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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. Yesterday was a very important day in this city, as hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers came back to work. And we have been through such a fight against the coronavirus it has been such a difficult time in this city, but we saw yesterday the beginning of the comeback of New York City. Now, we have to be clear, we are not just trying to get people back to work. We are not just trying to return to the status quo that existed before the coronavirus. The corona virus taught us extraordinarily painful, powerful lessons about disparity, about the lack of equality in this city. So, our clear mission is to not just restart, not just recover, but renew this city. To do something very different. To come back as a city that is fair. A city that is just. A city that hears and sees all its people, and acts in their interests. We must build a different New York City as we move forward. And that is where the taskforce for racial inclusion and equity comes in. Leaders of this city government who are doing work here and now. I want to be abundantly clear about this, this task force was not named to talk about big ideas that would happen someday. This task force was named, specifically people who are leaders in city government right now. People of color who are leading city agencies, playing a crucial role so that we could do work right now to address disparity. I named the task force 45 days ago, it was with the goal of doing work that would have a tangible and immediate impact. And then working on the bigger vision as well of what we could achieve in the next year and a half, and what this city needs to achieve beyond. Already, the work of this taskforce has led to the decision to shift resources from the NYPD to youth services and social services. It has led to the decision to move the enforcement of street vending away from the NYPD. It has led to a decision to address health care issues, such as the creation of mobile testing in the hardest hit communities all around the city. But now there's more to do immediately, particularly on the disparities in health care, which are so sharp and so real. And were the foundation of why the coronavirus did such horrific damage in communities of color.

We have to address the underlying reality of health care being a human right. That is not understood still in this nation, but here in New York City, it is. And that is why we are guaranteeing health care for every New York citizen, every New York person, regardless of documentation status. This COVID crisis has shown how broken our national reality is when it comes to health care. How many people suffered for years without access, because access was based on money. How many people never got physical health care, and lord knows, never got mental health care. How many people just didn't even have a doctor they could turn to what we made clear with a decision a year and a half ago to move to guaranteed health care for all New Yorkers that we had to lead the way, we had to show that everyone will get health care, regardless of income, regardless of whether they have insurance or not, regardless of documentation status, if you are a New Yorker, you deserve health care.

And so, New York City created NYC Care and it began in August, 2019 in the Bronx, continued January of this year in Brooklyn and Staten Island. Tens of thousands of people now have their own doctor for the first time. For many in the first time in their lives, a doctor, a primary care doctor, they could turn to. Pay only what they could afford. If they could afford nothing, that doctor was still there for them. But the task force looked at the situation and said, even though that was a powerful start, we need to go farther. The task force called for NYC Care to be expanded rapidly in Queens and Manhattan, four months ahead of schedule so we could reach 55,000 more New Yorkers. Folks of limited means, but unlimited potential who need health care. And that means primary care. It means special care. It means surgery, dental care, eye care, women's health, affordable medications. Again, no one charged more than they could pay. That is a foundation, but where we need to go much farther is in the area of mental health, because we have seen what happens in a society that does not provide mental health care. I was painfully reminded of it as I joined members of the cure violence movement a week ago at Queensbridge Houses, largest public housing development in New York City. I talked to residents one after another, about the pain that they had experienced in the coronavirus crisis. And for so many, it was the pain of losing a loved one. It was the pain of not being able to mourn. It was the sense of injustice, and that all added up for so many people to create anxiety and depression, to bear down on them, to create a mental health crisis within the crisis. We need to help make sure that people get the mental health care they need. And the task force on racial inclusion and equity is focused on what we can do right now. And so, to talk about the latest initiative from the task force, I turn to someone who, and I know I may be a little bit subjective because of my love for her, but she is not only a great leader in this city, a great leader in this nation in calling for mental health care for all, and showing it can be done. The First Lady of New York City, Chirlane McCray.

First Lady Chirlane McCray: Thank you, Bill. Good morning, everyone. Before the pandemic, and I emphasize before the pandemic, a study found that, within New York City, serious psychological distress is three times higher among adults who experienced racism. And so, we were not surprised by the results of the survey the taskforce sent out to the communities hardest hit by COVID-19. 28 percent of the residents of the respondents said that mental health was their top concern. The tremendous grief and loss, anger around the tragic killings is palpable. And when job insecurity, housing insecurity, worry about the prospects of the children are included, with the depression, that's so often the company [inaudible] that is living with a chronic disease. It is a wonder how anyone manages such an emotional burden. Langston Hughes asked that question 70 years ago in 1951, when he asks what happens to a dream deferred, does it dry up like a raisin in the sun or fester like a sore and then run? Does it stink like rotten meat or crust and sugar over like a syrupy sweet? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load or does it explode?

The accelerated expansion of NYC Care provides another opportunity for people to connect to mental health services directly, or when they seek to address other health concerns. We are also turbocharging the mental health resources in the communities hardest hit by the pandemic working with 270 community faith-based organizations. By the end of this year, we will reach 10,000 more residents with mental health supports that include education, and information about resources, and coping strategies. We will also train trainers, and that's clergy, and community-based organization representatives. These folks who already have the trust of the communities, and the ability to care for others right there in the neighborhoods where people live, people

should have culturally competent care, and different ways to access support for themselves, and their loved ones. Costs should not be a barrier. There should be no stigma, and especially no wrong door when help is needed. These actions are a significant step in the direction that we want to go in these next week, and you'll be hearing more from us coming very soon. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you to our First Lady, to all the members of the task force. They are working constantly, and I mean constantly. As the First Lady said, when the task force recognizes something needs to be done right now, it will be done right now, and announced by the task force leadership, and then put into action by the City of New York. Now, I also want to talk about something that needs to happen right away, and that emerged from powerful, moving thoughtful conversation on Sunday at Gracie Mansion. It is important when people are struggling and fighting for change, and justice, it is important that not only are their voices heard, but they're heard in full that people who truly represent communities from which they come, the fights for justice that have pervaded for years, that they bring forward the pain, the anger, the frustration, but the solutions, the things that we can do differently, the things we must do differently. And that's what happened Sunday at Gracie Mansion, conversation that everyone involved thought should be different, should be something done truly mutually, not about photo ops, not about something superficial, but something essential. So, we spoke for quite a long time about just how much pain there is, about just how many challenges people feel in their everyday life, about how much racism affects every moment of every day, and particularly policing. We talked about the culture of policing that has to change. We talked about how pervasive the problems were, but it was not a hopeless conversation, in the end a hopeful conversation, because the leaders and activists who gathered believe the change could happen, and had specific ideas for change. And they put them before the first lady and I, and they said, these are the things that would matter. And we will start working on them one by one. I want to thank all of these leaders. All, but one of whom are here today, gathered with us. And one of whom will speak on behalf of the group, but I want to acknowledge and thank each, and every one of them. Reverend Kevin McCall, civil rights activists, born and raised in Brownsville has dedicated his life to fighting for equality. He is a former crisis director at the National Action Network, and he organized a very powerful, heartfelt Memorial for George Floyd at Cadman Plaza a few days ago, at which George's brother Terrance was present. Mike Tucker – Mike Tucker lost his own son to police violence, and became one of the city's real true, authentic leaders against gun violence, founded lay down – excuse me, Lay the Guns Down. The organization Lay the Guns Down has done extraordinary work to try and create progress and healing and a different reality in our streets. Anthony Bedford, President and cofounder of Brooklyn Chapter of Black Lives Matter, served in the United States Marine Corps, came back to his community, devoted to change has emerged as a powerful voice of justice, a leader organizing the peaceful protest for change, that have made such an impact on this City. Iesha Sekou, who will speak for the group of activists gathered, Iesha is the CEO of Street Corner Resources, a leading cure violence organization does extraordinary work engaging young people, helping them to reach their amazing potential, helping to protect them. And I've had many opportunities to talk to Iesha and see her work over the years, I have tremendous admiration for her. And one of the things I said during our State of the City address really was based on the work of Iesha and her colleagues who have done amazing, amazing, just beautiful work to nurture our young people. I said, in that speech, our kids don't need to be policed, they need to be reached. And Iesha, and so many other good people in cure violence and community-based organizations are reaching our young people in a positive

way. Gwen Carr was at our meeting at Gracie Mansion, mother of Eric Garner, one of the most prominent voices for justice in the city and in this nation – a conscience who has turned pain in the purpose of ever that phrase has been made real and human that's in the person of Gwen Carr, someone I admire someone I feel shows the best in all of us. Gwen is in Houston today as part of one of the recognitions of the life of George Floyd here representing her is Bishop Evans, cousin of Eric Garner. And Bishop, we thank you for joining us in this important moment.

So, before I turn to Iesha, I will simply recount the one crucial piece of the conversation at Gracie mansion, Sunday, the activists said it's time to do something officially representing this city to recognize the power of the fundamental idea of black lives matter, the idea that so much of American history has wrongly renounced, but now must be affirmed. And the proposal put on table was to name streets in each borough, and to paint the words on the streets of this city in each borough at a crucial location, one of which will be here near City Hall. And I want to thank Borough President Gale Brewer and Council Member, Margaret Chin, who are working with us on this effort. And we're going to work with these leaders and advocates, and of course the city council to find the other four locations, but what will be clear the street name and on the streets of our city is that message that now this city must fully, fully deeply feel, and this nation must as well, that black lives matter. And with that turn to Iesha Sekou.

Iesha Sekou: Thank you. Thank you, Mayor Bill de Blasio. It is a great pleasure and honor, to be able to have voice along with other leaders here and to be able to be in conversation with you and to look at ways to make this city better and greater. But I stand here thinking about Mike Tucker and Kadiatou Diallo and Gwen Carr, Nicole Bell, Dhahran Smalls, and all of the others who lost their loved ones to police violence. I have to say that they are in support of the street renaming and that there are good vibrations coming from that. But I would be remiss if I stood here and didn't talk about those mothers and grandmothers like myself, I have a 23 year old grandson when he comes to New York and the fear I have with him engaging about him, engaging the police it's – I'm nervous until he gets back in the house. My conversations with other mothers and grandmothers are basically the same, they're giving their children these young men and women a way to have to be because our police have a way that they are. So, I'm glad that we're in conversation about actions that need to be taken about the consequences for wrong police behavior. Abusive and brutal police behavior [inaudible] match consequences, that behavior is not within police policy, we cannot make it okay. I think, as a city, in our past, it just became part of what happens, another black kid was killed today. Well, that we don't want to see that we don't want to have to name a street, but I'm glad that we are, but we also want to make sure that police are not allowed to act in the way that we've been seeing. And so, I'm grateful, again, for the conversations that we're having. I'm looking forward to those conversations turning into action. We're looking very much forward to, and that's our community large to holding the police again, accountable for their behavior. I'm grateful that we are looking at the illegal chokehold and not just looking at it, but taking action on it to ban it – to ban it, it should not exist. I also have to say that we are looking forward to continued conversation overall, we're really, really proud that cure violence has been a major part in this city helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19. I have to give a shout out the street corner resources to speak piece forward team and all of the crisis management system in the office to prevent gun violence. So again, thank you for having me here, I'm really looking forward to eradicating this police

brutality and violence that we see in this city. So, thank you again. Thank you, Chirlane, for all your hard work. And I appreciate you both.

Mayor: Thank you, Iesha. And I want to just— amen, the point about the crisis management system and Cure Violence, which has been a hugely important movement in this city that this city government has supported more and more each year with more and more resources. And we've seen more and more impact of community leaders from the grassroots folks who stop violence before it even begins, folks who create community leadership to solve community problems. And Iesha, you've been one of the true leaders of that movement and it is proving every day that there's a better way. I want to thank you, and we have more, we're going to do together.

I'll conclude this section by saying to all of the activists, thank you, God bless you for the work you do. We're going to keep talking, we're going to keep meeting that doesn't mean everyone always agrees, but that doesn't, to me, stop there from being powerful, meaningful dialogue, that leads to change. One thing we have all agreed on is the only change to discuss is change that can happen now – deeds, not words. And so, we will continue in that spirit meeting and finding the next step and the next step and the next step and helping this City to move forward. I know all the activists have a lot to do today. So, they're, they're going forward with their work today. Thank you all. Thank you for having joined us and we will continue in this work together. Thank you.

Let me continue with some other important updates. Yesterday, I got a call from the Mayor of Houston, Texas, Sylvester Turner, who is an extraordinary public servant, who's dealt with amazing, painful challenges in his City – amazingly difficult time in his City, not just now, but the years before. And Houston is the hometown of George Floyd. Mayor Turner asked me, could we light our City Hall in remembrance of George Floyd, and he specifically asked us to light with the colors of George's high school football team. And we did that last night at City Hall, a small gesture, but an important one in solidarity with the Floyd family, with the people of Houston, with all of those fighting right now for justice.

Now, it is a reminder, so many people right now are looking for the real, tangible, meaningful things that we can do to change what's broken. I am so heartened by the changes that I see happening immediately, and I want to thank our legislators in Albany who are doing extraordinary work. I spoke to a Speaker, Carl Heastie and Majority Leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins over the weekend. The package of— reformed the reforms that they put together in Albany are profoundly important for the future of this City, this state, this nation, particularly the reforms of the 58 law that have held back transparency that the law that has for years stood in the way of transparency, the reforms that are needed to fix it. For so many years, including as recently as February, when I testified in Albany, I have been calling for this law to be either changed or repealed, replaced, whatever way you look at it to get rid of a broken law that was standing in the way of transparency and harming the relationship between police and community, that is finally happening after years and years and years, that is finally happening. That means we're going to be able to restore trust by showing very transparency, what's happening in the discipline process in the NYPD and the actions that we have taken this city based on the work of the task force on racial inclusion and equity, shifting funding from the NYPD to use services that

will be formalized in the next few weeks in the city budget, the move to take away vendor enforcement, street vendor enforcement from NYPD, that will be acted on immediately. And we'll look at other ways to put civilians forward, wherever possible, the way that improves the level of peace and understanding of this community while keeping people safe at the same time. And then the community ambassadors we discussed just a few days ago, we hired within the NYPD to bring the voices of communities forward, to create more of a flow of both information and insight and a better way of doing things that need to be heard deeply within the NYPD. Those are just beginnings, there is so much more to do, and our city council is doing some very, very important work now. I have had a discussion with the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus of the City Council, I want to thank them for their leadership over these last weeks. And I'm going to be speaking with them again, to talk about all the steps we needed to take, some of which are legislative, some of which are administrative, some of which are a budget, but this is going to be an ongoing process of change. It's going to be a part of a year and a half of relentless effort and change.

Today, the City Council is hearing four bills, a chokehold band for the NYPD a bill that will affirm every individual's right to record their interactions with police officers, a bill, to ensure that all police shield numbers and rank designations are visible to members of the public and a bill to ensure there will be early intervention on any officers who need more training, more monitoring, anything that will adjust the course of their career to make sure that it reflects the values of this City. I want to affirm that I broadly support all of these bills, there are some specific details being worked through, but I'm confident that we will work them through, and we'll be able to move forward together with the City Council on all four of these bills.

Finally, everything that we're dealing with is against the backdrop of this battle against the coronavirus. The pain that people are feeling is not only about the injustices that have been pervading relationship between police and community. The reality of structural racism in this country, the reality of an economy that was fundamentally based on income inequality; all of that existed before the coronavirus and then the coronavirus took such a horrible toll on communities of color, one injustice piled upon the next and the frustration is so deep. And when Chirlane invoked the poem from Langston Hughes, it captured this moment as well; this moment of pain upon pain, upon pain. We have so much to do, but remember we have to do it while fighting back the coronavirus to save lives in all communities, but also to take away that which has created so much additional injustice and start the framework for that fair recovery that we must have in this city. So, fighting the coronavirus in every way possible is essential to doing the work of justice. Right now, we saw an extraordinary moment restarting yesterday and the emergence of our Test and Trace Corps on a scale never before seen in the United States of America; now, thousands of tracers out there, right this moment, talking to the people in New York City. Making sure that anyone who tests positive - it's followed up on - their contacts are traced. Those people get the support they need; those people get the testing they need. If they need to safely separate from others, all the support is there. This is going to change the trajectory of the coronavirus in New York City, but every single day, we're going to watch what happens with this disease. We're going to see if our efforts are working, we're going to need every New Yorker to be a part of it if we're going to fight it back. I'm going to keep reminding you, it all comes down to you, stick to the strength and the discipline, the teamwork, the sense of concern for yourself, your families, but for the whole community that all New Yorkers have shown.

So, let's talk about the indicators and thresholds today. Number one, the daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, that threshold is 200 and today we are well within that threshold at 52 patients. Second, daily number of people in Health + Hospitals ICUs - that threshold is 375, we're well within that threshold again today at 337. And this last one is unbelievably good news and it doesn't mean it's always going to be like this and it doesn't mean we don't need to keep fighting because we do, but I'm so proud of New Yorkers, you have earned this one; the percentage of people tested citywide who are positive for COVID-19 as more and more and more testing - well, over 30,000 tests a day now happening in New York City – that threshold is 15 percent, for the first time since the beginning of this crisis. Today's report only one percent, only one percent of those tested, tested positive for COVID-19. That is an amazing statement on what all of you have achieved; all of you have done. Let's keep clinging to that progress. Let's build upon it. Let's beat back this disease. Everybody, work together, work with the Test and Trace Corp, work with your neighbors. Every time you keep that face mask on, every time you stay home when you can, every time you practice social distancing, you're beating back this disease. But look at that one percent only, an extraordinary day from New York City.

A few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we will turn to questions from the media and our new format that we will discuss. And again, remember to give me the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: Hi, all just a reminder, we have First Lady McCray here in person and Deputy Mayor Thompson, Deputy Mayor Been, Deputy Mayor Perea-Henze and Executive Director of the Taskforce on Racial Inclusion and Equity Bonilla on the phone. I also wanted to remind you that when called on, you'll have the chance to either ask one question and a follow-up or one question, and then after it's answered a second question. In the interest of time, we will still limit each reporter to two questions, but it's up to you whether your second is a follow-up on your first or a new question altogether. With that, I will start with Rich from WCBS 880.

Question: Mr. Mayor, hello.

Mayor: There you go. How you doing?

Question: Yeah, I'm here. Yeah. Mr. Mayor, do you think that all of this talk about defunding the police is undermining the average cop's outlook on his job? I mean, this is a tough thing to hear I think if you're a police officer.

Mayor: Rich, it's a very fair question, but I don't think these things have to be a contradiction at all. For years and years in this city, we have been building neighborhood policing – the idea is to bond our police and our communities, the idea is to respect everyone. And, in fact, what I have heard from NCO's and cops involved in neighborhood policing is they really prefer having that human relationship, that connection to the community they serve, not to feel like there's distance, but they want to have that human reality. We're all in this together and that was impossible when

things like stop and frisk existed in this city, you couldn't have that. When there was a policy of over arrest, you couldn't have that, but now, and I've heard it from officers, I've heard it from community members. Now you have a reality that's starting - only starting - Rich, but we have to build upon where officers can have the true fulfillment of knowing that they are at one with the communities they serve, protecting the peace, stopping crime of course, but also connected deeply to community. So, we have to do that work; that is the truest work. The retraining of officers, that respecting professionalism by giving training, all of that work matters. Saying that we need to take money from a police department and give it to youth services and social services because we have desperate needs that must be addressed because our young people must be uplifted. That is not an affront; that is an affirmation of the young people and the communities that need help. And Commissioner Shea powerfully said that if there was any place he would ever want to see money go, if he had to lose money from his budget, he said it, "if I had to lose it, I want it to go to young people." He said that publicly, and it is absolutely consistent with what he say, he said months ago, in terms of redefining the mission of the NYPD to focus proactively and positively on young people. So, Rich, I don't think it has to be something that people would feel upset about or worried about. I think it could be something affirmational about the way we're going to move forward together.

Now, Rich, what do you want to do next?

Question: I'll ask a different question then. So, is anybody in the administration actually laying out plans for what happens if you, if Washington and Albany don't come through? In other words, you actually – do you have a blueprint? Do you have an idea of what kind of cuts would happen?

Mayor: Yes, only Rich, I'm not lying to you if I say, when we think about the dangers we face, it's very hard to look at them because we're talking about billions and billions of dollars and it is a very real scenario right now. The last we're hearing the Senate – the US Senate does not intend to take up the stimulus in the month of June. We must legally have our budget by June 30. We're still in discussions with Albany. I do believe we will eventually get there on borrowing, but we're not there yet. If neither of those things is ready in time, we will see, unfortunately I feel very pain to say it, but we will see cutbacks across all city agencies and it's not something we want to do. And we're trying to figure out now how that would be grappled with; we're obviously in conversations with the City Council on it as well. So that is becoming tragically, I mean, it truly tragic because a lot of people will suffer if there aren't resources available, or if people are not able to continue their employment in the middle of this horrible economic crisis. I don't know why Rich the Senate, after watching the coronavirus and then now watching that the problems have been dredged up so powerfully in the last week or two in America; I don't know how they choose to not act. You would think the stimulus will be the most sensible thing now more than ever, but what we're hearing is they won't act. We'll try and do something to fix that. But yeah, we are preparing those plans and, and you know, we're going to have to come to grips with them very quickly, we have only three weeks till the budget, and it will be a very, very tough scenario if we have to do it.

Moderator: Next we have Juliet from 1010 Wins.

Question: Oh, hi. Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good morning all. So, my question is this, shootings in New York City have doubled in the past month and according to Chief of Department Terence Monahan, he says gun arrests have occurred – the most gun arrests have occurred in Brooklyn, 78 percent of those arrested have been released on their own recognizance. And there were seven shootings in Brooklyn last night. So, what do you think about that? And what is the plan to curb gun violence?

Mayor: Yeah, Juliet. We are going through an extraordinarily difficult time where all of the pieces, you know, all these things simultaneously, the massive health care crisis, massive economic crisis, the human crisis that we're going through, the crisis over justice and on top of that, a budget crisis, like we've never seen – all of these things are happening at once. This is arguably the toughest moment New York City has gone through in its history, but it's also a city that can handle, I think, anything. I think that's the people of New York City that we are willing and able to take on any challenge. So, we're going to have to find a way to address this uptick in violence. And I'd say it's a couple of things – it's deepening neighborhood policing, which clearly worked; it is a pinpointing where we're seeing the problems, which is the story of CompStat, and clearly worked. When the NYPD – there's been times throughout this administration, every administration where we saw upticks, the NYPD focused strategically on those areas and was able to address the problem. We need cooperation from prosecutors when it comes to gun violence. We need more cooperation from prosecutors to address gun violence. We need our criminal justice system to restart. We all understand why the court system has been largely out of commission, because of coronavirus. Hopefully, that's going to change now. We're going to be able to do things as the city comes back to life to create more action in terms of the criminal justice system. We're going to need all of that, Juliet.

Question: I do have a second, sort of, related question. Do you see community leadership and activists playing a bigger role in, or with the Police Department? And, if so, to what extent?

Mayor: Yes. Juliet, we have tried now for over six years to try and deepen the role of community engagement with the police, whether it's traditional methodologies like police precinct councils, which do really important grassroots work; whether it is the work of the Cure Violence movement, which is a different approach, but one where there's still dialogue; whether it is listening to activists who have called for change and reform and all the things that we have done; way back, it's the end of stop and frisk, but think of everything else over the years – the reduction in arrests, 180,000 fewer arrests in 2019 than in 2013; the reduction in incarceration, 11,000 people in Rikers the day I came in the door in our Correction system, 4,000 today. Many, many reforms and changes that came from the voices of communities. We have to deepen that. What I talked about with the activists that Chirlane and I met with Sunday is a series of additional changes we have to make. And so, yes, the NYPD needs to listen. City Hall needs to listen. I need to listen. We need to keep going farther. And I think we can, in a way that supports the safety of the people of the city, because there is a right way to police, and there is a right way to make sure we work with the grassroots. The truest safety comes from the grassroots, and that's what those voices are calling for, and that's what we can achieve.

Moderator: Next we have Andrew from NBC.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, and everyone on the call. Hope you're doing well.

Mayor: Yes, Andrew. How are you?

Question: Good. I hate to channel Katie Honan here, my good friend, but I do want to ask about the summer. Today could hit 90 degrees, it's possible in the afternoon. I'm wondering, what progress you've made towards coming up with any plan to allow young people to either swim in a pool, swim at a beach, or get in a sprinkler?

Mayor: So, a very important question, Andrew. You're channeling an important question from Katie. We've got to start with the things we know we can do. So, we talked about before the additional sprinklers that we're going to set up in parks that, even under the current conditions of phase one, we can do in a safe and appropriate manner. So, there will be cooling for young people, cooling for older people that we talked about before the actions were taken with the air conditioners and cooling stations. But you raise a very important point about the beaches, the pools. We're now going to be reassessing everything. We're making some real progress. And I want to emphasize, Andrew, we've had two with the coronavirus – no two days have been the same, to say the least – we've had to always guard against the possibility that coronavirus was not being beaten back. Remember that period of time – and I'm knocking on wood as I say it – were we thought we might be in a plateau, where it was just going to stay at a high level and not change? Obviously, before that we thought it was going to keep going upward. Thank God, through everyone's effort, it has gone lower and lower, but we have to make sure it stays lower. If we can do that, then we're having a real conversation about beaches, for sure. If we can do that, there may even be a way to get back to pools. We're not there yet. And I'm not keep saying to people, I understand the great anxiety to get there, but we have to make sure that we don't do the worst of all things, which is to allow a resurgence. If we had a resurgence the wrong way, then we're literally shutting down phase one and going back to fuller restrictions or worse. So, it's going to take a little patience, but, absolutely, we can have a conversation now with a little more opportunity to envision progress around beaches. And now, we can start a conversation around pools. I don't know if we'll get there, but at least we can at least begin that conversation now for the first time, based on what you saw today with those indicators. Do you want it – do you have a second one?

Question: My second question has to do with outdoor dining and phase two in New York. You had indicated it would be the beginning of July. All the other regions have been able to move to phase two in two weeks, which would put New York City on June 22nd. Why could you not [inaudible] and how close are you to giving restaurants the details about how they can reclaim some of the street space?

Mayor: Yeah. So, two parts to that answer. Absolutely – is it, if you will, legally possible that we could get to phase two by the end of June? Yes. We need to provide answers on that timeline. So, that means over the next week or 10 days, we have to fill in as many of those blanks as humanly possible. But I've been very clear, and I said it yesterday, that I'm not saying June 22nd, which is the earliest, you know, official date, according to State guidance, because I do not want to unduly raise expectations. We are not like the other regions of the state. I love the whole State of New York. I've been all over the State of New York. We are different and we're different than

almost every place in the country, that's why we were the epicenter – just the nature of life in the nation's largest city. So, I'm not – people – I want people to hear that we'll work with the State. We're going to constantly communicate with the State, Andrew, but if we're ready on June 22nd, that's beautiful, but I don't want people to have undue expectations. We're trying to do something so difficult in these next few weeks, bring back hundreds of thousands of workers and ensure that we keep the coronavirus down and then bring back many hundreds of thousands more. So, I said July because I wanted to keep expectations a little lower. But if we can get there sooner, of course, if the State and the City agree and we think it's safe, of course. So, yes, an answer to your question, we owe those restaurants guidance very quickly this week, next week.

Moderator: Next we have Shant from the Daily News.

Question: Yeah. Good morning, everyone. To start with, I wanted to ask about the number of letters and even a march with your own staffers recently criticizing your handling of the protests and making demands such as majorly defunding the NYPD and immediately firing officers who used excessive force. Are you planning any actions specifically to meet staffers' demands or to otherwise assure them they should continue to work for you? And yeah, if we could start with that and then I'll ask my follow up.

Mayor: Shant, look, I worked in City Hall as a staffer and an administration dedicated to change in an extraordinarily difficult time in the City's history. I respect the heartfelt views of the members of this team. I know they are speaking from their own honest view of things. And I respect everyone's choice. If people don't want to work in this administration, I respect that. We're going to continue the work, whether they choose to be a part of it or not. We're going to continue to work. I hear people's voices, but I also understand that there was an election that determined a direction. I put forward a vision, we are acting on that vision, we're going to deepen that vision. That's what democracy is all about. And I've been very clear about the changes we're going to make. And so, people should understand, you know someone by what they have done. When we got rid of stop and frisk, when we settled the Central Park Five case, when we reduced arrest, we ended marijuana arrests, we put body cameras on every patrol officer, we retrained the entire police force in de-escalation, we create a dynamic for a police force that's now majority people of color, more and more women officers, more and more officers who are from the City of New York. We brought forward a whole new generation of leadership, including more and more people of color and women in leadership. This is just some of what we have done to change the NYPD, all in the rubric of neighborhood policing, which is a profound redirection for this agency. And now, we're going to do a lot more, and we are going to relentlessly change this city and this Police Department over the next 18 months, and anyone who wants to be part of that mission, that's where we're going.

Question: Yeah. So, I think on a related note, wanted to ask about a high-profile departure that Politico reported this morning saying that Alison Hirsh is leaving City Hall and going to DOE over objections of your handling of the protest. So, I just wanted to ask between that, and, you know, some staffers published publicly criticizing you, I think even people who don't necessarily follow the inner workings of your administration have to be wondering, is it imploding? Could you address that?

Mayor: Shant, I appreciate your attempt at drama, but it's just inaccurate. I have tremendous respect for Alison, she cares deeply about the issues of education. She's been focused on those issues in her previous role, a lot of what she did focused on those issues. She happens to be a working mom who cares deeply about the reality of kids in public school, parents and everything they're going through. We're asking her to take on a role, which we actually talked about with her to begin with. It was – might've been her original role – and now it is a role that makes sense in terms of the crucial need to bring back the New York City public schools. The hardest mission our public school system has ever gone on. We'll be coming back in September, and it has to be literally the greatest school year in the history of New York City. So, it's all hands on deck, and I think she will contribute greatly to that mission.

Moderator: Next we have Henry from Bloomberg.

Question: Hello, Mr. Mayor. How are you doing?

Mayor: Hey, Henry. How are you doing?

Question: Okay. I just have one question. I was speaking with someone in the Health Department and they said that when people come in, admitted to hospitals with suspected COVID, they're not sure because they're untested at that point. There's no contact tracing of these people. In other words, they're treated at the hospital, they're tested there, but there's no examination of who they may have been close to. So, in the hours or days that it takes to get a test result, these people out in the world who they've had contact with presumably are infected or in the process of becoming infected and they're not located, nobody knows who they are, they're spreading the virus. Why aren't people who are admitted to hospitals immediately in touch with contact tracers?

Mayor: Henry, I don't know who you spoke to, but that is not the approach. If there's something that's being missed, we'll fix it immediately. I'll make sure you talk today to either Dr. Mitch Katz or Dr. Ted Long. Contact tracing is for everyone who tests positive in New York City, regardless of where they test positive. If someone comes to the hospital, they're not yet identified as COVID, because, as we know, some of the folks who are coming in with respiratory symptoms may not be COVID. But anyone who test positive for COVID, every single one of them gets contact tracing. If there's any piece of this be tightened up, it will be tightened up. So, we'll make sure you get that follow up discussion.

Question: I'm not sure you understood my question.

Mayor: I thought I did, try again.

Question: People come in to the hospital, they're suspected COVID patients, they've got these symptoms. They have not been tested yet. The test results are not in, but they're suspected of having COVID to the point where they've been hospitalized. Their contacts are not traced until a positive test result is obtained. And this is coming from the press office of the Health Department.

Mayor: Henry, thank you. I think when you said your question, I heard the test result piece, and I appreciate your clarity. I would use the word symptomatic, just so we're all speaking the same language. I think I hear you now saying, if someone was symptomatic, but not confirmed, would they be followed up on? Yes, because, remember, we need to go after symptomatic people too, to the maximum extent possible. Now, I want to affirm to you that we've got so many positive – confirmed positives that the Test and Trace Corps is reaching out to right now – that, by definition, is job-one, because we know a certain number of the folks going into hospitals do not have COVID. That is a fact, it has been traced. We should show you that information, because it's important. It came up in an earlier question that was a very good one – I think Matt asked it – about the difference between some of that goes into hospital, COVID suspected, versus how many are actually confirmed. COVID. So, tomorrow, I want to speak about that in the briefing. People should realize that, thank God, a certain number of those folks who are going in turn out not to have COVID. That's a very good thing and we need to affirm that. But your point about symptomatic folks is well taken. The Test and Trace Corps should – has to first go after the positive – confirmed positives. But where there are symptomatic people, it makes sense to start that work as well, presuming there are resources available as we move more and more people into test and trace. We're at thousands of people now, we're going to keep growing it. I want to see us reach more and more into symptomatic folks as well. So, we will do that follow up with you so you get the specifics. But your point is well taken, so long as – you can also hear my point that job-one is where you have a confirmed positive, because you know it, and a lot of those folks who are COVID-suspected in the hospital turn out not to have COVID.

Moderator: Next we have Jake from Gothamist.

Question: Good morning.

Mayor: Good morning, Jake.

Question: Hi, so, yesterday we published both full videos of police officers violently detaining legal observers with the National Lawyers Guild during Thursday's protest in Mott Haven. When we asked PD about this yesterday, we were told the cops were enforcing curfew despite the fact that your own office said legal observers were exempt from the curfew. When one legal driver tried to show officers documentation of that exemption, the officer crumpled the paper to the ground and tossed the woman to the street. There's another video that shows an officer with the NYPD Legal Bureau telling cops that legal observers can be arrested. So, my first question is whether you think the officers involved in these stops on Thursday should face discipline?

Mayor: Well, Jacob, it is a very important question. I do not believe ever that a legal observer should be arrested period, if it's a legitimate legal observer, there is no way they should ever be arrested unless they are committing a specific crime. And, obviously, the same goes for members of the media. We talked about that the other day. I will not accept that from the NYPD. If they are in any way violating those very essential rules of a free society that media and legal observers, certified legal observers, certified media and, Jake, not everyone, of course, who claims to be something is something, but as you're saying, if someone's showing their documentation, that needs to be honored. So, we need to fix that immediately.

In terms of what kind of discipline – the question I would have is, is discipline applied to an individual officer or the person who gave the orders? And we need to look at that specifically, but that should be a part of the investigation of what happened in Mott Haven. I am convinced that there was a profound danger that day. That doesn't mean that everything was done right. There is a full investigation going on right now by the State Attorney General, by the independent review that our DOI Commissioner and Corp Counsel are doing, and, of course, by the Internal Affairs Bureau. I want the truth of what happened in Mott Haven. I believe, based on all the information I received, in the afternoon before the protest and during the protest, that there was a real and tangible and very dangerous threat of violence in that situation that affected the whole approach. But that does not mean we don't need to look at everything that happened and see if there was anything done inappropriately and there needs to be any accountability for any officer or supervisor. That needs to be part of that review and it needs to happen quickly.

Question: Okay. So, my follow up question related to that, is that, you know, when we first asked about this on Friday, Dermot Shea said, this operation was executed nearly flawlessly. He claimed that police found a gun on protesters and gasoline. Yesterday, I believe the Post reported that the gun was seized hours before the protest at a separate location with no apparent link to protesters. There was no gasoline found at the site as far as we know. Are you [inaudible] your Police Commissioner is spreading misinformation about protesters?

Mayor: I believe he was responding to everything he knew in an incredibly dynamic and complex situation. I can understand everything we're talking about here, Jake. I know you personally were there. I know it was a painful reality for you. And I respect that. The problem during the whole sequence, those nine or ten days, was that violence was introduced into our protests in a way we had not seen in this city in such a sustained pattern. We need to find out who did that violence. We need to find out if it was groups from Antifa, if it was right ring groups pretending to be Antifa, whatever it was, if it was just individuals, but that violence caused a whole different reality in this city on top of the very different and also unacceptable violence on Sunday and Monday night at the beginning of the protests. The violence in the Bronx, the violence in Midtown had nothing to do with the protests, but it added another element that had to be addressed.

When we are able now to review everything in the cool light of day, I think what we're going to see is a particular challenge this city never faced in combination, on this scale, ever. And what was most important was to save lives and ensure that no one lost their life, whether a civilian or police officer, but now we have to do the work on understanding exactly what happened, what was done right, what was done wrong, what should be the consequences, what policies should be changed, what accountability needs to be held. But that specific moment, the Commissioner showed me what the NYPD had received earlier that day, that afternoon, the threat to that area, the threat of violence coming from an organization that had done violence before. Those items that were seized were seized in the immediate area. Those are real things, Jake, that does affect the thinking of those charged with keeping us safe. It's very hard to see all those indicators at once and not believe that something very dangerous is about to happen and not have to take action to make sure that no one has killed. So, I believe that's what was motivating the Commissioner, but there will be a full investigation.

Moderator: Next we have Steve from Westwood One News.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. Want to make sure you can hear me well before I start my question.

Mayor: Yeah, Steve – how you doing?

Question: I'm doing well. Thank you very much. I'll start with one about contact tracing. You know, we're still seeing a significant, definitely a lower number, but a significant number of new coronavirus cases each day. And presumably some of those new cases were the results of the contact tracers responding to new positive cases and going out and mapping the contacts, getting those people tested. At some point that contact tracing effort would, in theory, bring down the daily number of new coronavirus cases to such a low number that you'd consider it successful and it's safe to go back to normalcy. What figure would the city have to get down to in order to declare that we reached a low transmission rate and say that the program has worked? And by what date would you like to see the city getting there?

Mayor: Well, Steve, you're asking the big, big question. I appreciate that question. We're talking all the time about that very question and trying to figure out how we define that. You're right, that the number of cases is so much lower, but we're still talking about hundreds per day. If each case leads to three, four, five, ten people that then need to be followed up on who are the close contacts with the person that tested positive, it's a huge amount of work and that's every day. And then the next day brings a whole new set of assignments. That's a lot. I do believe with time – and I've talked to health care leaders, I don't think there's anyone who has this specific answer you're looking for. It's a very good question, but I don't think – I literally have not met someone who can say this is exactly how it goes. I had this conversation just yesterday with Dr. Varma.

I think it's fair to say that the more we can kind of wrap our arms around, squeeze, contain this disease through the contact tracing that – you are right, that should push down the numbers with a challenge of a counter dynamic as more and more people are coming in close contact because of going back to work. Even with all the precautions, humans are humans, it's not going to be perfect. So, you will see some spread of disease when people go back to work. Our job is to keep it very contained, and if we see a localized site that needs to be addressed immediately, or even shut down immediately, to take those actions. But, Steve, I don't think we have an exact number. I think if you said, what's the final stage look like where we really have succeeded, it's where there's basically no new cases in New York City. Only if one comes from outside New York City, which is a ways off to say the least, that's probably at this point only achievable with a vaccine.

So, to get to that low transmission phase, I think you're talking certainly, you got to go through the whole summer into the fall because we're going to have to deal with the impact of each new phase, each new reopening, and what that does even as we build the contact tracing bigger and bigger and bigger. But, look, if we can get there over the next few months, I would consider that a real victory – if we could get to the point that we could literally say, we had only a handful of new cases each day, that came from New York City. That would be a huge victory, but I can't give you the date yet. It's going to take some time to see what the reality brings. And, of course,

to make sure we never see a resurgence, which is the clear and present danger I worry about every single day.

Question: Thank you very much for that answer. I appreciate it. And then the other question concerns phase one of the reopening yesterday, you know, many of the city's most popular retail stores in some of the most popular shopping districts remained covered in plywood because of vandalism and looting that happened well over a week ago and has essentially disappeared. Those stores didn't seem to take advantage of the phase one reopening. What is the City doing to assure the retail sector that it is safe to take down the plywood, to do away with block after block of boarded up storefronts in places like Fulton Mall, where I was out yesterday and there were barely any stores that took advantage of the lifting of the restrictions? And what are you doing to support those retailers and keeping those stores, you know, safe right now and assured that, yes, you don't have to worry anymore that you can reopen, you don't have to put the plywood backup?

Mayor: Yeah, Steve, great question as well. Couple of different points. I've been talking to people in the retail sector, starting with the CEO of Macy's, who is absolutely confident in their ability to come back and raring to go. The reality of curbside pickup or pickup in-store is complicated for a lot of retail folks in a very tight urban environment. If you're talking about suburbs, you're talking about malls, things like curbside pickup are much easier, but in a lot of parts of New York City, it's not the easiest thing. The State rules are for the whole state, and we're the least car-focused part of New York State. The in-store is different and doable, but still harder because of distance. So, when I talked to the CEO of Macy's, Jeff Gennette, you know, they want to get going, they want to figure out how to do all of the above, but most especially, they want to get to phase two where they can get closer to normal operations. He told me the Herald Square store sustained very little damage, nothing that would stop them from moving forward. And generally, the word I've gotten from folks in the business community, they understand that we saw like a perfect storm over those first few days, and that now, of course, communities all over the city, small business owners, big business owners, NYPD, everyone's on alert for anything that might attempt to reassert in terms of attempts to harm people or property. And I really believe we're not going to say anything like that again, because that happened in, again, a perfect storm moment where a lot of attention was distracted elsewhere. That won't happen now. But I think what's going to happen, Steve, is that a lot of retail folks won't think phase one is what works for them because curbside pickup and in-store pickup just won't be the effective context for them. They want to get to phase two where they can do as much of their normal operations as possible. And that's when I think you're going to really see retail come alive in New York City.

Moderator: Next, we have Julia from the Post. Julia –

Question: Good morning. Hey, can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes, Julia, how are you doing

Question: Good. How are you? Happy day two of phase one on the city's reopening.

Mayor: Day two, phase one – I like that.

Question: Moving forward. I'm wondering, Mr. Mayor – my first question, could you please explain to New Yorkers why it took the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis for you to decide to shift funding from the NYPD instead of at any other time during your tenure, including after the death of Eric Garner right here in New York City?

Mayor: Yes, Julia, the fact – in the first years of this mayoralty, we were not only trying to deal with issues of justice and civil rights, we were trying to deal with issues of crime that were far from resolved. We now look back after six years of driving down crime to the levels not seen since the 1950s and we're able to look at a whole bigger agenda, but I want to be clear that in the beginning of this administration, we were dealing with huge challenges of violence against people who live in public housing. We were seeing a surge in shootings. We were dealing with a crisis between police and community that had been created by stop-and-frisk, and that crisis needed an answer. And the answer was neighborhood policing. Neighborhood policing actually required more resources.

The City Council prioritized a couple of years into my administration – their number one priority was more police officers on the street for safety. We added 2,000 more officers on patrol, and we did the things to reform the NYPD while also driving down crime, reducing arrests, reducing incarceration, and we can do a lot more. So, that was what we went through. That was what we had to address then. We're in a moment now where we can take this action, show people that our young people will be the focus, help uplift them, and still keep the city safe. I'm very comfortable we can make that goal achievable. Okay, you had a second one, Julia –

Question: Yeah, I did it. And it's actually for the First Lady, if she's still here.

Mayor: Yep. She's coming back from the Bullpen. Go ahead, she can hear you.

Question: Yeah. Happy belated wedding anniversary to you, First Lady. And then I'd like to ask you if you urged the Mayor to reverse his position on not cutting any funds from the NYPD to where he's at now, which is supporting a shift to youth services. And if not, how was that decision made?

Mayor: I will start and pass to the First Lady. The answer's yes, the First Lady and the task force believe that the shift of funds to youth services made sense, and she can tell you about it.

First Lady McCray: Julia, there's no question that it was important to move more funds to youth and social services. We submitted a questionnaire to more than 300 residents of the hardest hit communities. We talked to community leaders, members of community-based organizations, and that was one of the most important responses that we got back. You know, mental health was at the top, but the fact that we need more resources for our young people was right up there. There was no question that that was something that needed to be addressed. And I – even without those responses I talked to my husband about it, and I encouraged him to find – help us find ways to do that because you know, it's something I know from my heart. If young people don't have constructive activities during the summer, even better at have paid internships, have

mentorships, then you know, they're going to do something. And not necessarily anything bad, but it's a setback, any middle class family, any upper class family, you know, they all have activities for their children. They travel, they do – there are so many positive outlets for that energy that young people have. But in these communities, the opportunities are lacking. And they've been lacking and we have to do everything we can to address that gap.

Mayor: Okay. Who's next?

Moderator: Last two for today. And next we have Marcia from CBS.

Question: Mr. Mayor, I'd like to follow up on the question that I asked you yesterday, about where you're going to find money for police cuts. The City Comptroller has suggested that one way you could find that money would be a hiring freeze in the NYPD, which would be \$245 million a year. And over the course of the next year and a half would reduce the size of the police force to 35,000. Which is the same amount that was enforced from 2011 to 2016. Do you think that's something that you might look at as a possibility for cutbacks?

Mayor: Marcia, there's going to be a real dialogue with the City Council, as I said, I'm speaking again with the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus of the Council this week. A real dialogue about what makes sense to do in terms of shifting money from the NYPD to youth services and social services. There's also going to be a real dialogue about how we make sure we keep our community safe. I have had the honor of getting to know communities all over this city. And when I talked to City Council members about their neighborhoods, they consistently emphasized to me the concerns of everyday people, whether they are, you know, working class people, middle class people, lower income people, union members, store owners, homeowners, renters, they talk to me about the real lives of real people. When I was in Cambria Heights on Saturday, people came in and talked about what they're going through. Not only their concerns about justice and better dynamics between police and community, but also what's happening. They don't have paychecks. They don't know how to pay the rent. They're concerned about how to overcome the challenge of this moment. And they're always concerned about safety. And so we will figure out how to strike that balance, working with the Council.

I want to make sure whatever we do ensures the ability to keep all neighborhoods safe, including some neighborhoods that still have never known the safety they deserve. We talked about some precincts in this city that are still dealing with way too much violence, and we've got to find the right way to address that. So I'm not going to answer you about one specific approach or another. That's going to be a subject of dialogue. I'm going to give you the clear frame that I feel, which is we can find money out of the NYPD to go to youth services, social services, but we have to protect safety on the ground. That is exactly why this same City Council just a few years ago, wanted more officers in neighborhoods with a neighborhood policing mentality to build a different approach, to build relationships. So we'll figure out how to do that. Under obviously very adverse budget circumstances in general, but that's the balance we're going to strike.

Question: Mr. Mayor, my follow up question is this – so are you saying that you don't want to touch patrol strength, especially in these times where the NYPD is seeing a spike in crime?

Mayor: Marcia, I'm very concerned about that spike in crime. Look, I don't know what's going to hit New York City next. If it's going to be locus or what it's going to be, but, you know, there's something feeling a little biblical nowadays. We have the greatest health care crisis in the history of this city. We have an economic crisis only comparable to the Great Depression. We have a moment of profound pain and a cry for justice that must be addressed. And we have profound safety challenges that after years of beating back crime, we have seen in the last weeks, some very troubling indicators of crime rising. And it's rising in the same communities often that are hardest hit by the coronavirus and the economic crisis. So, we cannot allow people to on top everything else, not feel safe. We've got to figure out what that balance is. We're going to have a conversation with NYPD, how do we keep people safe? We're going to have the conversation with the Council, what's the right things to take out of the NYPD that makes sense so we can fund these other initiatives. And we're going to do it against the backdrop of the biggest fiscal crisis since the 1970's. So, somehow we're going to strike that balance, but I will only keep it broad Marcia, on purpose, because this is a subject of discussion, negotiation, and a lot of thinking we all have to do together. Whatever we do, we must keep the city safe.

Moderator: Last question for today, Luis from New York [Inaudible].

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: Hey, Luis, how are you doing?

Question: Hey, how are you doing?

Mayor: Good.

Question: I've got a question for Mr. Phil Thompson. It's my understanding that you're leading the Faith Based Advisory Council. There's no question how faith plays an important part in the lives of most New Yorkers. And considering how New York City's places of worship might be able to partially open after phase two, I was hoping you could enlighten us as to the purpose of the council and any progress made this far?

Mayor: I'll start and pass to Phil. Phil and a lot of others have been deeply involved in our faith efforts. Our Commissioner for Community Affairs Marco Carrión has been a key leader in that effort. The head of our community and faith initiatives, Reverend Dominique Atchison. And then of course the faith leaders for so long, we've had extraordinary leadership from pastor Michael Walrond, First Corinthian Baptist in Harlem. We've had tremendous leadership from CORL led by Cardinal Dolan and so many others. So the voices of faith communities are constant in this administration. We listen constantly. It's been crucial to the Thrive initiative with the faith efforts to spread mental health support through congregations. I've had a number of calls with faith leaders over the last few weeks, and they have been incredible in helping people through this crisis, including telling people that it wasn't time to come back to services. So now we have an opportunity to start services on a more modest level in phase two. And then build from there, but always making sure we're continuing to hold back this disease. So a lot of good work is happening. And then when there is specific suggestions – there's been suggestions about how to restart services that certainly contributed to the thinking of the City and the State. There's been

suggestions both ways, including us asking faith leaders, take the lead in helping people understand how to be safe. But we will be engaging faith leaders constantly on what they think will be additional steps we need to take for justice in communities and to serve communities' needs. And Phil, I know you have worked with a lot of faith leaders over the years. So if you have other reflections you'd like to offer on how we're going to work with them and some specific things that might come of that, I'd appreciate it. And obviously you've been particularly focused because you have Department of Youth Services under you, on the question of how we can serve youth, which is a central, central concern for faith leaders as well. Phil Thompson.

Deputy Mayor J. Phillip Thompson, Strategic Initiatives: Thank you. I would just mention three of the items we've been talking about on the Faith Council, and I will tell you that the conversations have been so robust that we decided to keep meeting for weeks longer than originally planned just so we can keep the dialogue going because so many things have come up. But one big concern of the faith leaders actually was that the entire faith community follow safe practices and not open up too quickly or unsafely. And that was a concern that the faith leaders themselves really emphasized. Two initiatives we discussed last week – one, several of the leaders that have large churches, synagogues, and buildings such as the Archdiocese in Brooklyn, want to open up their buildings for storefront churches, smaller churches that don't have the kind of ventilation or room for spacing people out. They want to open up their doors to invite those churches, to use their facilities so that they could have staggered hours for church services, things like that. And so that was something they were very interested in, the large churches. And we're following up on how to make that happen.

A second thing, many of the churches and synagogues said they would like – that are predominantly white, said they would like to invite people from the protest movements, Black Lives Matter, others to come and talk to their congregations about what they've been experiencing, what their aspirations are. So there could be more understanding across communities about all of this. And how we can all work together to achieve a more just and fair city. And that is something actually, we're all very excited about and we're going to continue those conversations and figure out how to operationalize a lot of that.

Mayor: Excellent. Thank you so much. Go ahead, Luis.

Question: Thank you, sir. That all sounds very promising. My next question is for you, Mr. Mayor. I traveled through the subways yesterday and I made sure I passed through major stations like Time Square and Grand Central. Admittedly there were barely any commuters. However, I didn't see the slightest bit of public awareness signage. There were social distancing markings only on a couple of station platforms and only one single platform controller, understandably so. Would I be correct in thinking that this will ramp up as we go forward in time?

Mayor: Yeah, look, this is, we have continued to work productively with the MTA. But I want to push them to do more and more and more. I believe the markings are crucial. This is an area we still haven't resolved. I believe that it would be really helpful that markings on every platform. Look, folks who own grocery stores, supermarkets. They put markings outside to show people where to stand in line. Like it's just so helpful. People make sense of things. When they see the markings. In my view, every platform, every MetroCard machine, every subway car,

every bus should have markings to show people. If you sit here, or you stand here, then here's the next place someone should be sitting or standing. I understand and I do feel sympathy. The MTA is trying to move a lot of people and they're saying, they're not sure that's realistic. And I appreciate why they say it. I think we have a chicken and egg problem here at Luis. I think if they would put down the marketing's more and more people would come back and be comfortable on the subways because it would give a sense of order. So, I would just urge the MTA to try it, try doing it more and more. See if it works. If it works, it might be a really great thing. If it doesn't work, I'll be the first to say it was worth trying, but it didn't work. So, I would like to see that.

On the signage? Absolutely. That should be the one thing we all agree, the MTA needs to step up on that. The signage is obvious. People need that. It helps them. And on the personnel, we are going to work with them on that. We're providing personnel to help them. They should maximize the use of their own personnel creatively. I think we can work together and make this work. But I do think a human directive presence, Luis helps. It helps people to think about what they need to do. I mean we're human beings. If someone's there who says, Hey, here's a good way to address, you know, to deal with this situation. Why don't you stand here? Why don't you stand there? Or that car is too full, go on the one behind it. People respond to that. So, and again, I want -- that's, that's all about education. That's not about enforcement. That's not about summonses. That's not about the NYPD. We took the NYPD out of that. It is about education and helping people see the right way to do things.

So, look, everyone, I'll conclude by saying we are dealing with some of the biggest challenges in the history of the city right now, maybe the single most difficult moment in the history of New York City. But I stand up here every day with faith. And I'll tell you why, because I know the people of this city, I just do. I know all of you. I don't know all of you personally, but I know the character and the heart and soul of the people of this city. I've spent a lifetime watching and listening and engaging and seeing the strength of this place. We will overcome everything that's been thrown at us. A few weeks ago, we didn't think the challenges of these last few weeks were coming. That happened. We will deal with this. We will deal with whatever's next and whatever's next and whatever's next. But we have to deal with it from a perspective of justice. We have to deal with it from a perspective of fairness. That's actually how you move forward, recognizing what was wrong and doing something about it. And I have faith we can do so much more. I really do.

So, for the next year and a half, you're going to see a lot of things change. You will see a recovery and you will see fairness pervade that recovery. And then it will be a better city to move forward into a future. And again, if you meet a person who says New York City can't come back, won't come back, can't overcome its problems. That person doesn't understand the people of New York City. Tell them they're wrong. Tell them we're going to show them how far we can reach together. Thank you.

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