer: Well, there was a new revelation in court this week. That's why it came back to – people are coming back to it.

Mayor: I just don't think it's a revelation. I think it's been covered many, many times over.

Lehrer: Why did you – or whoever did it – delete that particular email about Chief Banks?

Mayor: I really don't know the specifics of it, I just told you. Anything we had, we turned over.

Lehrer: Michael in Midtown, you're on WNYC with the Mayor. Hi, Michael.

Question: Hi, good morning. I've been a cyclist for over 14 years living on 10th Avenue for all of those years. The legislation in City Council to classify e-bikes and allow them to go into our already crumbling and inadequate bike lanes is just not safe. There's no bike lanes on 10th and 11th Avenues. There are other ways to address accessibility issues. There are other ways to address immigrants' rights than imposing safety hazards on the people that depend on the bike lanes that exist already. Congestion pricing needs to be part of that, bus prioritization needs to be part of that by making dedicated bus lanes on every avenue and every two-way street. We need more bus shelters. Think about a car-free Broadway like Amsterdam [inaudible] separate east from west traffic.

I agree with City Council Speaker Corey Johnson that we need to combat the car culture here in New York City but by making these electric machines allowed to use the bike lanes freely – it's not appropriate. If you look at these folks, they don't move their legs. It's a complete moped, it's a motorcycle. And if we allow these machines to go into our bike lane, it's going to make them more dangerous, more dangerous than they already are.

Lehrer: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Michael, I think that's a very well-argued case and look, the, I think – I really like the way you framed it particularly in the beginning. One – whatever we end up doing here, and I

think from what we understand right now, a lot of this has to be decided at the State level. There's a possibility some of it could be decided by City legislation. But we're still trying to sort out the jurisdiction questions.

But whatever we decide, safety has to be the number one concern and you're right there are honest concerns about for example immigrant rights but there's a whole lot of other ways to address that broader question. But the safety issue has to be paramount. And right now, I am convinced that the way that the e-bikes are being used particularly by delivery folks wasn't safe, and that if that happened a lot more we'd have a problem.

And we're got to figure out – it's a City that is crowded already. I agree with you also that one of the biggest things we can do is the better mass transit options to help people get out of their cars. But in the meantime there's too many people and there's too little space and we've got to focus on safety. That's the whole Vision Zero mentality. We've got to focus on safety. So, I think your point is well taken.

And as these debates go forward in Albany, in the City Council, safety has to be the first question. E-bikes are not legal to be used in New York City right now which is why the NYPD is authorized to take them and impound them because it's not something that is governed by law at this point.

Lehrer: The immigrant worker supporters say there's been no documented pedestrian injury rate by e-bikes higher than regular bike because the City doesn't keep statistics separately like that. So, maybe they just seem more dangerous for pedestrians but aren't really, or at least maybe not. Would a solution to this – partial solution – be to have the Transportation Department or whoever keeps accident report stats, begin to keep those numbers so a year or two from now you can make public policy based on public fact?

Mayor: Look, I always want more data. We've seen in a lot of cases that data comes back either inconclusive or one report says one thing and another says another thing. But it's certainly – of course we want more data. But here's the bottom line, there's a common sense element to this too and it gets to Michael's point. These e-bikes go very fast. It's a very different reality than being on a normal human-powered bike. There's ample evidence of e-bikes going the wrong way down streets, going on sidewalks, all sorts of things that create safety hazards – driving recklessly –

Lehrer: But –

Mayor: There's plenty of evidence of that. The difference is –

Lehrer: But so do regular bikes, and they say there's no documented –

Mayor: But the regular bikes can't do as much damage, I mean, come on. This is, again, common sense. A car, a motorcycle – there's a set of rules. Everyone understands it. If you go the wrong way down a street on a motorcycle, you're going to be treated the same way as a car – and people don't do it.

Lehrer: But are these accidents actually happening and how can we know?

Mayor: They're happening, as you just said at the same rate as what's involved with regular the bikes but they cause, of course, more impact than a regular bike. The bottom line is the common sense says since they are being used in a way that does not resemble a full-blown vehicle but they're not a bike that goes a lot less fast and then there's less impact if it hits you – something is wrong with this picture. And my view is, since it's illegal anyway in this state, we're starting with the safety first attitude. It's illegal and it doesn't fit the equation of how we keep people safe, and there has been abuse of it, of these e-bikes, in ways that makes people unsafe particularly for folks who have disabilities or happen to be seniors. It adds an additional danger.

That's what I care about first. So, I get if people – to Michael's point – if people are immigrant advocates, there's a lot we need to do to support immigrants. We do in this city. But don't put that as the first consideration on the e-bike question. The first consideration of the e-bike question is safety.

Lehrer: And some people have pointed out a paradox between your position on that as just stated and the fact that you're okay with the pedal-assisted e-bikes that have been rolled out yesterday with the Citi Bike expansion.

Mayor: But wait, pedal-assist is legal but again we got to – sort of everyone enjoin this debate without having the bottom line facts because it wasn't a frontline issue for a long time. Pedal-assist bikes are legal in New York City, and they have a speed limit. Physically, they can only go so fast, and they've been something that has been valuable to folks, for example, with disabilities who need to get around. That's one thing.

E-bikes go faster. E-bikes are not legal. We have to make sense of all it and we have to reset the entire equation in a methodical way that focuses on safety but they're two different things.

Lehrer: Do you want to end today with a related good news and just talk about the Citi Bike expansion itself?

Mayor: Look, this is something that people have been talking about for a long, long time in this city. Citi Bike has been a huge success. There's a lot of exciting possibilities ahead in terms of dockless biking. It's important to recognize that more and more New Yorkers are choosing to get around by bike. That takes cars off the streets. That's good. We have to make sure they're safe. But this is more and more going to be something that reaches all over our city and gives people another transportation option. So, it's real exciting.

Lehrer: Mr. Mayor, thank you as always. Talk to you next week.

Mayor: Thank you, Brian.

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