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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO AND FIRST LADY CHIRLANE MCCRAY  
APPOINT J. PHILLIP THOMPSON AS DEPUTY MAYOR FOR STRATEGIC POLICY  
INITIATIVES**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Alright. Hello, everybody. Well, one of the things that always brings me joy is when we keep renewing and building our team here at City Hall. As we've started into the second term, we feel great about the team that we have that has continued on and we feel great about bringing in new talent.

So, today is a chance to add to the talent of the team and also to reiterate what our mission is. Every choice, whether it is about personnel or it's about a budget item or whether it's about policy, every choice should connect back to our philosophy and our core strategy.

So, I talked about it last week in the State of the City, the goal is to make this the fairest big city in the country. It is a very specific goal, a very tangible goal, and I gave you examples last week of what that would like and you'll hear a lot more in the coming weeks and months, but it was crucial to us to put together additional elements of the team to keep driving that goal and Chirlane and I as we thought about who should succeed Rich Buery, that was in the front our minds in the discussion.

We obviously adamantly believe that this city has a responsibility at this point in history to show what a fair and inclusive society looks like. We think it's something that's crucial for all 8.5 million of us but it has ramifications well beyond our borders.

It's also important to have a government that looks like New York City and reflects all of us. It's something that we believe in and we've shown to be both morally important and effective here over the last four years. It's something we're seeing the exact opposite of in Washington, D.C. It's not surprising that in Washington, in the current federal administration, we see a government that doesn't look like America and pursues policies that are so out of touch with the needs of everyday Americans.

Here, we know that drawing from every part of our community makes us stronger and more effective. So, it is my pleasure to say – and I'm a baseball fan so I will put this in the context of this moment that – this is the time when teams are making their free agent acquisitions.

[Laughter]

So, we just made a really big free agent acquisitions and I'm honored to name as our new Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson who is a friend of colleague for decades. In fact, we were just in my office reminiscing about many a moment together in this room and all around this building back in the early 1990s. And we all worked together in the Dinkins administration in what was a really tough time in the history of this city.

And if you watched Phil in those days, what was abundantly clear was the quality of his intellect, the creativity he brought to his work, his ability to work with everyone effectively, and the fact that he maintained optimism and energy no matter what was thrown at him and no matter what was thrown at the whole team.

And he hasn't changed in all these years, and that's a compliment. Chirlane and I, when we sat down at Gracie Mansion a few weeks back with Phil and his wife Dana and we had a deep conversation about this work and what it would mean, what struck me was how that core optimism and energy hasn't changed. And that's what we need to achieve a lot more for this city.

So, I'm going to say a little bit more about Phil and some of the specifics of his history and what he has focused on but I also want to take a moment up front to talk about Rich Buery.

Rich, this has been a fantastic partnership from the beginning. Chirlane and I are so grateful. And you know when you're involved in public service, you could sometimes wonder, what is it all achieving. Sometimes it may feel, you know, you're spinning the wheel because there are so many challenges but in your case Rich as you leave us in the coming weeks, boy, you're going to get to look back on so many positive and specific achievements particularly for our young people.

And I hope that that is something you're going to be proud of throughout your life. And Rich also said to me that he wanted to continue to be helpful to the team and remain involved and, know we're going to be taking you up on that.

I always say, be careful what you wish for. So I just want to thank you on behalf of 8.5 million New Yorkers for extraordinary service to this city.

As the handoff occurs, what you will see is that the great work that Rich started, Phil will continue and will deepen. We got four whole years ahead to do that. I said what I experienced with Phil decades ago but I've also seen his work in the years since particularly through his work at MIT and with local governments around the country and grassroots organizations, neighborhood organizations, he is someone who really thinks about the process of change and how to build it from the grassroots up.

And that is so crucial to the role he will take on. One of the things that runs through so many of these change making priorities that are part of the purview of this deputy mayor role is it

requires deeply engaging the whole community and that's an area where Phil has tremendous history and a history of success.

There is one thing one might protest in Phil's background – he's originally from Philadelphia but –

[Laughter]

You know, sometimes people who grew up in other places turnout okay.

[Laughter]

Now since I grew up in another place – I grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, I can tell you, you know in Cambridge and other college towns, there's a town versus gown thing so I have a little bit of have a little bit of a hang up with people who went to Harvard. Phil went to Harvard, Richard went to Harvard. I still have shown my openness of spirit by allowing them opportunity in this administration. But I will always be a little hung up about that institution.

Again great work in the Dinkins years in government, great work in academia but Phil's version of academia, and I say this as a tremendous compliment, doesn't resemble most academics' approach. Because his approach was to engage real people, real work, real movements around the country, even internationally and that's some of what excites me about the expertise he will bring to this role.

He has particularly looked at in his work how to strengthen communities that are disadvantaged and communities that need economic empowerment and that's crucial. If we are going to be the fairest city, we have to continue to deepen the economic empowerment of all communities. And that's going to be a crucial piece that Phil brings to the equation.

As I conclude I want to say, I just want to reiterate because this is what we look at when we are making a major personal decision. We look at expertise and the ability to get the job done. We look at values. We look at real alignment with the goals that we have and a burning desire to fight for fairness and you are going to certainly see that in Phil Thompson. So Phil, as the years have passed by when we first met each other it was probably 29 years ago, something like that. But again in the best sense I can say you haven't changed, so I commend you. Let me say a few words in Spanish then I'm going to introduce the First Lady to say a few words and then Richard and then Phil.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that I turn to the First Lady and she joined me in feeling great enthusiasm as we went through this process, especially once we heard of Phil's true interest in joining us and she is going to be working very, very closely with our new Deputy Mayor. Our First Lady.

**First Lady Chirlane McCray:** Thank you, Bill. I am truly delighted to welcome Phil back to City Hall after ever since meeting and working with him during the administration of Mayor

Dinkins. Bill and I have considered him a dear friend and a member of our extended family. He brings to this new role as deputy mayor a brilliant policy mind and decades of experience in government and academia.

Over the years he has worked closely with non-profits, labor unions, and foundations. Always with the goal of creating solutions to better serve people living in our cities, especially low income communities, and communities of color. Our connection to Phil is rooted in our shared values and unwavering commitment to public service, competence in government's ability to change people's lives for the better, and a deeply held commitment to equity, fairness, and justice.

Those are the values that drive all the leaders in this administration and so I know that Phil will fit right in.

[First Lady McCray speaks in Spanish]

As a scholar, activist, and public servant Phil has never shied away from the daunting challenges that affect our communities from economic and racial disparities, from economic and racial inequalities to health disparities to environmental justice and housing. We like that fearless spirit around here too. We like leaders who aren't afraid of taking on outdated traditions or unfriendly fire. Leaders who are always ready to work to achieve what may seem impossible.

In fact, one of the hallmarks of this administration has been tackling obstacles to ambitious goals by brining many different agencies to the table and working together to tackle systemic change, to create systemic change. And Phil gets it. He knows we have to think and work differently to overcome stasis and arrive at solutions that are lasting.

Anyone who has worked with him will quickly note that he is both a creative and nimble thinker and understands the importance of listening and offering different perspectives. Now, of course Phil has very big shoes to fill. As I've said before Rich Buery has brought persistence and artistry to his work to cut across silos and make changes happen. I'm grateful for his incredible leadership and close partnership and I know that if there is anyone, anyone else up to the challenge of this very big job is Phil Thompson. He will serve the people of New York City well. And I am very much looking forward to closely working with him.

**Mayor:** Thank you. And now the artist's currently known as Richard Buery.

**Deputy Mayor Richard Buery:** Nicely done, nicely done. Well, look I will just be brief. There are I think really two reasons as you will learn Phil why this is the best job in the world. The first of course is the work you get to do. And the second the people you get to do it with. The work of course speaks for itself. Every day we get to make this city a better, or a fairer, a more equitable place, a just place. And that has been a thrilling opportunity. And then of course the people you get to work with who are truly among the finest people I have ever met. And so I want to thank you again, Mayor and First Lady for giving me this opportunity. It has been quite a ride and I've loved every minute of it, maybe not every minute of it, but most of the minutes.

[Laughter]

**Mayor:** Don't lie to the media.

**Deputy Mayor Buery:** My team in particular I want to thank again, especially my chief of staff Alexis Confer who has been a partner and a friend and all the rest of our team here for all their hard work. The other thing I see is that Phil's family is here. And I think all of us who know this work, know that you don't do it alone. And so my wife Debra and my boys Elis, and Ethan who I love to death, and I just want to thank them all for this opportunity to loan daddy to the City of New York for four years. But hopefully I'll be home a little bit more starting soon. And to Phil I just want to say congratulations. It's hard to imagine just looking on paper or a better set of credentials and experiences for this job, the MIT notwithstanding.

[Laughter]

**Deputy Mayor Buery:** And I know you're going to have a tremendous impact in this as you had in other things and again it's really to the city's benefit that someone so talented and creative was willing to come and join this merry band. And I hope you will know that if I can ever be helpful, anything you do that I am here to be there for you. And wish you the best of luck.

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Phillip Thompson:** Thank you.

**Mayor:** Thank you, and now the man of the hour. Our new Deputy Mayor, Phil Thompson.

[Applause]

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Thank you, I noticed Marcia Kramer just checked her watch. Okay.

[Laughter]

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** I want to first of all thank the Mayor and First Lady for this honor. It's really exciting to me and it warms my heart really to be able to come and work here with the two of them. And the First Lady said it; it's like working with family. And I really so looking forward to this opportunity. One of my first challenges will be actually living up to the clothing and dress standards of Richard Buery.

[Laughter]

But I will work on that.

[Laughter]

As the Mayor said he and I met – started working together almost 30 years ago. Both the Mayor, and the First Lady and I worked together here in this building for Mayor David Dinkins. What the Mayor didn't say was 10 years ago when I went to him with this crazy idea of actually

training inner city young people to take up careers, form careers, have jobs retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency. He immediately opened up his office and said hey set up right in my office, let's do this. And it was the same Bill de Blasio that I knew working here in City Hall way before. And many people overtime lose their focus, lose their energy, lose their love and commitment for the work that they do. But this Mayor never did. And that was energizing, refreshing, exciting to me and it remains so. So I want to thank the Mayor again for giving me this opportunity to come back home to New York. And it's great to be back here in City Hall where for me it all began. And I know that I will be part of an administration that is fighting for the goals that we cared about from the beginning. And that is a progressive government that puts people first – economic, and environmental sustainability, equity, and fairness. Now I have an opportunity to harness the power of this government to help create change in the lives of New Yorkers and in their communities. And this is what I look forward to coming to work every day here in City Hall.

I also want to take this time to thank the people who brought me into city government and mentored me. Mayor David Dinkins, who was really like a father figure to me. My wife and I spent our first wedding anniversary in 1985 in his kitchen, where he made us come to do a policy briefing on our anniversary night. And Joyce never forgave him for that. The late Bill Lynch who actually mentored me from when I was 22-years-old, and is someone I think about like every day, and Barbara Feith who's at a dentist appointment right now. But she's been a longtime friend and mentor of mine. And I want to thank all of them. And of course my family, my wife Dana is here, my mother in-law is here, my son James, my nephew Chris, my cousin who is like my younger brother, Chuck, his wife Teresa. I want to mention Chuck retired from customs after 30 years of service. And I said – he said – I asked him what do you want to do on your retirement and he said I want to work at a soup kitchen. So what he now does is a full time volunteer. He runs a soup kitchen in the South Bronx. His wife Teresa left DOI after 25 years and said I want to do something different. And I said what do you want to do Teresa? She went and got a Master's degree in counseling and said I want to work with young children who are having challenges in school. And so she's teaching in the South Bronx. And I just want to say you know, this is my family, and these are the people who I learn from, you know, all the time. And I couldn't do it without their support.

And lastly I want to say that, like the nation, New York City is on the cusp of great change, brought about by climate change and I need to deal with that. The digital revolution in technology which will have big impacts on future employment and how we live, and the emergence of a generation of young, multi-racial, progressive, urban Americans across the country. And I think this Mayor's election really signaled the arrival of that coming together, that new America, that we're beginning to see. And I can't think of a more exciting or important place to be than right here in New York City. So thank you.

**Mayor:** Thank you, well done, well done. Thank you. And to the family as well, thank you.

[Applause]

Yes it will be a family affair, so welcome to the team as well. Alright let's take questions on this news today of this appointment and then I am going to speak about another topic for a few minutes on gun safety and then we will go into other off-topic. Way back, Mara?

**Question:** Thanks Mr. Mayor. Deputy Mayor Thompson, hi, now you have a fair amount of experience in housing and you've also worked at the New York City Public Housing Authority before, obviously that's a little bit different than Deputy Mayor Buery's portfolio was and Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen's been involved in housing here, but are you going to involve yourself or be involved in the turnaround effort NYCHA or in other affordable housing initiatives at all?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** So we're still working out what I – my full responsibilities and portfolio, but in the main I will be taking up the work of Deputy Mayor Buery and I'm looking forward to that.

**Mayor:** I want to add that we have a very strong rule around here, we hire the person, we hire the talent, we hire the human being. Phil's done a whole range of things in the course of his career. He did start out primarily in housing but as you've mentioned he's gotten very involved in environmental sustainability and a host of other issues.

So my view is he will be ideal to move this whole government on some of the issues that are part of this current portfolio and I would love to get him involved in some other things as well. But we're going – we're going to determine the fine tuning over the next few weeks. Yes, Jill?

**Question:** Just to kind of follow up on that, the start of Deputy Buery's term, he was focusing on pre-K, which obviously was the biggest strategic initiative of that time, can you give us – even a broad sense of what you see as, you know, what it will be the strategic issues of your second term that Deputy Mayor Thompson might be overseeing?

**Mayor:** Well I want to – I'm glad you asked that way, because it really points out how the role evolved in a very high impact manner. In the beginning, Chirlane and I were talking about this the other night, we were trying to figure out how to achieve something as sprawling as pre-K and after school, after school hasn't gotten as much attention, but it was a big piece of the equation too.

It was multi-agency. It was on a ridiculously fast timeline, not that Rich Buery ever noticed. The only way to do it, we couldn't have it soloed, if you will, in the traditional fashion. So we thought, this only happens if it's handled by a Deputy Mayor who can cross those different boundaries effectively, and lo and behold, that's what happened.

At that point that was before Thrive existed. At that point it was not the place we had our MWBE efforts focused. Each of those pieces were added on as it continued to grow and as we saw other imperatives that had to be addressed. So I think the way to think about this role, right now, is it will continue to evolve as the administration's priorities evolved over four whole years.

I want to use the MWBE piece as an example. Not a part of the original portfolio. Came into Rich's portfolio a couple years ago, I think he's done an outstanding job, we're poised for a lot

more to happen on that front and as part of the handoff here, you know, Phil now has the mission of taking that up to the next level. That's going to a lot of work right there across, bluntly, every City agency. So you will see that kind of evolution as the role continues to grow over the next few years. Yeah, David?

**Question:** For Deputy Mayor, and given your experience in these housing agencies, how do you view the struggles that occurring there right now?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Well I haven't been there in more than twenty years –

**Question:** You can't not be watching that, especially given that you're considering this appointment.

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** I've been worried about public housing both in New York and the nation since I left. And the building stock is just getting old. And public housing has been defunded for 50 years. And so that's the broader context in which, you know, all of these problems that I have been reading about are occurring. And I think it's a problem for the nation as a whole, not only New York City, it's just that New York City is, sort of, the biggest public housing authority and the most difficult place in the country because simply of its scale.

**Mayor:** Bridget?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, you announced this new democracy agenda during your State of the City and Deputy Mayor Thompson you wrote a book talking about – reflecting on your time in the Dinkins administration, “Black Mayor's, Black Communities, and the Call for Deep Democracy”, so you anticipate having a role in that democracy agenda and can you talk a little bit about what that might be?

**Mayor:** I'll start and say yes. The democracy agenda also crosses a lot of different agencies. Given Phil's history it would be unnatural for him to be involved. Again how we're going to put together the final organizational chart that will play out over the next few weeks, but inherently given Phil's history, and given that it will be a very creative enterprise to do some things that City government hasn't done at all in the past, or certainly in many cases hasn't done well, we're going to need Phil's energy and creativity to help achieve that.

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Well I think the book that I wrote about New York basically made the argument that New York is a paradigm for what's happening in the whole country right now. Where there is no majority, racial or ethnic majority, where everyone has – if we're going to make change, if we're going to succeed, everyone has to learn how to work and form coalitions with everybody else.

And that the way to do that really starts with – you learn good manners at home, you learn democracy at home, so what I said in the book was, within the black community deep democracy means that black men learn how to respect and treat black women differently, that black churches learn how to respect gay and lesbian people, and it is through those internal struggles that people develop understanding and also empathy that helps them engage with other groups.



So if you're African-American and you're angry at white people and you think that they don't understand you. Well maybe if you look at – if you're a male, a black male, and you look at how you've dealt with women and understand maybe there are things you did that weren't right, but you didn't understand that they weren't right, understanding that you can make mistakes or things that are not in your best interest simply because that's how things have been and that's how you were raised, that helps you develop empathy for understanding white people you deal with who you may be angry with because you felt they did something wrong to you. So maybe they are just like you.

And so deep democracy said, the process of change is an internal one. It's just not how you deal with others, it's also how you deal with yourself.

**Mayor:** Go on this side, yes?

**Question:** Deputy Mayor Thompson, how are you? I'm wondering if in your look in empowering communities there is a couple specifics, or on climate change as you've mentioned a couple times, but are there a couple specific programs or types of policies that you don't see right now in New York City that you've offered as good models, good ideas, to do this type of work?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Well the City's already pushed for legislation at the state level to increase opportunities for minority owned and women owned businesses to get City contracts and I've been working in Central Brooklyn the last few years on similar lines to expand opportunities for minority and women owned businesses to get contracts with hospitals and I think there is a huge potential there.

I think there is also a lot of potential in the energy sector, in the emerging digital sector for minority business growth and development, and I also think there are opportunities to work with a lot CUNY institutions, some of which have started MBA programs and others to really connect more closely with the City's efforts. So I see lots and lots of room and opportunities for things to work on.

**Mayor:** Amen. Please?

**Question:** I haven't had a chance to look at it yet, but just in a quick look at your bio, I saw that you have a 2015 paper about broken windows policing, calling it broken policing, can you give us the gist of your take on that?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** That article was a critique of the original theory of broken windows policing, James Q. Wilson and Ed Banfield, they were two academics, one of which was in my department way back then. In the original Broken Windows theory, police were encouraged to target suspicious characters such as interracial couples and African-Americans with big afros, things of that sort. And I argued that police get to exercise a lot of discretion when you do these quality of life kinds of policing and that requires very particular and careful

kinds of training. And I criticized the early theory for pushing in the exact wrong direction when it comes to that.

I think the Mayor's Neighborhood Policing Initiative and what the NYPD is doing now is nothing like that. So that's what I was referring to when I talked about broken policing. And I think the Mayor's family would have been targeted, I don't think that's where the Mayor's coming from –

**Mayor:** No.

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** And certainly that's not the NYPD we see now.

**Mayor:** Way back.

**Question:** Deputy Mayor, congratulations. You worked in this very building decades ago, you're a native New Yorker, you know what this is. Having left government administration for decades and coming back, what are you bringing to the table that you would not be bringing to the table if you remained in government for all those years?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** One of the things I looked to when I left government was actually having the time to think through systematically how to address chronic poverty, unemployment, many other problems we're all familiar with, and so I had a lot of time to work on new approaches, prototypes to learn lessons from other places, to experiment with different things. And so I think I've – I'm pretty different than I was 25 years ago in that sense and that's what I'm excited about working with my colleagues here to really try and talk about these things and engage.

**Mayor:** Okay, let me see if there's any other questions on this announcement. Yes?

**Question:** Do we know an exact start date? Forgive me if I missed it. And to Deputy Mayor Buery, do you know what you're doing next?

**Mayor:** I'll start and then pass to Rich. March is when Deputy Mayor Buery departs. March is when new Deputy Mayor Thompson begins. Over to you.

**Deputy Mayor Buery:** The answer is not quite yet, but I will be sure to share it with the world or whichever part of the world cares when I do.

**Mayor:** No Rich, you'll be the first one to know. That's what you're supposed to say.

**Deputy Mayor Buery:** You'll be the first – you will be the first one to know.

**Mayor:** The first one to know.

Yes, David?

**Question:** I just have a follow up on the broken windows article. So you talked about how it was meant to sort of critique the original period but why did you write it in 2015?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Because I read something by former Commissioner Bratton where he referenced the original article in laudatory terms and you know, I'm an academic, so I went back to the 1960s and went through all the original articles and writing about the subject. And, you know, I don't expect him to be an academic and to do that, but I wanted to clarify. If we're going to reference the early theory, then we need to really dig into what that was and be very clear about it. James Q. Wilson, who was one of the authors who originated the term broken windows, was also one of the authors of mass incarceration as a policy. He also wrote a very controversial book that toyed with the idea that African Americans have genetic inferiorities. So, I think it's pretty important to sort of separate the practice of neighborhood policing from the origins of the theory. And as an academic we tend to do that kind of work so.

**Question:** The timing made me think maybe there was a reaction to the death of Eric Garner or the kind of policing that led to his death. Is there any connect in there?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** The connection was that training police to be really sensitive when enforcing these sort of quality of life crimes is super important. That was it.

**Mayor:** Yes, way back?

**Question:** Mr. Thompson, do you believe in the core philosophy of broken windows though? That addressing smaller crime forestalls bigger crime?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Going back to when I was in public housing, I would say yes. Going back to when – and not just smaller crimes, it's just small interactions. When I was in public housing, back then the – we had 2,300 police officers who actually were part of the Housing Authority and one of the things that the police department pointed out to me, was really a learning experience for me, women police officers were actually really effective in reducing crime, and not because they did pushups and ran the 100 yard dash really fast, it was because they actually made friends with kids and interacted with them when they were eight and nine-years-old. And when these kids were 16 and 17 they actually looked up to these female officers as role models and, you know, basically they didn't want the police officers to be mad with them. They really respected them and cared about them and vice versa. And so that's an interaction. And so I think the broader issue here was police – how police interact with folks in communities around day to day things all the time. And that's where, yes, I think that's really important. And I think that's part of what neighborhood policing – good neighborhood policing is.

**Question:** What would you say to critics, activists who want broken window ended?

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** Again, I think we need to clarify what it is we're talking about. So, if they mean they want to abandon the original concepts about what kinds of activities or behaviors constitute suspicious behavior, that's one thing. If they're saying they want to abandon neighborhood policing, that's another thing. And I would disagree with the latter.

**Question:** They're saying they want to abandon broken windows as its practiced by this administration.

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** I would disagree.

**Mayor:** Alright last call. Yes?

**Question:** This question is for Mr. Thompson but it would be great if Mr. Mayor you could chime in on this as well. During the last four years, most of the rezonings have taken place to increase the amount of affordable housing in this city have been in lower income communities. I wanted to get your take on that approach. And Mr. Mayor if you could talk a little bit about if you're open to maybe shifting that in the direction of upper income communities such as Gownaus which is in the pipeline right now.

**Mayor:** Let me start before the Deputy Mayor. The – look we have looked for everywhere to create affordable housing. And if you look it's occurring all over the city. The rezonings have been relatively few by definition. We're only going to do a small number of major rezonings in the course of any administration. But what we've looked at in that case is where is there land, where are there building sites where we can do a lot of affordable housing. East New York is the classic example. There was a lot to work with. In some cases there's a lot of public land or private sites that haven't been built out.

East Harlem was a little different. It's an area that historically was lower income, in recent years obviously income levels went up, but there was a lot of opportunity there to act because so much of it was very, very low scale even though it was a perfect location given access to mass transit and employment opportunities excreta.

So, my point would be one, on the rezonings we're still first and foremost going to be focused on affordable housing. That's the reason we're going the rezonings overwhelmingly. And two, that's going to be where land and where building sites are. But at the same time, anything we can get our hands on, and Gowanus is in the pipeline as an example, we want to do it anywhere we can find an opportunity whether it's a single site or whether it's a piece of a neighborhood. We're looking, literally, every neighborhood, all five boroughs.

**Incoming Deputy Mayor Thompson:** We haven't had a chance to really talk about this issue. I just got here, but as an external observer one of the things that really strikes me having looked at New York over a long period of time, housing – the State used to be really active in the affordable housing issue. You know, the creation of Mitchell-Lama, rent control, rent stabilization that was all State, and one of the things that I find really interesting is, in part because of the history of the City's activism around affordable housing even beginning with Koch and the old Board of Estimate, now everyone looks to the City to deal with affordable housing issues and the State has sort of dropped out of the picture. And so, to me, I think that we need to get the – look at also what the State can do. And I think they have an important role to play.

**Question:** So to clarify what you said Mr. Mayor, you're saying that the reason that most of the rezones have been targeted for lower income areas is because that is where there is space available and there isn't in upper income communities?

**Mayor:** Yes, follow the pattern of the rezonings. The goal has been affordable housing first and foremost. There's always some exceptions, but in the main the goal of the rezonings is to maximize affordable housing. The opportunities to create more affordable housing have been first and foremost in some communities that have been underbuilt for a variety of reasons. Now I've talked about, in recent weeks, the fact that we need to start coming to grips with we're a city that's at our all-time high population right now, by the end of this year, according to City Planning, projected to get to 8.6 million for the first time. By as early as 2030 projected to get to nine million. So another thing that the rezonings address is we need more housing of every kind. Affordable first and foremost, but we need market rental housing as well. So it's – we look for where is the opportunity to make the biggest impact.

Okay last call on this. I know you are going to another meeting. Enjoy your meeting.

Okay, so let me do just a moment on gun safety. I'd like to speak about that, take any immediate questions you may have on that, then we'll do all other off topic.

This morning at the CPAC convention Wayne LaPierre, the head of the NRA, spoke. And he attacked me by name and he attacked a group of other democratic leaders. And let me say at the outset, he can attack me all day long, I'm not worried about that, what I'm worried about is what he is doing to this country and what the leaders of the NRA are doing to endanger our people and our children specifically.

And it's stunning to me that in the aftermath of the tragedy in Florida there's not a hint of penitence in the leadership of the NRA. There's not the slightest willingness to say that they have been wrong all these years and that they bear some responsibility for what has happened.

So my answer to Wayne LaPierre is, you are one of the people responsible for this massacre and for all the massacres before because your actions and the actions of the NRA leadership made guns so widely available in this country that even a terrorist could get their hands on guns legally. Even a person with a severe mental health problem could get their hands on a gun legally. Even a young person who has been deeply troubled can walk into a store and legally get a gun.

This has been the work of the NRA leadership for decades. And I want to separate that from the membership because surveys of the NRA membership have shown that they are open to sane gun safety legislation, they understand that things like background checks make sense. They understand that we don't want terrorists or people with mental health challenges getting guns.

The members of the NRA understand it a lot better than their leaders, but the leaders of the NRA are in league with the gun industry. And it's not just a political question here, this is a question of profit. The gun industry profits because of the activities of the NRA, and the NRA leadership profits because of the gun industry, which supports their organization and all of its leadership's

salaries. This is a very cynical situation. To make matters worse, Wayne LaPierre attacked the FBI – this is really important to focus on. The President of the United States is attacking the FBI because the FBI is doing its job and investigating him. The head of the NRA is attacking the FBI and trying to shift blame for the huge number of guns in our society to, of all places, the FBI, that works all day to try and stop these massacres.

Regardless of what is happening in any one incident, the FBI and other federal law enforcement has saved thousands and thousands of lives by intervening to stop these kinds of things. What law enforcement professionals, including our Commissioner Jimmy O'Neill, will tell you is, the NRA is their worst enemy. And Jimmy O'Neill has spoken about this, and Bill Bratton before him spoke out passionately – the NRA makes law enforcement's job more difficult every single day in this country. But it's a particularly sick twist that now they're attacking the FBI – they're overtly attacking the FBI. You know what? The FBI was one of the reasons why the plot in Harlem was stopped last week.

So, I want to defend the FBI – I want to defend the partnership between the NYPD and the FBI that succeeded in stopping something that could have been awful. But the notion that the NRA leadership is not just attacking Democrats – that doesn't surprise me, it doesn't surprise me that Wayne LaPierre is attacking me. It's sick that the head of the NRA is trying to shift blame from himself to the FBI, and no one should stand for it. We have to understand that at this point in history, the NRA is the problem. The leadership of the NRA is responsible for these massacres – it's as plain and simple as that. If you didn't have this leadership at the NRA, the members of the NRA and elected officials all around the country would move forward with sane gun-safety legislation – I don't have a doubt in my mind. If Wayne LaPierre wasn't in the way, this would be a safer country. And don't just ask me, ask law enforcement leaders what they think about that.

With that, I want to see if there are any questions on that.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, so much of the protests that we've heard so far has heard from young people.

**Mayor:** Yes.

**Question:** There's an organized walkout being planned for March 14th – is that something that the Department of Education and you will sanction if students here in the City decide to participate?

**Mayor:** We're certainly ready for that and we respect it. I respect it. If I was a high school student today, I'd be walking out – there's no question about it. The current leadership in Washington has not protected our young people, and they have every right to stand up, and I give them a lot of credit. I have a lot of faith in the generation coming up and I think what they're doing is powerful. Look, we have a school system to run. We want to make sure that this is done quickly – it's supposed to be a 17-minute walkout – that it's done the right way and students get back into class. We urge parents to let their schools know if they're comfortable with their child walking out – that's important to us. But this is too important a moment in history to try to hold

back the desire of our young people to see fundamental change and to protect themselves. They just saw their fellow young people massacred, if they watched that passively I think they would not be actors in our society. It would be hypocritical for us – I just gave a speech where I said we wanted to provide young people with ways to get more engaged in their communities and in real events happening today, and to feel empowered to make change. Well, they're doing that and I certainly respect it.

**Question:** Just to follow up – does that mean that the students who do participate will not be penalized in any way by their schools?

**Mayor:** We – typically there is a form of discipline. It is a modest form of discipline. Again, the more we hear from parents in advance, the better, because so long as we know it's something that the parent understands – that will certainly mitigate some of how we approach it. But, you know, there's no negative, lasting impact if they do this. And again, I think it is a particular moment. I say very emphatically to our young people, spend every minute in school, the whole school year – that is the best way to get yourself prepared for the future. But I truly respect why so many young people want to walk out at this point.

**Question:** So, Mr. Mayor – so, how do you take on the head of the NRA?

**Mayor:** We need to change the political leadership in this country – and that is not just about the Presidency, that's about flipping the House and the Senate, and it's about changing State houses as well. I think what you're going to see in 2018 is more and more focus on the State houses around this country because as State legislatures change, the districts that our members of Congress run in will change, and that's really where the foundation will be for political change that can then lead to real gun safety legislation. I've been very struck since November almost without exception – November 2017 – almost every single election in the country where there is a Republican seat that was being contested has flipped to Democrat. It happened in Kentucky in the last few weeks. So, it's not by any stretch of the imagination just in blue states. You could say the Alabama election for US Senate was unusual. I think there were a lot of things going on in Alabama that really were about fundamental change happening that state – certainly in Virginia. Something very big is happening. I keep telling people there is a bigger progressive movement growing, and a bigger progressive era about to begin, and I fundamentally believe it. But this country will change literally State legislative seat by State legislative seat – that is the core of making bigger change. I'm going to put as much energy as I can into helping all that along wherever I can be helpful.

Rich?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, after Sandy Hook, there was kind of a national anticipation that gun laws will be changed. How is this moment different do you think?

**Mayor:** I think – I saw a quote from one of the high school students from Florida, and I think it's right that Sandy Hook was terrifying, particularly to every one of us who is a parent, that these vulnerable little kids who were slaughtered and you would have thought that would have been the last straw, and it's stunning that it wasn't. And again, this is all about Wayne LaPierre and

the leadership of the NRA and their iron grip on the Republican party. The difference in Florida is, these students are older – these are high school students, they can speak for themselves now, and they have. It's been outstanding, it's been moving. These young people have distinguished themselves immediately. They're just not going to stand for it anymore. And they have their own voices, they're not waiting on anyone else. And I think it also says a lot about the digital age. Just even since Sandy Hook, a lot has changed – the Women's March in January of 2017 could never have happened a few years earlier. Something like a national movement of young people and high school students couldn't have happened a few years ago. So, a lot is going on here that's actually profoundly different, but I'm really moved by these young people and I think it will be impossible to ignore them.

Way back –

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, just to follow up on the question that [inaudible] had asked, how do parents notify their kid's schools that they're okay with them walking out, and can you be a little more specific about what the sanctions students will face for walking out will be?

**Mayor:** I'll let the DOE speak to the latter – and I can just say as a parent it's something as simple as calling the school office, or sending a note in the book bag, or emailing the principal or other folks at the school. But I'll let the DOE speak to the specifics of the situation. Again, we want to control this situation, we want it to move as quickly as possible, but we think there's a way that this can be handled appropriately.

Marcia?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, yesterday the NYPD arrested a 15-year-old at the Bronx Center for Science and Math for what they call making terrorist threats. Specifically, what he did was he went on an app called Kik and said he [inaudible] going to get a gun and take care of things at the school – that was his words. So, I ask you, in light of this, and copycat [inaudible] what conversations you're having with the NYPD and DOE to make sure these kinds of things don't happen?

**Mayor:** Thank you, Marcia. The first conversations were the day after the Florida tragedy where I met with leaders of the DOE and of the NYPD. I spoke with Commissioner O'Neill then and I spoke with him again today on the measures we're taking. And I want to emphasize that – the first thing I want everyone to understand, and I'm saying this as a parent – my kids went to New York City public schools, and Dante just finished a few years ago, so I take this very, very personally – this could be my own kids in those classrooms. The full force of the NYPD is being applied to protect our schools, including our counterterrorism capacity. The arrests in the incident in Harlem were a result of the NYPD's counterterrorism activities, plus the FBI's and the constant work they do together. The incident that you mentioned in the Bronx, that was caught also by the counterterrorism and intelligence-gathering capacity of the NYPD. I need New Yorkers to understand that the NYPD is not just looking at threats generated from overseas or the notion of an individual who seeks to do harm for political or other beliefs. The NYPD is also constantly assessing the situation in our schools. 36,000 NYPD officers, thousands more school safety agents, and close cooperation with the DOE, but here's what Commissioner



O'Neill always says – we protect ourselves when everyone is involved. So, students, parents, teachers, everyone who works in schools has to be a part of this. If they hear anything or see online anything that might be a threat to a school, we need to know right away. If it's an urgent threat, call 9-1-1 – it's as simple as that. If it's something where you want to report suspicious information activity, call 3-1-1. But this is central to our abilities to defend people to have that information.

**Question:** [Inaudible] I was told there might be more drills and lockdowns. Could you go through the types of things that, I think, will make people and parents especially feel more secure?

**Mayor:** Absolutely, Marcia. And again, I'm speaking as a parent, and I feel very good about the efforts the NYPD is undertaking to protect our kids. In addition to 36,000 officers and thousands more school safety agents and what they do every day, our neighborhood policing initiative involves our Neighborhood Coordinating Officers going into schools and talking to the professionals and to students, seeking any information that might be a threat. There's a 300-member school safety task force of NYPD officers that are utilized wherever we have an area of concern and is a mobile force that can be moved at any place in the City immediately. All that counterterrorism activity to find any information that might cause danger. I think it's fair to say that the kind of information that we heard in the case of Florida was the kind of thing NYPD looks for every hour or every day, and is very, very successful at finding. And all of those efforts, plus we're encouraging young people, in particular, to report constantly, whether it's bullying or something worse than bullying. All of this adds up to an immense effort to protect our young people and we're going to stay constant with that, and it's been working. Look, this threat you talked about in the Bronx, there have been a number of them over time. The common thread is, the NYPD found them and acted on them.

**Question:** Given the fact that sometimes intelligence doesn't work, as we saw recently – as great as the NYPD is, something there isn't intelligence. So, for any parent who might wonder why you might not want to put magnetometers just as a backstop to something like this. What are your thoughts about that? I know there's a policy in place and you try to limit it and you have parent involvement and all of that, but is it something you're discussing? Are you at all moving to the idea of that?

**Mayor:** Let me separate the whole question of what will allow our schools to successful for our kids from the question of how we deal with this moment that we're seeing and the fears that it legitimately generates. First of all, all safety decisions related to our schools are done with the NYPD, and it's crucial for parents to understand that. The NYPD directly supervises school safety, but the NYPD, again, is directly present in schools on many levels. Any time the NYPD thinks a school needs additional security measures, we will put them in. Separate from any question of parent consultation, of course we're going to consult with parents. But the bottom line on safety and security is, if the NYPD thinks there is a specific need, we will add measures, and we can do that very quickly. Second, to the previous question, we are doing safety drills regularly now, and they will be happening this month and next month in schools all over the City. Every school will go through those shelter drills. Third, we will be undertaking screening at schools all over the City on an individualized basis, meaning every school in New York City –

middle school and high school level – at some point will have scanning for at least a day. Other schools have it on an ongoing basis, but every school will have it sometimes. That is an important deterrent that that will happen. It could happen at any school at any time, and that's a measure you'll see play out right away. We think all of these coordinated efforts will add up to a lot – so, that's dealing with the immediate moment. On the bigger question – parents and educators often feel very strongly that the presence of scanners is very negative for the environment in the building and for the effectiveness of the education in that building. There's been a lot of desire to avoid it if it can be avoided. But we will always make the decision based on the security dynamics in the building, and those can change over time. There may be times –

**Question:** [Inaudible] don't predict when one lone person is going to want to come in with a gun

**Mayor:** There is – again, as much I understand your point – do we have perfect knowledge? No. But I would look very carefully – I often talk about everything that happened since 9/11 until today and how many times the NYPD did have information in time – talk about fighting terror. When it comes to school incidents, there have been any number of times when threats were called in and they were acted on. And you haven't reported on them for a very good reason, nothing came of them because they were stopped. And again, there is no place in the country that has the public safety capacity of New York City. So, I think it a pretty clear history, and it's been very, very effective, and we're re-doubling. But here's the thing, we cannot fall into the trap, Melissa, of thinking – let the government do all of this, we'll sit back, the government will keep us safe and we have nothing to do with it. That phrase, if you see something, say something – that's everyone's responsibility. Young people have to report what they see – and they can go to a trusted adult, they could go to a parent, they could go to a teacher, they could go to a police officer. Teachers, crossing guards – everyone is a part of this. If we really want to be perfectly safe, it's not going to be because we have 100 percent security apparatus in every inch or every space in New York City – that's not what's going to do it. We have the best police force in the country. We need the people to be involved.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, I'd like to know if you would please comment on the President's statement about arming teachers in schools?

**Mayor:** I suspect the President doesn't know anything about public schools. I don't know – I have no reason to believe he went to a public school or his kids went to a public school. There's nothing more terrifying than the notion of putting more guns in our children's schools. I'm speaking as a parent – both my kids went to New York City public schools for their entire education. The last thing I want to see is more guns in our schools. I want to see a de-escalation in American society. I want to see guns taken out of our lives on this ridiculous level they're on now. So, again, the President is parroting Wayne LaPierre's line of – this is what LaPierre was saying this morning – more guns everywhere – let's fight guns with guns. No, let's get guns out of our lives by having sensible gun safety legislation.

**Question:** Have you had any conversation with Chancellor Fariña or someone, anyone from the UFT following the President's statement.

**Mayor:** With all of the leadership of the DOE, we've been talking, again, constantly on safety and security issues for four years, but especially since the Florida tragedy, I have not talked to them about the President's statement and I don't think anyone who's serious about education is giving much regard to what the President suggested.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, when you spoke about drills in schools – elaborate on –

**Mayor:** Sure, I mean, there's – as we saw in Florida – and it's tragic that our young people have to go through these drills. If ever there's an indication that there's something wrong it's that we have to teach our young people to get ready for a mass shooting. Again, that is a fundamental policy mistake. That's not something that has to be. That's because Wayne LaPierre and the leadership of the NRA, are forcing the Republican party to avoid any kind of sensible gun safety legislation, and the Republican party is complicit because they don't stand up to the NRA leadership. If we could make those changes, we would have a very different reality. Until that day, we have to train our young people who to get ready for an incident like this. Now, on a different front, you remember we had the attack on the West Side Highway that went right by Stuyvesant High School. Stuyvesant High School, the teachers, the staff, the students had all been prepared and they followed the protocol very well and kept everyone safe doing that. Those drills are going to become commonplace in our schools now, starting immediately, until the day that we, as a nation, address the underlying issue.

**Question:** Mayor, just to follow up on that, the President also this morning expressed on Twitter some support for increasing the age to buy certain weapons to 21, or banning bump stocks. Some people have argued that his comments about the mentally ill have just sort of demonized the mentally ill, and there hasn't really been a concrete proposal of who would be barred from guns in what kind of background checks. What do you think needs to happen in terms of gun control legislation?

**Mayor:** I think of course the bump stocks need to be banned, assault weapons need to be banned. Obviously with the exception of law enforcement, and the military, background checks – more thorough background checks across the board. Folks with mental illness problems should not be allowed to buy guns. Folks on the terror watch list should not be allowed to buy guns, real common sense stuff.

Then again most public polling shows, a majority of Americans believe in and a very substantial number of them members of the NRA believe in. Which is again why I want to strongly separate the members of that organization which is a huge organization with lots of people in it, versus the leadership which I think is acting very cynically. All of those actions would make a huge impact and again I asked the question of law enforcement leaders. What would help you to keep people safe? And what I hear starting with our Police Commissioner is those kind of simple actions, making sure terrorists, and folks with mental health problems can't get weapons, and making sure that there are not assault weapons legally available that can be used against our police officers. Those are about as common sense as it gets.

Look, if the president comes around, and would use his bully pulpits to support those kinds of measures, that would be a real contribution to this country. I am not seeing him do that except on

bump stocks, and – look, the 21-year-old age limit, that’s something. Any progress is appreciated; on a question of mental health it’s wrong to try to switch the conversation to mental health. We should have the conversation about gun safety legislation and address that. We should also have the right conversation about reaching people with mental health challenges early in their lives, which is what the whole ThriveNYC concept is. Those are two separate ideas, but they’re both important to this equation.

**Question:** Just to follow up really quickly, you’ve expressed a large amount of concern about concealed carry reciprocity laws and do you think that this will take this discussion that you know the way it shifted. Do you think it’ll take some of the steam out of the –

**Mayor:** I hope so. Again we’re the safest big city in the country for a reason. We have very strict gun laws. We have the best police force in the country and any change that would allow people from other states to bring their weapons in more easily is going to hurt the safety of New Yorkers it’s as simple as that. So we have to stop it. I think there was already was a lot of hesitation in the Congress on that one. I do believe that this tragedy will make it less likely that that reciprocity law will pass. Juliet?

**Question:** Getting back to the drills – what is the policy currently? Is it up to the individual school –

**Mayor:** No, it’s been increasingly a citywide mandate and we’ve amplified that in the last few days. Every school has to do it. And it’s not just going to be once, it’s going to be an on-going series of drills to really make sure that everyone is prepared.

**Question:** So there will be a uniformed policy then for schools?

**Mayor:** Yes, every school.

**Question:** [Inaudible] Stuyvesant high school now as opposed to another.

**Mayor:** It’s been increasingly the case; you can get the chapter and verse from the DOE. But, we’ve been phasing in these approaches over the last few years. We’re making it very clear now that at every school this is mandatory, it has to happen everywhere, it has to happen on an on-going basis. It’s not something you drill once and then stop. You have to constantly do it several times a year. So we can get you those facts. Go ahead.

**Question:** And the scanners, is this going to be sort of on a rolling basis?

**Mayor:** Yes, so some schools have them throughout the week, every week. It’s a fairly small number of schools at this point. Some have them in place and I am forgetting the exact terms of art, but some have them in place regularly but only activate them sometimes during the week. But you can move mobile scanners in very quickly in a matter of hours. So what we’re going to be doing in high schools and middle schools is unannounced scanning. They will come in for a day with no prior notification do that scanning, pull it out, go elsewhere, come back around over time. You’ll be seeing that at high schools and middle schools all over the city. And then on the

decision of whether a school needs something more that will in consultation with parents and consolation with educators but the ultimate decision will be made by the NYPD. Go ahead.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor I know you said you're going to do drills in [inaudible], and do scanners. I wonder if there are other steps that could be taken to protect schools. For example, locks on doors in class rooms and bathrooms. That if some shooter comes in you lock the door so they can't get in or I know some people have said you know cops in every school. But I wonder if in in school that can be done to make them safer?

**Mayor:** It's a good question and we're going to look at any and all methodologies but again I don't, I don't try to do what the NYPD does. The NYPD are the experts in security. I want them to come back and say what's the best way to handle this. Right now from NYPD perspective and I spoke to Commissioner O'Neill a couple of hours ago. It is everything we're doing right now. The approach we're taking to scanning, the drills to protect young people and have them shelter in place - the neighborhood policing approach, the close coordination between our officers and the schools. All of that is the essence what we need more of is the public to come forward with information and that includes young people. Yes?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, Council Speaker Corey Johnson recently said he's very, very open to the city putting the half of the subway action plan up. Is that something that you discussed, and does that frustrate you that he's putting that out there and weakening your negotiation?

**Mayor:** No, I have a lot of respect of the Speaker. We have talked about it, we have a different view, but it's with real respect. He's the leader of a separate part of government who's going to issue his opinions. The important thing is we always talk about them, and we're working together very, very closely. I appreciate a lot of what he said, he talked about the need for lock box. He talked about for the need for the money that's raised for any kind of congestion pricing plan not only in the stay in New York City, but to be spent with the approval of New York City with real checks and balances to make sure that money is spent where it needs to be and on valuable projects. We don't want lights on bridges, we don't want cosmetic things, we want the subway to run on time. So I think the Speaker right on point on those things he said about what the conditions would be. But no we've had a very collegial relationship. I am very happy with it.

**Question:** That money I would assume if it's going to go to the action plan it would be part these budget negotiations right?

**Mayor:** Look, I maintain my position that the best solution is the millionaire's tax. both in terms of the long terms, economic needs of the MTA and so that we can institute the fair fare, the half price MetroCards for low-income New Yorkers. I've said that the newer version of congestion pricing was a better plan than anyone I've seen before. I think the notion of getting new revenue from the surcharge on for-hire vehicles and broadening that is a very promising one. So I think there's a lot going on. What's crucial and I hope all New Yorkers will join in, is demanding that Albany agree on a plan this year that addresses the long-term needs of the MTA.

My position is, the MTA has the money right now for the things it has to do. If they need any other immediate money from the State, the State should return the \$456 million they diverted

over the last few years back to the MTA. But look, there's going to be a whole negotiation over the State budget, we're going to be actively involved in that, and we're going to be listening for any plan that guarantees results for the people of New York City. If it doesn't have a lockbox, we're not going to be a part of it.

**Unknown:** We have time for a couple more folks.

**Mayor:** Way back, way back.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, I apologize if I missed this, but is this new that every single school in New York City will be getting metal detectors at least once a day – or I'm sorry, once a year. We're talking elementary –

**Mayor:** Not elementary. I said it a hundred times, my friend, middle and high school.

**Question:** Middle and high school.

**Mayor:** Middle and high school.

**Question:** And can you also elaborate on what the drills consist of?

**Mayor:** I will have DOE do that.

Okay, last call. Anyone else? Yes?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, as you know there's going to be two special elections for the State Senate now in April. It seems as though democrats are trying to stay really united as a party going to [inaudible] the Governor who some say has enabled the situation in the Senate. Seems to be really pushing for – to get Democrats elected in both seats. I think the Bronx one is probably likely to go democratic but the one in Westchester really isn't, and for a special election, as you know, the turnout it really dependent on who actually comes to the polls. What role will you play in that, in trying to win that seat for the Democrats and maintain [inaudible]?

**Mayor:** I appreciate the question. I'm going to give you this answer probably 100 times in 2018. I go where people ask me to go. I participate in ways they ask me to participate. I only am going to do what a candidate or, you know, the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee ask. I think it's real important to be respectful of each candidate and how they want to do their work and what makes sense for their district.

I would disagree with you a little bit. I think it's a democratic seat in Westchester and we saw what happen in the County Executive election which is very promising for Democrats and we see what's going on all over the country in response to the Trump administration. So, I think the Democrats are in good standing to win that seat.

But, again, I'll do only that which is asked of me. I think the crucial point is the pressure on the IDC to come home has reached a fever pitch and it's time to do that right now. People are sick of

waiting. It's time for Democrats, anyone who calls themselves a Democrat, get over to the democratic side of the aisle now.

I'll do a few more, yes?

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, despite your announcement last year to crack down on illegal placards and abuse of placards, this seems to continue to be a rampant problem. The same people parking their vehicles illegally every day whether at hydrants, no standing zones, bus lanes. I know the NYPD ticket enforcement bureau that was newly created says they've issued a lot more summons so far this year, but it seems that these people think they're above the law and they're going to continue to use placards or vests or –

**Mayor:** No.

**Question:** – whatever it is that [inaudible] windshields. How can you stop them?

**Mayor:** It's – look, we put this in place to be very, very clear, we're not accepting that kind of activity anymore. And there's a lot of enforcement going on. I think we owe you guys an update on how it's going and Chief Chan will be a part of that. But, no, message is very clear. We're coming for anyone who violates the rules relating to a placard, or anyone who has an inappropriate placard.

**Question:** What about this notation though that police will take care of their own, you know, there seems to be this though well the NYPD –

**Mayor:** No, it's not acceptable. The Commissioner has spoken to this, and Chief Chan has spoken to this, they're just not going to allow it. If someone does that, they are risking a sanction on themselves. They're risking disciplinary action if they ignore an obvious infraction. So, we're going to crack down on it.

Last call, I'm going to do two. Jill and Rich?

**Question:** Mayor, there was a lawsuit followed against the City by a DCAS employee who was fired after the Rivington House situation. In the suit he alleges that for the testimony by DCAS to the City Council on that situation on the day of removal that he was told by one of your staffers, Jon Paul Lupo, to provoke – or to put forward a false narrative and that nobody but one person from DCAS could speak at the hearing, and to indicate that nobody –

**Mayor:** I got the point, I've read your article. Okay. One, I don't comment on lawsuits. Two, everything we did was appropriate. I've said it many, many times.

Last call, Rich.

**Question:** Mr. Mayor, given the division that you've described within the NRA would you urge the membership to rise up and get rid of the leadership? Is that possible?

**Mayor:** Absolutely. It's absolutely possible. Look, the men and women who are the members of the NRA are everyday Americans of a wide range of views who, in many cases, participate because there are membership benefits they want to take advantage of, and that's perfectly understandable. A lot of them are very concerned to make sure that they and their family members are properly trained in how to use a firearm whether it's for hunting or self-defense or any other reason. That's perfectly appropriate under the Second Amendment.

I don't have a quarrel with millions of everyday Americans who are members of the NRA. In fact, if you look at the survey research they are clearly more willing to see sensible gun safety legislation than the leadership of the NRA. I think the organization is being held hostage by Wayne LaPierre and a right-wing group that is funded by the gun industry.

And I think it's absolutely possible for the members to say enough is enough. I imagine if you talk to everyday members of the NRA and asked them what they felt about the massacre in Florida they'd be just as disgusted as the rest of us.

Thanks, everyone.

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