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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS, BLOCPOWER ANNOUNCE SIGNIFICANT EXPANSION OF PRECISION EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE GREEN JOBS TO NEW YORKERS MOST IMPACTED BY GUN VIOLENCE

Donnel Baird, Founder and CEO of BlocPower: We are so grateful to our mayor for coming by — back to his home borough here in Brooklyn — to learn a little bit about our Civilian Climate Corps. We shared with the mayor how we're using augmented reality, how we're using thermodynamic modeling, blower door testing, to prepare a new workforce of the future to lead New York City and actually the rest of the country and the rest of the world in the use of cutting edge software and hardware. We looked at some heat pumps, which we use to electrify buildings and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 70 percent. This is how buildings across the city will comply with all of the green building laws, but we need a workforce to do that. And growing up not too far from here in Brooklyn, I remember learning about the two forms of waste that were happening in the community.

One was the waste of fossil fuels and energy in our homes where we have to open up the windows because we were heating our homes with our ovens or we were overheating or under heating the homes that needed to ventilate. But the other waste was the waste of human potential of the young people in the community who didn't have jobs or had the wrong kind of job. And we now have a mayor who's had the vision to solve both of those problems at the same time. We are reducing unemployment, we are reducing the rate of violent crime and gun violence in the five neighborhoods that have the highest rate of gun violence. We have trained and hired over a thousand folks who have been identified at being at risk of being involved in incidents of gun violence by the district attorney, by the NYPD, and we've created an opportunity to put them on a better path, not just through training, but through jobs and putting them into a career where they're prepared to do the most incredible work that's going on in green construction anywhere in the country.

So with no further ado, we welcome you all to the space and we welcome the 110th mayor of New York City, Mayor Eric Adams. Thank you.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you, thank you so so much. And just walking through and seeing some of the men and women who are part of this initiative, it's just so impactful. When you think about as the economy and the conversation about how do we deal with our environment, I think you were just on point. The waste of human and mental capital is just so pervasive, and we normalize it. We had this higher level conversation about how do we save the environment, how

do we green our buildings? Everyone talked about that, but no one talked about how do we save the people who are in the communities that want to be part of this conversation of utilizing their hands to do the job of dealing with the environmental issues that we are facing. BlocPower is saying Black power, and we can make it happen with the two. And I'm just really pleased by that.

And Goldman Sachs, thank you. Everyone wants to beat up on our financial institutions and our multi-billion dollar corporations on what they're not doing. We should highlight the things that they are doing. And what they've stated over and over again, "Hey, how about coming in and sitting down and talking to us and not at us?" And this administration started in January sitting down with the leaders of Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, so many others, top corporate leaders to say, we want to be partners here.

And it was unfortunate that I don't know why others believe it wasn't crucial to sit down and have those conversations. Conversations when you hear some of the good stories. Elvis is not out of the building, he's in the building. He was incarcerated for five years, he learned about BlocPower's Civilian Climate Corps and came in and decided to make a decision to participate in paid training and obtained a full-time apprenticeship licensed through National Grid with one of their contractors.

When I was meeting with gang members during the campaign, and even prior to that, sitting down with gang members over and over again, they all criticized me for being with gang members. You know that? But when I sat down with them, they said, "We want to get out of the gang."

Audience member: That's right.

Mayor Adams: "We want to get out of the gang, but where do we go?"

Audience member: That's right.

Mayor Adams: "Where do we get the job?" Some of them were dealing with dropped out of high school, overage, under credit. And from learning from them, I knew that programs like this was an important part of making it happen. And so it's not easy to turn your life around. All you have to do is ask your mayor. It's not an easy task, but if you are consistent and people believe in you and give you a natural pathway to accomplish that task, it is doable.

I'm pretty sure a lot of the men and women who are here today can tell you, the moment they hit a bend in the road, but damn it that's not the end of the road as long as you make the turn. And this organization is allowing people to make the turn. Some of these brothers here, 500 Men Making a Difference — it's good seeing you as well. This partnership that we are developing to make this happen, our Precision Employment Initiative allows New Yorkers to deal with the environment and deal with the environment that caused them to go down the wrong road in the first place. And so we are putting our money where our mouths are by investing \$54 million into the expansion of this program, which connects New Yorkers at risk of gun violence with career training and job placement programs. You want to take the steel gun out of someone's hand, put a steel screwdriver in their hands, and allow them to be productively employed in their communities.

This investment is going to allow 3000 more New Yorkers to participate in this program. And thanks to our investment, the Precision Employment Initiative is now able to serve participants from East New York, Far Rockaway, Flatbush, and East Flatbush, Harlem, and Melrose, with the possibility of expanding to serve residents of additional neighborhoods. Now, what is also unique about those neighborhoods? Look at those neighborhoods and look at these shootings in those neighborhoods. You'll see why this is precision. We're going after those neighborhoods to get the real talent and think upstream in a real way.

Another example of how we are just thinking creatively about solving 21st century problems, real challenges by using real on the ground information. And this is a great program. Those who are involved in the criminal justice system, we want them to move away. But if you going to tell someone to move away from doing something wrong, you got to give them something to do good. And that's what this program is doing. We're making sure that each participant connects with a case manager, and that all participants are paid while they are training and that they are being trained. This removes one of the key stumbling blocks. Many people can't pay for training. It's challenging, it's difficult. But by doing this, we are filling the gap and we are dismantling that block that's preventing them from moving forward.

The Precision Employment Initiative began in 2021. I remember what we were doing back when I was borough president. It is administered by the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice partnership with BlocPower, a community-based organization, and has already a proven track record. Over 1,300 New Yorkers who previously participated, nearly 30 percent have been paid or placed in full time, good-paying jobs in the green sector, and 62 percent have passed their OSHA training. Those are some great numbers.

A majority of the participants are Black and brown, communities that have historically been left out of the emerging, profitable green sector. We want to change that conversation and mindset. Walking through, listening to some of these participants, it was amazing how they articulate how to use the equipment and the opportunities that are available of really starting their own businesses and going after some of these RFPs that are available. They don't have to be subcontractors, they can be primary contractors. This fills into what we're doing about MWBEs is all coming together.

And the majority were underemployed or unemployed. We're filling that gap in Brownsville and Mott Haven. Two neighborhoods first served by the program, as it was mentioned, shooters declined by 21 percent and 35 percent respectively. So we are creating jobs, bringing down gun violence, and bringing new labor into the green sector. Public safety is not just a police job. It is about giving people a job. And if we want less crime on our streets, we must make sure people are employed and they see the opportunities of the future.

Green jobs is going to bring green dollars into communities and really put people on the pathway of success. This program offers youth training in conflict resolution and emotional intelligence. These are skills that New Yorkers need in order to succeed. And so I want to thank Goldman Sachs, BlocPower, founders like our CBO partners in the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. This is a real win. I'm really excited about this program. This is directly in line of what I believe. I'm a carpenter by skill. Yes, you find that hard to believe, don't you? That's my therapy. I love miter cuts. I love doing framing. I love doing woodwork. It's a skill that they could have forever. And I'm just really proud, and I just want to say thank you. I'm happy to be here with you today

and participating in this program. And you can feel the energy in this building that something special is happening here. More than a tree is growing in Brooklyn, good jobs are growing in our city. Thank you very much.

Baird: So everybody in this room knows why Eric Adams is our mayor. He's our mayor. We think this is a visionary program. The White House and mayors from across the country are starting to think about how they can duplicate this program because it solves so many problems all at once. We're going to have some quick comments from Kahena, the vice president of urban investment at Goldman Sachs. So I want to welcome you to the podium.

Kahena Joubert, Vice President, Urban Investment Group, Goldman Sachs: Good afternoon everyone. It's great to be here. I'm Kahena Joubert, vice president at Goldman Sachs, and I lead the investment strategy for the One Million Black Women Initiative. First, thank you to Mayor Adams for his leadership on this issue, and thank you to Donnel Baird and the whole BlocPower team. I also want to acknowledge my colleagues who are here today, Michael Lore and Jill Nee, who have been working closely with BlocPower to make today possible. Goldman Sachs is proud to partner with the mayor and BlocPower to provide the capital to significantly expand the city's precision employment initiative.

This facility will help combat the gun violence crisis and help those at greatest risk find good paying green jobs to drive our economy forward. More than a year ago, Goldman Sachs launched its One Million Black Women Initiative, committing 10 billion of investment capital alongside a hundred million dollars of philanthropy to address the dual disproportionate gender and racial biases that Black women have faced for generations, which have only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

The Precision Employment Initiative is exactly the type of program we work to support, aligning directly with our mission of driving inclusive economic growth and the workforce development pillar of One Million Black Women. BlocPower is targeting a significant portion of program participants to be Black women and will also have specific training for women including construction programming. As the programming is already driving results, serving over a thousand New Yorkers, employing and training them to reduce the threat of gun violence in our most impacted communities. We are excited for its expansion, but also its impact. We look forward to continuing to partner with the mayor and BlocPower on this important issue. Thank you.

Baird: One of the most important things that we're so proud of is we have, I believe over 30 percent of the folks who are trained in construction are women in this program, and we're very proud of that. We are going to have quick comments from one of my favorite participants. We actually stole him away from the program. He works directly for our company now, Wesley Booker. But before that, wanted to take 20 seconds and share a quick story of one of the stories that's really moved me.

We had a gentleman who was incarcerated for 17 years and he came out, reconnected with his family, wasn't quite sure how he was going to meet the expectations of his children and was he going to find work and be able to get involved in their lives. And we were able to get him trained and get him a job at our sister startup (inaudible), who's here today. And you might have seen the (inaudible) vehicle outside. It has sensors on top of the car that will measure pollution and it

drives all over New York City and 10 other cities around the state to measure and map pollution all over New York City.

So now he has a full time job. He's doing well. His kids are proud of him, he's proud of himself and that's what this program is about. And to exemplify that, we have comments from Wesley Booker, who is one of our civilian climate core members and a member of the BlocPower core staff. Wesley?

Wesley Booker, Member, Civilian Climate Corps: Thank you. I want to thank everybody who came out today in support of the program. Special thanks to Keith and Donnel for kicking off a program like this that's bringing jobs to communities who definitely need it, and also jobs to communities who are most hit by climate change. Give you a little bit of my story. I was connected to the CCC program when they were about to kick off a solar carport install at Rikers Island. This was last November and this was a great project. I got to finally meet a lot of the members from BlocPower CCC program and I was brought on as a supervisor to help motivate and just make sure that the program ran smoothly. It took us three weeks and we got the solar carport up and running, so that the staff at Rikers Island can have better options as far as their motor vehicles.

After that, I came on to be part of BlocPower CCC program as full time staff and supervisor, working with the great crew of six other BlocPower members led by Evan Mantilla. Thank you Evan, for all of the training opportunities and teaching us how to run this process, as far as bringing air source heat pumps into the city, helping to electrify buildings and being part of the whole process, from doing their initial energy audits to helping with customer success and just helping clients to understand their product and how it's beneficial to the environment and all the work that we're doing.

So again, thank you to BlocPower for creating the CCC program. Thank you to the mayor's office for helping to fund this program and keep it up and running and sustainable, so we can continue to do the jobs that most need to be done for the sustainability of the city and the world all over.

Baird: Alright.

Booker: Thank you guys.

Baird: So I think... Q&A, any questions?

Question: I want to ask about Goldman Sachs's role in the initiative. When the initiative was launched on the previous administration, as you mentioned Goldman Sachs was not involved. Just curious if you can elaborate a little bit on why you find it important to involve Goldman Sachs on this? And secondly, exactly what Goldman Sachs' role is here. Are they providing funding or how's it going to work?

Baird: Let me provide the specifics and then the mayor can provide the (inaudible). The mayor outlined a vision of public private partnership with our technology companies here in New York City and with our leading financial institutions. They're a competitive advantage for all of us.

This is not an easy project to execute. We know that we have \$16 billion of green construction that we're going to need to do in New York City over the coming years.

Goldman Sachs is going to be a huge partner in that. We know that nine to 10 billion dollars of that \$16 billion is going to go to construction firms. How do we prepare prime contractors, as the mayor said, women of color from low and modern income communities who are going to hire our folks as we go after that \$11 billion of green construction work.

And so the mechanics are that Goldman Sachs is one of our core partners as BlocPower... as a venture capital backed startup. They finance when we electrify buildings and remove fossil fuel equipment from buildings and replace it with green energy in low income buildings, Goldman helps us to finance that. And when we have working capital needs broadly across our company to make sure that we can deliver on the high goals and metrics for this project. Goldman is always there as our core partner. Mr. Mayor?

Mayor Adams: No, I think you hit it out the park. Day one, when I... Actually prior to taking office, I immediately sent out a call to my corporate community. I sent out and told them, "I don't know what the relationship was like previously, but I need you. I need for us to have a partnership with great solutions." Our corporate communities, they run their businesses the right way and we have to get in the business of running our city the right way. This is a corporation — NYC. New York City is a corporation. I am the CEO of this corporation.

And as it was mentioned, the project that's being done for Black women, identifying the problems of hiring, of building those businesses, it was just right in line. And I did not sit down with one corporate leader that stated they didn't want to help. They said no one asked them. And so I'm asking them every day, all day. And we're seeing that. You've been at press conferences where we're doing our internship program, where we're doing about training young people. Our Summer Youth Employment. They have been stepping up day after day, month after month and we want to continue to do this. We have just started begging. We got more begging that we're going to do with our corporate entities.

Question: Oh yeah, Michelle Ma for Protocol. I'm just curious if Donnel and Mr. Mayor, if you think other cities can replicate this and you know what the roadblocks might be in their way and if you're having conversations with other city mayors about doing a similar kind of program?

Baird: Oh, I want to mention something quickly. I was in the room when Mayor Adams met with mayors from around the country at the Clinton Global Initiative a few weeks ago. CGI came back and there were mayors from Cleveland and Baltimore and Little Rock. And our mayor was there to host them, because of course this is New York City and he wanted to welcome them to the city. So he hosted a little luncheon for them.

And we talked a bit about a lot of different initiatives. The mayor had some ideas around how we can use the largeness of New York City to help partner and empower smaller cities to do bulk purchasing of green construction or equipment that they may need. A lot of cities, if they call Home Depot, Home Depot don't pick up the phone. But when New York calls, they always do. And so how can we help smaller cities to get discounts and information like that?

The mayor, of course, had to leave because he had to move on to the next set of events. But after he left, the mayors of Cleveland and Baltimore and Little Rock were so excited to have the opportunity to partner with New York City and fall in line under the vision and leadership that's being established here. And also specifically for this program, they're very excited about trying to figure out how they can duplicate this program to solve the labor shortage in their communities and their cities while preparing a workforce for the future, while reducing crime, while creating opportunities for minority and women and prime contractors in the construction sector.

So in particular, folks are very excited, but the mayor may have... So there's a lot of excitement. I would say in addition, we did speak with folks in the White House about the program. The program initially was funded through COVID dollars through a member from the White House. Now the mayor has chosen to fund this program himself as New York City. And the innovation that's been generated through the program, we know that the White House is really interested because... I mean, take a step back to two years ago with the Black Lives Matter protests, it wasn't clear the disconnect between communities of color and the police. This is something that's new and fresh and different. Of course it's our mayor who came up with it and is investing in it. And we do think it is a model for different cities across the country. So do they.

Question: Yeah, I just have a question. Who identifies these at risk individuals? How do you guys reach them? Are you going to job fairs? Do you already have people on the ground? How does that work to bring in the actual person? Obviously if you have been impacted by gun violence, you're not thinking, "Oh, a great job is the thing for me." Are you convincing these people? How are you getting them into the program?

Baird: That's a really great question. That's really important. Thank you. One of the things that I didn't understand that I learned from the city and City Hall on this, through the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, is COVID's a pandemic, but so is gun violence. It's an epidemic. So sociologically, if you witness or are involved in an incident of gun violence, it turns out that you're far more likely, statistically, to be involved in a future incident of gun violence. People normally think of the shooters or the victims as being the only people involved in an incident of gun violence, but there's witnesses and what the data is showing is that anyone, including witnesses, who is involved in any way, shape or form with an incident of gun violence, is far more likely in the future to be involved with a future incident.

So when you take a long view and you start to plan, how are we going to lower incidents of violent crime in this city? Well, there's a large group of people who we know are likely to be involved in future incidents of gun violence. This isn't Big Brother, this is just being smart and looking at the data and saying there's no existing programming to support witnesses of gun violence to help them deal with their feelings and say, "Well now I feel vulnerable. Should I go buy a gun and is that how I'm going to protect myself? What's the path?"

And so the brilliance of this vision from City Hall, frankly. Because this is not something we came up with, City Hall in consultation with the district attorneys in the consultation with leadership at the NYPD recognized that we have this population across New York of people who were far more likely according to the professors and the academics to be involved in future incidents of gun violence. But there is no resources or programming for them. So that's one part.

The second part is one of the things we learned early on is the mayor shared when he was on the campaign trail, when he was meeting with gang leaders, that they said that they wanted a job.

I mean, you can read the book by the Chicago economist, "Gang Leader For a Day," where he talks about, well it turns out most of these people who work in these drug gangs, they actually don't get paid that well. And if you gave him a job as a custodian making \$35,000 an hour someplace, they would leave that gang and take a job cleaning toilets. Because the job cleaning toilets is a better, more stable life for them. So when we think of crime prevention, there's a lot of people who aren't using this cutting-edge data to think about how to implement policy that's really going to impact the safety and stability of our communities. And we're fortunate that in City Hall and with our mayor that we have that.

So if you take those two ideas that people kind of know but no one's really put it together, you have a group of people that really don't want to be gang banging anymore and don't want to be out there at risk and they're witnessing violence and they actually want to leave the situation that they're in, but there's no resources or programming for them. So we don't have a problem recruiting folks, right? Because there's a lot of people who want to better their lives when we come to them and we say, look, we're going to train you how to do a green construction job using cutting edge technology from Silicon Valley. At the end of the day, you can end up making a hundred thousand dollars a year. If you want to start your own green construction firm, you can end up being a millionaire.

We don't have to persuade too hard to offer people that opportunity. What we do have to do is to make sure that they know that the difficulty that they have in their life, if someone gets shot... We had program participants whose I think two of their children were shot during the program. We surround them with psychosocial support so that we're there with them because when we start the program, we expect them to finish the program, get their certification, and get their job. And so the persuasion that we have to do is that we're going to be there with them throughout the entire process and make sure that they end up in a career. So that's how we operate.

Mayor Adams: Well said. And two important things that was stated and they probably missed the first one, they said the brilliance.

Baird: It's a brilliant program. (Inaudible.)

Mayor Adams: You know what I'm saying? They're not going to print that line. (Laughter.) But the second thing that's so important, and this is what I learned when I was sitting down with gangbangers, some who came home and we went into a room and just talked as men. No one wants to do this. You don't wake up in the morning and say, "I want to be a gangbanger."

Baird: That's right.

Mayor Adams: When you have cut off all the other avenues, if you happen to have a learning disability, happen to be dyslexic, went through a broken home or happened to not have those services, no one is there to navigate you through the opportunities. And so if we were just doing a job training placement program, this won't succeed. You have to be able to meet people where they are, to take them where they ought to be.

So if you go to other parts of this city, they can't give you a narrative of, "Yeah, two of my loved ones were shot." So there's no built in program that someone else can put together that does not understand the totality of the client they're working with. You must have something to deal with, "Hey, I just lost my best friend to gun violence and now I'm tempted to go out there and respond." So you have to have this system in place that no, we are going to nurture you through this painful moment. That's the real part of what we are doing. That's the real part. That's what people underestimate. I'm not trying to be ideal, I'm trying to be real. Got to deal with people where they are. And if you weren't where they are, it's difficult for you to know where they are right now. And I was there.

So there's nothing special about me. There's nothing you know that hey, Eric was the best. No, no, I was just lucky and I had nurturing. And now we're going to apply that nurturing to these brilliant people who are in this program. They want to put down the guns. You go out today and walk the block today and ask the average person, "Where do you go get a job?" They can't answer. That's part of what Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer is doing. We need to simplify the mechanism to be employed. Yeah, so all of us know how. We go to LinkedIn, we put our profiles, we do all this other stuff.

But the average person in this city that's going through a difficult time, they have no idea how to find the availability of jobs that are out there. My job is to make employment training and opportunities to simplify it. That's what we're doing. Okay, let's take some off topic. Normally I ask everybody to leave, but can some of you brothers come stand with me just on topic because they are hard on me. So I want to show some strength. I want to show some strength. I'm in Bed Stuy, so some of y'all come and stand. Let me see some strength and come and stand with me to show I got my power back here.

And when I touch my nose, that's when I want you to really flex because those are one of reporters that's hard on me. Matter of fact, no. Before I do that, councilman come say a few words. This is in your district and this is what you like, you enjoy. I didn't even see you there, looking like a teenager. (Laughter.)

Council Member Chi Ossé: I look like a teenager? I just graduated from the program. Yeah, I just want to commend Mr. Mayor and BlocPower for not only empowering the Black and brown folks of the 36 district Bed Stuy and Crown Heights, but block empowering them to explore the other means that are outside of gun violence and violence. But something I do want to add that is so important to me and in my role in office as well as a Gen Z elected official is that when we talk about what environmental racism looks like and our strides in tackling environmental racism, the loudest and properly funded organizations are always white-led. And when you look around us here in this room, there's a lot of melanin behind me right now, and that's so important in terms of tackling the climate crisis. So thank you for doing this and thank you for the amazing organization that you have right here and the district. Thank you very much.

Mayor Adams: Well said. That was a good point. So we're going to do a few quick (inaudible). When I touch my nose, flex.

(...)

Question: I actually have a two part question to do with migrants.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: First question is this. So you opened the new facility on Randall's Island for migrants the other day. It's literally a hop, skip and a jump from a homeless shelter that was built in an old 65-year-old psychiatric facility, which is crumbling and horrible. The elevators don't work. The food is terrible. The people are all upset and they say it's unfair that the migrants who are coming in from another country are being treated so well with nice facilities when they who are Americans and who are New Yorkers are living in squalor. And they're asking for you to go and take a look at the conditions that they're living in and to do something about the conditions they're living in. Your reaction to their charges of unfair treatment?

Mayor Adams: Right. I like that. And if you didn't hear that, we say we're sending the workers over to fix the shelter. Prior to their invite, I was on Randall's Island. I went to Randall's Island to visit some of the shelters, it must have been around by 11:30, 12 a.m. at night. I went to see the conditions to visit there. Help is over there. I think it's HELP USA. Yes, I went. So I have been there. I visit homeless shelters.

Question: They think it's terrible.

Mayor Adams: Right. And so this is not about comparing those who need assistance and care from the city. We're not doing that and we're not going to... You speak to some that will look at who's there in the shelter on Randall's Island and say, "Well, why am I not on Randall's Island surrounded by water?" There's always going to be reasons that people are going to feel as though someone else is getting something better than them. My job is to make sure everyone gets a place to sleep that's safe, three meals a day, and the support that they need so they can cycle out of being in the shelter. And that's what we're doing. And those who want to come and see what those asylum seekers are receiving over in the HERRC, then we allow them to do so. But remember, there's a lot of people saying that we shouldn't even have the HERRC. 8.8 million people, 35 million opinions.

Question: The second part of my question is...

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: The number of asylum seekers has now reached over 21,000 people, which is a tremendous problem for you to deal with.

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: And it's costing a lot of money, but despite your pleas for Washington aid, so far nothing has come through. I wonder at what point, given the fact that you have a budget, that you have to do a budget modification next month and a new budget in January, at what point do you have to start cutting city services in order to deal with this massive emergency that you're being faced with?

Mayor Adams: Well, I think in hindsight, two things we should look at. Number one, why it was crucial that I communicated to New Yorkers a few weeks ago on what we were dealing

with. There was an honest moment that I had to tell New Yorkers what we were dealing with and what I needed from the federal government. And the president responded, they did a decompression strategy. We were getting eight, nine, ten buses. After we communicated with the White House, they responded, they put in place a decompression strategy. I think today we received two buses. Yesterday we received two buses, a substantial decrease. Only two people got off those buses at the Port Authority, of my concern, that wanted to go to other places. And so it is clear that we navigated through this storm. We don't believe we are there yet, but we need to really look at how this administration dealt with a real crisis. We would've continued getting ten buses a day, nine buses a day, that would have had a major impact on the future of our economy. There are over 21,000 now. Close to 19,000, 18, 19,000 still in our care. But there's a real system that we have in place, and it's an economic challenge. We need money from the White House. We need to allow people to be able to work.

Question: At some point, the huge amounts of money that you have to spend to deal with this crisis is going to take its toll on the services that you have to deliver to the 8 million people that you represent.

Mayor Adams: My first priority is for long-term New Yorkers that are here. That's my first priority. And I'm always going to keep that in focus and I'm always going to fulfill that obligation. And that's why we need the federal government and we need the state to also assist us. This is a national problem, this is a national problem and we must focus on that problem on a national level. The president took the first step to doing that. The White House did. We're happy that they did, because it was more than just funding. We said we needed to stop the flow and that's important. And Matt, thank you for that, Fabian. It's 15,900 in our care now.

Question: But there's no funding, Mr. Mayor. So far there's not a single...

Mayor Adams: Well, we stopped the first phase. The first phase was to stop the flow, slow down the flow. We think we're going to reach the place to do that. And now, we are still in negotiation to get the dollars.

Question: Okay, so the governor's race is in the last couple of weeks. Earlier this week, a couple of polls showed that things are tightening. Zeldin's closing in a little bit. Are you going to be actively campaigning for the governor in the last couple of weeks?

Mayor Adams: Yes.

Question: Okay. Can you give us just an idea of what that'll look like?

Mayor Adams: Campaigning. I'm going to be campaigning, whatever she needs me.

Question: Thank you. So this program's about giving you...

Mayor Adams: Hello, Dana.

Question: Hi.

Mayor Adams: Notice I'm touching my nose, guys. What's up, Dana?

Question: So this program's about giving people a first chance, a second chance. Curious why you weren't willing to give Christopher Baugh...

Mayor Adams: I want to do what?

Question: I'm curious why you weren't willing to give Christopher Baugh, the Project Veritas guy, a second chance? Particularly since you've given so many of your colleagues and friends second chances and often talk about the importance of that.

Mayor Adams: The first tape we saw, Christopher made disparaging remarks about me. The team came to me and stated, "You know what? Are we getting rid of him?" And I said, "No." People crap on me every day. You got to be thick-skinned. This is what being a mayor is. Being a mayor means you're crapped on. But when you have disparaging remarks about first responders, that's unacceptable. It is not tolerated. My team didn't have to call me again. I say, that's not acceptable. I know what first responders went through. I cannot allow that to happen. And my team cannot be a part of that. So it wasn't about giving him... We did give him a second chance. The first tape, team came to me, I said, "No." Got to be thick-skinned in this business. But my first responders don't have to be thick-skinned and I'm going to stand up for them.

Question: I have a two part question for you. The first part, transit crime is up. Just today, we're seeing at least two stabbings on the subway, one with a sword. Is there anything that you guys can do possibly to cut down specifically on stabbings on the subway? And the second part to this question, are you looking for any sort of assistance from the state? The state's supposed to be sort of an overseer of the MTA. Do you think that they should provide more financial assistance, whether that be the NYPD or just money?

Mayor Adams: Yes. First, it's my responsibility to keep New Yorkers safe. That's my responsibility. We've made some major moves, a thousand new police officers on the scene, changing the way police officers are patrolling. 750,000 safety inspections. We had officers in precincts park their cars going into the subway system and do visual inspections, walking through. Over 19,000 of those who didn't follow the rules, 75,000 summonses, 51, 5,200 arrests. There's been a consistent presence, but we have to keep modifying until we get to where we want to be. So we are in conversations with the governor's office on some things we believe we need to do. And I think, in the next couple of days, we're going to be rolling out another phase to deal with this issue. The question was asked last week about the shootings and I think was misinterpreted when I was talking about too many guns on the street to deal with the shooting of a child in Rockaway.

But when you do an analysis of the subway crimes we are seeing, you are seeing that it's being driven by people with mental health issues. If you got a ninja outfit on and you're running around with a sword, swinging at people, something is wrong. Michelle Go's murder, you're seeing this mental health issue that we are facing. There's a small number of people with mental health issues that we need to make sure they have community healthcare and the support that they need. That is where we're focusing on. The stabbings you're seeing, the shoving people on the subway system that you're seeing, the attacks that you're seeing, they're mental health issues. And so, part of our public safety plan, making sure the police are there, but we have to have that

mental health aspect of it. We've done some things. We got rid of the encampments off our system.

We removed over 2,000 people who are living on the system and put them in safe havens. But we have to do more. The system must be safe actually, and people must perceive that they're safe. The combination. People keep focusing on I'm saying the perception of crime. Both are important. Because if the numbers are zero and you don't feel safe, then it's just as bad. And we're going to attack both of them.

(Inaudible.)

Mayor: What are you doing here? You normally here on Saturdays. You got to get him. I like this guy over here.

Question: With regard to the asylum seekers who are already here in the city seeking asylum, whether or not they're in the shelter system. It seems like there's a lot of legal red tape between them and being able to work legally even if employers want to hire them. What needs to happen in order to expedite them?

Mayor Adams: It makes no sense that we have an immigrant policy that states you can come into the country, but for six months, you cannot work. That just makes no sense. So for six months, a city like New York, we are obligated to provide food, shelter, and all the other needs. We need the federal government to modify that just as we did with Ukraine. We need to modify it. And the irony of it all is that while we're telling 21,000 people and the representative, the working-age people, that they can't work, we're dealing with a shortage in jobs. Some of these asylum seekers are nurses, some of them are professionals. We have a shortage of jobs that we need to fill. And so we're hoping the federal government can do the same thing that we did during the Ukrainian war of allowing individuals who are here to work who want to work. It's important to do so. You can't have single age men sitting around doing nothing at all. That is not a winning solution. And we think we have to do a better job.

I got to get this guy. He's going to ask a tough question.

Question: Just wondering, where's your police commissioner? Why hasn't she taken questions in two weeks?

Mayor Adams: That's news to me. She's been very front and center. She enjoys taking the questions. So she's DCPI, finding out what's going on with DCPI. Every morning, she's on the ground. Listen, I think Police Commissioner Sewell is a real winner, shows the level of brilliance. Whoever decided to pick her... Well, that was me. I just think she's a winner. I think that she has the right temperament, she brings the right energy to be the first woman police commissioner in this city. She has really set the bar for whomever comes after her. And I'm just excited by having her here. Thank you very much.

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