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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY

Mayor Bill de Blasio: All right. Good morning, everybody. We're in a very powerful moment in history and yesterday, a watershed moment, truly historical moment in Albany. The repeal of the 50-a law, a law that had held back transparency, and openness, had created a horrible block really, in the ability to build trust between police and community. This law was in the way for a long time. And for years I've been calling for a change. Police leaders have been calling for a change. Activists have been calling for a change. Elected officials have been calling for change. And often seemed like it was beyond our reach, but yesterday in Albany, that change happened. And that will change everything, because now there will be the ability to have the openness, the transparency, the ability to see what's really going on that I think is how you build faith and trust. So, I want to thank Majority Leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins. I want to thank Speaker Carl Heastie. The sponsors of the legislation, Senator Jamaal Bailey, and Assembly Member Danny O'Donnell. They have done something historic. You can use a word like historic, and it can sometimes be overused – this is historic. This is one of the moments where things change. For decades and decades, there were so many things in the way of change, including too often the, I think fundamentally inappropriate overuse of power by police unions. That's what often blocked change in Albany, but it did not block it this time. So, now we have the sunlight we've been waiting for. Now, we have the kind of openness that will not only tell us about specific instances of discipline or what's being done with an officer who didn't do the right thing. It will start to restore a deeper faith.

So, that is such an important building block, but I want to talk today about the larger solutions. Transparency matters deeply, but the truest solutions come from the grassroots. The truest solutions come from the people. The way we're going to move forward, both in terms of safety, and peace, and justice is by the empowerment of grassroots leadership. The empowerment of organizations that authentically represent the people of our communities, that create change that government alone could never create. And that's where I want to talk about today. I want to talk about the crisis management system, the Cure Violence movement, the way that government has recognized, and I have recognized personally that if we actually invest in people, if we invest in communities, we make a change that's much, much deeper. You're going to hear also from the leaders of the Black, Latino, Asian caucus of the City Council who have been leading the way for months now, in terms of the kinds of changes we need in this city. Who are not only demanding change, but putting forward the tangible proposals that will bring us change.

You'll hear from Council Member Adrienne Adams, and Council Member Daneek Miller, who have been doing such important work, bringing forward a whole new set of different approaches that we need in this city. But I want you to hear first from leaders of the crisis management

system, the Cure Violence movement. And I want to first tell you why it matters to me, what I have come to learn. I didn't know about this movement at the time I took office as mayor. I came to understand it piece by piece. I came to understand phrases like credible messengers. I came to understand that there were people in communities who understood how to mediate, how to stop violence before it happened, how to reach young people in a way that no one in government possibly could. There were people in communities who were stepping up, owning their streets in a whole different way. And it was not just about the fact that they stop violence – they did, in an amazing fashion. This is a story that should be on every front page. And I hope today will help put it on the front page. A movement that stopped violence before it happened. A movement that stopped shootings, that stopped violence, that stopped people from dying. A movement that reached young people, and gave them hope. That's what I came to understand more and more, a movement that created actual grassroots leadership that could build a future. A future on the ground in community, something we have needed more and more of. I've seen it with my own eyes that this is now happening in our city, but it's happening without I think the full understanding and support that this movement, this system deserves. This is a group of human beings who made a difference. They decided to own. They decided to create. They decided to break cycles that were only hurting their own people and do something about it. It's incredibly noble. We need this movement to keep growing. Today, I'm going to announce an expansion of the crisis management system and the Cure Violence movement. We will add four additional neighborhoods – Soundview in the Bronx, Jamaica, Queens, Crown Heights, Brooklyn, and Canarsie in Brooklyn as well. With that expansion, the Cure Violence movement will now be active in 20 precincts, all 20 precincts with the highest gun violence levels in the city, that means lives will be saved, period – lives will be saved, violence will be reduced. We will also be increasing the budget for all existing crisis management system organizations. So, between these two initiatives, we will be adding in the upcoming budget over \$10 million for the crisis management system, cure violence movement. This is now an additional investment on top of the tripling of resources that has been achieved since 2014. We need to bring in additional sites, additional staff, we need more and more people at the community level hired into this work to achieve peace in a way that we have now seen with our own eyes works like nothing else.

So, I want you to hear from the folks who did this extraordinary work. I want you to hear from people who have made a difference and they are in many ways. I think the kind of heroes people need to know, and the people who work with them are the kind of heroes people need to know. At a moment where everyone's looking for where we go, this, I believe, is one of the ways we move forward. This is where we go. This is the future. First, a 30-year veteran of this work recognized all over the country. She's taught and spread the work of peace and grassroots solutions, but not just teaches how this movement works, how this system works, but practices every day, goes to wherever the need is and makes a difference. Her organization, Life Camp, what a powerful name Life Camp, for almost 20 years has changed the lives of tens of thousands of young people, teenagers, and young adults, and what a difference she and Life Camp have made. Let me introduce to you, Erica Ford.

I don't think you need a step to give you –

[Laughter].

Erica Ford: Peace, everyone. And thank you, Mayor for being a visionary, and being bold, and audacious, and radically reimagining how we can move forward once our people make a cry throughout the nation for something different. We are trailblazers in New York, and we've been trailblazing with the New York City crisis management system on the frontline, interrupting and reducing violence by mediating conflict and working with young people to make sure that they do something different when the trauma that impacts them from generation to generation, from the violence from the years of oppression, from the years of brutality, from the years of miseducation. And sometimes they take that trauma, that pain and lash out on those around them. And so, we in the crisis management system throughout New York City, believe it is important to address violence as a public health crisis. And to address it as a disease and help these young people heal, help their families heal. And so, we have unconventional, and conventional therapeutic services. We go into the jails, we go into the schools, we go into the centers where young people hang out, and we go to the hotspots, and where they are. We go everywhere where there's a potential for someone to be shot or to shoot someone. And we help people turn their lives around. And I remember just a minute ago in our district in Southeast Queens, we had 25 shootings and 12 people killed. And one of the police inspectors told me, there's no way you're going to stop retaliation. There's no way you're going to be able to do this. There's no way you're going to be able to change those young men's lives. We did that. We not only stop retaliation from being at a high level, but we worked with those young people who were directly involved in the situation, and we had them on Zoom, learning how to develop leadership. We had them at Man Up taking that OSHA classes. We had them challenging their pain to purpose, and we helped so many of them who lost family members heal. And this is only the beginning, and we continue to walk down this road of co-producing public safety in New York, but understanding the importance of investing in people, believing in people, and understanding that our children are under invested in, and under resourced, and not criminals, and not violent, and not, there's no need for the police to come in and continue to have incidents of creating more violence when we're so aggressive amongst each other. And so, peace is a lifestyle, is our mantra. And we continue to make piece a lifestyle, not only in the streets with our young brothers and sisters, but in the precincts with the police officers who come into our community, as we continue to work with them, and help them heal too. As we saw the increase of suicide amongst police officers this year, as we see the increase of incidents in, in all over New York, the United States around domestic violence, and all kinds of violence, interpersonal violence. That comes from pain, and we have to help people heal. We hear the cry in the streets. We understand, and we see you. And we know that the work must begin in changing mindsets, and healing people, and putting a system together that can do something different. And we are here to take the job, and stand in [inaudible] peace. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you so much, Erica. So, you can hear the passion and the purpose, and as I've just come to know each of these leaders, my admiration for them has grown. I want to introduce to you now a leader who worked for structural change, he helped to create legislation to change relationship between police and community. He worked on the big changes we need, but he also worked at the frontline to create peace founded 696 Build Queensbridge, 696 Build Queensbridge. Transformed the Queensbridge houses, I don't think that is the wrong verb, I think it's the right verb, transformed the lives of people in the largest public housing development in the United States of America. I remember for years and years, you said Queensbridge, people thought tragically, they thought of violence, they thought of pain until this organization changed

the reality fundamentally. It was painstaking work and it was work of the heart, it was work of the mind, it was work connecting with young people in a whole different way, reaching people no matter what had happened in their life, reaching them differently. I saw this work and the only word I can use is awe, that I felt to see this level of achievement. There was more than a year in the Queensbridge houses without a single shooting, something would have been inconceivable for decades in this city, but it was achieved by this organization, people at the grassroots, the man who made it happen, my pleasure introduced K. Bain.

K. Bain: So, first and foremost, thank you, Mr. Mayor. I just want to say what an important moment we are in at this time we're talking about black lives matter and they've always mattered to us here. In this conversation, we've always known that people inside of all communities have the same concerns as you know, people outside, and we are the ones that are best positioned to find those remedies and solutions to the issues in our community. I'm thinking about what Erica Ford said in the work that life camp does, I'm also thinking about my brother A.T. Mitchell and Man Up, and there's a common denominator in the work that we do. And it's really easy to see that we are involved in a human justice initiative where people at the center of the work that we do. And sometimes it's easy for us in today's fast-paced society to lose sight of the fact that we have to have a human-centered approach to making change and all also to do that, to make change in a housing development, you get asked, how do you stop shootings for 365 days in the largest housing development in the world? And that's a longer conversation along the question, but at the core of it is understanding that human relationships, earning trust, putting individuals in a humanity first is a key component. And when we want to affect change in a season where we see unrest and protests in this city, in this country and around the world, we have to address it on three levels, we have to look at community empowerment. And when you talk to us leaders in the crisis management system and the Cure Violence initiative, we are those people that again, are in tune with the community, we believe in people being the voice that's heard. We have to remember we elect our elected officials. So, I don't always agree with the mayor of New York City, and I'm sure sometimes he doesn't agree with me, but when those calls and those texts come in, I know that he's going to listen, he's going to hear. And we are here in this position of change and restructuring because leaders understand to be in those positions, you have to listen to the people. So, community empowerment is very important. A second thing that we do in terms of our approach is system realignment, we understand that the system is working for some and not working for all. So, we have to address policies like we talk about 58, we talk about on a state level, what's happening with regard to transparency, with authority and accountability for law enforcement, that is very important for change, to occur, a transformation to occur.

And lastly, we look at the direct services that we provide, we touch young people's lives in a way that I don't see happen anywhere else. And it's because we are those persons, we are the real models we live, those lives, we stepped in those shoes, we've walked those streets, we've made those mistakes and we've grown through into where we are now. So, when you address change and revolution and transformation on those three levels, when you empower communities, when you realize systems and you work with individuals in direct touch, response and services, as was taught to me, by my mentors, Eddie Ellis and Divine Pryor, this is human justice at his best, and so we have entered a stage in our society where people have to be heard and listened to. The people have the power, again, we elect the elected officials, we are the ones that vote and cast those votes to put them in office, and they are there to listen to us. We are the ones that pay the

salaries of the law enforcement officers that come into and out of our communities, those are our dollars. So, this allocation today announcement that's being made we appreciate the support we're going to be working with and watching our Mayor in the next 19 months. And he's welcomed that accountability has to happen on our end in the community, it has to happen in law enforcement, and it has to happen when elected officials, this is how we move forward. It's a pleasure and a privilege today to be here as a part of the leadership and architecture in the visionary forest, behind the crisis management system with my sister, Erica Ford, my brother, A.T Mitchell and the Mayor of New York City. Thank you.

Mayor: Thanks very much. And you're hearing how personal this work is. You are hearing that this is a choice people made confronted with unacceptable realities, they did not shrink before they created something. They fought with peace, an amazing example of people taking ownership of their own community, this is the way forward. I'm going to keep saying it, this is the future. It's not something that came together in this last week or two, this is the work that's been done for years and decades, to build authentic grassroots leadership, to make a change. And all of us in government better be listening, and we should be deferring and supporting grassroots leadership in this moment.

And now an example, that's so powerful. So, back in 2003, an eight-year-old killed by a stray bullet in East New York, Daesean Hill, think of the pain and the frustration and the anger and the hopelessness that that could make a community feel. But in that moment, one man saw something that could be different, A.T. Mitchell believed something could be different founded Man Up. And it began like so many of the great historic movements in history, in a small room with a small group of people and it built and it built and it built. And now so many thousands, tens of thousands of people have been touched by the work of Man Up, given hope, given purpose, given an understanding of the power of peace, young people mentored, programs that reach young people and give them something positive and show them a path away from violence, and toward hope. It only happened because one man said it did not have to be a broken reality, it could be something that people create that as better. I'm really honored, introduced to you A.T. Mitchell.

A.T Mitchell: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'm very appreciative— of those remarks. I'm thankful to be here, I want to say thank you to a host of folks for allowing us the opportunity to be able to stand here United, to speak from this platform in this podium, to those of you, that you work in the city of your administrators, and some of those that work behind the scenes at the Office to Prevent Gun Violence at the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. I'm very thankful to all the City Council Members that represent our districts that helped support us in this effort, in the very beginning to this very day, we were very appreciative of all that City Council members throughout the City for your support. I'm very thankful of all my Crisis Management System called architects like those, like my sister, Erica Ford and K. Bain and Dr. Pryor and Lance Furtado and others who have helped us to build this system. But I'm even more thankful to my comrades and to my colleagues out there, the fearless men and women superheroes of the Crisis Management System and the Cure Violence Global family worldwide, I salute you. Because every day, night we go out there without guns and without badges, we've been a quiet some but major part of making New York City, the biggest and safest city in the nation. Because of this administration and its continued financial support, New York city is the largest Cure

Violence Global and Crisis Management System replication site in the world, this is a fact. It was said best by this mayor several years ago, we recall we had got together at the Brooklyn Museum in Brooklyn to celebrate— the stats at that time that, you know, it was the goal of this administration to reduce gun violence related homicides, and that you would not stop until we reported a zero death in the City of New York, and to date, and this announcement demonstrates his commitment that he made several years ago in Brooklyn. With that in mind, we need to commit to baseline and an increase in the funding of the system, because even though today's announcement helps us, it's still far from what we need in order to really produce the results that we ultimately all want to see the data that we can report zero homicides in the City of New York. Simply by recruiting, employing training, and then deploying influential credible messengers as public health workers back into the neighborhoods and the communities that they were raised makes a big difference. They go back into those communities with a renewed mindset, they use their influence in a positive manner to help us reduce violent incidences every single day. The data and the evaluations that are out there is proof of what I'm talking about. We need to make sure that there is legislation that supports the permanent, the making the Office to Prevent Gun Violence, a permanent office in the City of New York. So just like the Office of the Domestic Violence and Office of Immigration Affairs, we would like to see the Office to Prevent Gun Violence made permanent. I am looking forward to working alongside administration, as we further create a plan that is led by the community and driven by the community, but more importantly, a plan that is a public health approach to public safety. Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you. I want to just everyone to hear, before you hear from our leadership of the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus, these three individuals and so many thousand more put their lives on the line. I don't want this just to be heard as these are leaders who stay back in an office, get reports from the field. I need people to understand that the bravery of going out as was said, without a gun, without a badge, into situations where there's pain, where there's conflict, where there's even the potential of gun violence and diffusing it with mind, body, spirit; there's been many, many positive stories, many positive moments where violence was averted, but because these people put their lives on the line and we have to understand that level of sacrifice and commitment. So, we're going to continue to add resources; we're going to continue to add support, continue to empower this movement. I can't think of anything more noble than a human being, deciding that in the name of peace, they will put their own body forward and risk their own life for the safety of others, without anything to defend them, but the power of their beliefs. There's many great traditions in the history of world of non-violence overcoming violence. This is one of them and it's happening in our time. So, my honor's given to all of you. I've watched you, I have admired you, and I look forward to being a true partner, even more in a year and a half ahead.

This work only happens because City Council believes in this model and supports it just as fully as I do and the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus has led the way. And I've been in constant conversation over these last days, with the leadership of the things we're going to do differently in this city; the way we're going to build a new reality in this transformative moment. Remember, we all have recognized that the pain that has come out of the coronavirus, and we've been saying this now for months, it laid bare a reality more starkly than ever before and therefore the city cannot return to its status quo. I want this to be abundantly clear, I've said it for weeks and weeks and weeks – we cannot return to the status quo before. We must create something

different to move forward in this city. The caucus has been leading the way, creating the ideas and the vision of how we get there. And I want introduce to you both leaders here with us today. I was just with him in Cambria Heights just a few days ago and this is a man who does so much for the community. In that case, we were working together on a food drive for people who were working just weeks ago and now have no income and need food and Councilmember Daneek Miller, working with clergy, working with community organizations was giving food to folks who need it. Every time and the many experiences we've had together every time it took courage, he displayed courage in the name of change. Every time working people were not being given justice, he stood up and that comes from his history as a leader in the labor movement. He's someone who painstakingly works to make change. I saw him stand up for veterans when it wasn't easy in his own community, and it should never be hard to stand up for veterans, but, in this case it took courage. Some people may see him as a man who has a calm demeanor. I see a man of steel and strength who stands up for what's right – Co-chair of the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus, Councilmember Daneek Miller.

Council Member Daneek Miller: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I got a new hype man there. That is – that was pretty good, but, but I am so appreciative of the opportunity to be here, to talk about these extraordinary organizations and your extraordinary leadership in this. I have had as you, as you give a brief, brief history of my history, and I've had the pleasure of even in my labor days, partnering with, with the crisis management groups and systems and the Cure Violence groups and using some of those resources and just coming together. And I think that has been really, that type of synergy has really led to the success that this leadership has, has really reached out to community leaders, reached out to folks in labor and in government and said that this work is important. And, as you said, those, those credible messengers, the way that they reach the lives and the souls of those untouchable, often disenfranchised young people that, [inaudible] would say those invisible men and women that no one sees that could walk past you and we either put our head down and walk to the other side of the street, or just don't see them; they have seen and touched the lives of those. And then, also seniors that sometimes we see that portion of the work and so what I want to, my statement was simple; it was about the crisis management organizations that have consistently left, led the emergency response to our communities, public safety and social service needs. Today's announcement, not only reflects the values of the work that they have done on the ground to combat gun violence, but the vital role that they will now play in aiding the city with helping our communities of color heal from the twin traumas of COVID and racial injustice. I thank the administration for its partnership with the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus, and it's supporting these ambassadors of peace as they set out to fulfill their latest mission. And so when we say that, you know, we, we talk very specifically about the gun violence, but I will tell you having, you know, I show up in Queensbridge where, you know, obviously, everybody has family and, you know, when being the largest public housing in the country and to East New York, which is where I was bred and certainly in district – in the greater Jamaica area and folks when they see the, the orange RV pulling up or they see the man up pulling up, they just know, and there's a level of comfort that then happens and so it has transcended even beyond the gun violence. It is the next level of these ambassadors in the work that you do. There was such an easy transition and, and, quite frankly, a no-brainer when it came to not enforcement, but social distancing – the education of social distancing, right. And how they seamlessly transitioned over to those ambassadors, those group of young folks who were standing on the corner, or just doing what they normally do and not

knowing why they should be masked, not knowing why they should have the hand sanitizers and what this process really looks like. It is the members of this crisis management system that seamlessly went in there and educated them on why and how it should be done.

And so, these are the things that they do on a regular basis that really transcend just what we see in terms of the gun violence, and the gun violence certainly now. And I would also say, I would submit that, you know, I witnessed firsthand being each and every one of them and your team members being out on the streets. And I have been, you know, I have certainly got the twelve, one, two o'clock phone calls and ended up in emergency rooms or precincts, but as you witnessed on this weekend and the other times that we have spoken and you had visited the community, Mr. Mayor, the work that we have done even with the law enforcement side was never easy, right? And some of the work that you have seen, the lack of response that you've seen in Jamaica, Queens, and in the borough of Queens overall, I can speak to that you unlike what you've seen throughout the city, you know, when you sit back, it is really by virtue of the work that was done by these groups in advance. This is the work that we've all done. It wasn't by accident or by chance, and to dismiss the voice and the work is, would be really a disservice to all of us, because the work that they do is really a manifestation of the voice of those who have been unheard, right? And so the transformation and the marijuana reform, the stop and frisk reforms, all those things, and the culmination of the work that we are hearing, and that these people are on the ground, talking to these young folks, bringing to these young folks who are, by the way, they're interning with us. You know, they're, they're doing they're really changing lives and to be a part of that this movement is special. I want to thank you for your vision, your leadership on that and I look forward to working with the crisis management team and looking forward to, to really seeing this movement grow. So, thank you.

Mayor: Thank you so much. Now, one more speaker and she is coming to us remotely and has done extraordinary work. Want to say that I came to know Adrienne Adams through her work in the community in Southeast Queens; worked at the grassroots, making sure that government actually served people. And there's some people when you get to know them, you can tell immediately they understand how things work and what changes are needed. And they have the will and the intelligence to make the change, the perseverance to make the change, and I saw that from Adrienne Adams, time and time again. In her leadership with Councilmember, Daneek Miller, leadership of the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus, she has been a clear strong leader saying, not only do we need to move forward, but here's how we do it. And if you know her, you know her work, it doesn't surprise you to know she has that architect's way of thinking – she's not an architect by profession, that's not my point. My point is she thinks about how you build stone upon stone, upon stone to create something new that will actually serve the community. And that's the work she's done all her life – and I also have to say on a very poignant note and a very sad note, she lost her dad very recently in the midst of this crisis, and, you know, was there for her family, but still there for the people she served, kept persevering as her father taught her. And I admire – I admire your strength in this moment, Adrienne. Welcome to speak to all of us – Council Member Adrienne Adams.

Council Member Adrienne Adams: Thank you so much, Mr. Mayor. It is an honor to be with you this morning. This is such an unprecedented time. I thank my colleague, my co-chair Councilmember I. Daneek Miller for your work, of course, our cure violence partners, all of you,

particularly my sister, Erica Ford, that I've admired for so many years. And I'm going to tell you a little story once I say my words I'm, I am literally right now in the middle of a finance hearing with the New York City Council, or I would be there with you right now, but I'm happy to just give my thoughts on this, because partnerships with Cure Violence groups on the ground, intimately involved in, living in our communities are keeping our youth and communities safe. You know, our community has had its share of challenges over the past year, but we remain resilient. So, at this juncture, it's important that we resist the temptation to overuse law enforcement to solve all of the problems in our community. We do need a holistic approach, and I thank you, Cure Violence team, crisis management system leaders for being there for us over these years, these decades. This new funding is a welcome investment in the community-driven work that brings our communities to help and the hope that we all need. It's so important that this critical time that we partner, continue to partner, always partner with our community-based Cure Violence organizations. These are the people that have developed interpersonal relationships with children, parents, schools, religious institutions, and the entire community [inaudible] to uplift our neighborhoods and are best suited to not only stop problems before they start, but also encourage residents to take action so that we can encourage social distancing and curb the spread of COVID-19. Our Cure Violence organizations engage our communities to promote neighborhood resilience and safety. Increasing community-led measures to preemptively cure violence is a step in the right direction.

So, today's announcement is an important step toward moving forward as a city. We cannot – we cannot place a dollar amount on the life and safety of New Yorkers. And I thank Mayor de Blasio for this investment and thoughtful approach. Thank you so much. You know, I've been a resident of Jamaica for over 30 years, way before I became an elected official. I was – still am – I would say this to my constituents, I'm your next door neighbor – you know, still am your next door neighbor. And I remember many, many years ago, I was on my way to church, I was driving down 111th Avenue, and on my left I saw this orange car, and I saw this being jump out of this little orange car, and I saw the unmistakable hair running up into a front lawn, and I looked out of my car, and I said, oh my God, that's Erica Ford, I wonder where she's going. And all I could imagine is that, I knew the work of Erica Ford for years. We were on the community board at the same time – for a little while, but on the same time. So, I knew her work for a very long time, but to see her physically in motion, I knew that she was on the ground in my neighborhood and I trusted that work then, and I trust that work now. So, anything that I can do, have done, will do to preserve the work of our crisis management system. Erica is always saying help us, help us, help us – I hope that this is the beginning of [inaudible] and entrenched help for this amazing system that, as the Mayor says, puts your life on the line, 24-by-seven, to do things that our law enforcement officials cannot do, to do things that lay people cannot do, to do things that elected officials cannot do. And for that, I say, thank you, thank you, thank you Cure management system leaders. I look forward to and am honored to continue our partnership. Thank you, Mayor de Blasio for your continued support and thank you to my co-chair. I'm high-fiving you from a distance. I've got to get [inaudible] finance hearing, but I wish you all well. Thanks again.

Mayor: Thank you so much, Council Member. And, everyone, as we conclude this piece of this press conference, I want to say something that really people need to hear these stories, in my opinion, not just in a city, but all over this country. Three tremendous leaders and voices,

powerful voices of change. These are positive voices who have a solution. They have seen the pain, they will tell you just how real it is. They've seen the disparity. They will take a back seat to no one in fighting the injustice, the disparity 400 years of oppression that brought us to this moment. But they also have created something. So, this nation is struggling to find solutions. I've got a solution for you right here – right here.

[Applause]

And I would say to everyone around the country, including all my fellow mayors, as you're dealing with these weeks of pain that are simply a horrible reminder – people speaking out is a good thing, people speaking for change is a good thing, but the pain that brought it up is horrible. The pain of the coronavirus is shocking to all of us. We still can't take in – a hundred days we have been on a journey together and something we never could have imagined, but it has dredged up truth. So, to every mayor out there, if you want to move forward, turn to the people, turn to the grassroots, turn to folks who actually have solutions, turn to folks who are so sincere about the work of change that they will literally put their own lives forward. If we did that in every corner of this country, if Cure Violence crisis management system existed in every neighborhood and was respected – and it is crucial that elected officials, police all institutions of society, understand and respect this movement – we would be taking a huge step to a more peaceful country, but also a more just country. Leadership resides at the grassroots, people who are actually agents of true justice. We can all move forward together.

So, I thank you all. I know you all have important work to get back to. Thank you, again, Council Member. God bless you all. Thank you.

[...]

Now, everything we're dealing with against the backdrop – again, I cannot believe what the last hundred days has done to all of us, to so many families. And we grapple every day now with how we overcome that. And we've got to figure out, to make all other things possible, a way to finally contain this disease and then painstakingly, purposefully address the disparities one after another, after another – this has to be our constant commitment. But we first, as we do all this work, must stop the ravages of this disease. It's phase one now, and we've waited for this day, but of course this day comes with more and more people coming in, more and more contact with each other. We must keep to those standards, those rules that keep us safe, because they've gotten us this far. And then, we've got to focus on the ability to reach people and address them through test, trace, take care – test, trace, take care. I want to go over it again, because it's so important – everybody who test positive, we reach all their contacts. Anyone who needs testing, gets it. Anyone that needs to safely separate in a hotel room, gets it. Anyone needs support at home – if they're isolated from their family at home, they need food, they need medicine, they get it. It is all for free. It is an extraordinary effort. It is growing all the time, but for this to work the way we want it to, we need everyone to get a test. So, I'm reminding all New Yorkers, as you prepare, as these phases begin, as life starts back towards something better, get tested. We think about the school year ahead, I want everyone tested. As you think about going back to work, I want everyone tested. We're making it more available than ever. We had a day last week where 33,000 New Yorkers got tested on a single day. We want that number to keep growing, I want to hit

50,000 and more soon. Anyone who wants to test go to [nyc.gov/covid test](https://nyc.gov/covid-test) or call 3-1-1. We have that test for free. It's simple. It's fast. It's free.

Now, we're going to do more to make testing available to people. So, I have three announcements today. First, we have launched two mobile test trucks. They were out yesterday in Soundview, in the Bronx, at the Monroe houses. We're going to just have the trucks going around to different neighborhoods, making testing as simple and available as it possibly could be. 10 trucks will be on the ground by next month, 800 tests a day, and the more it works, the more we will do. The focus of beyond the hardest hit communities. The testing comes right to your doorstep.

Second announcement, we have six new community testing partners, and these are organizations that people trust. And we're going to start investing more and more in community-based clinics, because they have the trust of the community, the knowledge of community, they know how to reach into community, they speak the language of the community. This is a big part of what we're going to do is we build out more and more testing and more and more health care to the grassroots. There'll be 15 to 20 new sites coming in the next few weeks through community-based clinics and that will take us over 200 sites all over New York City, where people get tested for free, and that is just going to keep growing. The goal is to constantly make testing more local, more available, and I'm going to say it again – fast, easy, free.

Third point, we're going to provide the full test kits to all the hospitals and hospital systems in New York City. Any place in New York City, any place in health care that needs them, the hospitals are going to get them. Whether they are public, private, independent – if they need test kits, we will have them for them. There has been a particular request from Borough President Oddo in Staten Island to get more test kits to Staten Island immediately. We have these made in New York test kits – another one of the great innovations that came out of this crisis, creating our own here in New York City – 3,000 test kits now being sent immediately to Staten Island. We will keep resupplying tens of thousands more not in Staten Island, but all five boroughs. Whatever it takes, we're letting our health care institutions know that if they need test kits, we will have them for them, because we need testing to grow and grow and grow.

And I said, test trace, take care – let's talk about the tracers. This team now, growing all the time, over 2,500 at work now, and building. We're going to keep taking that number to 5,000 or as many as 10,000 if we need to. The biggest effort in the history of this country, right here. You heard earlier with our colleagues from the crisis management system, Cure Violence movement, that in the globe, this is the single most important place on earth for that movement. This is the place where it's supported the most. It's grown the most. When it comes to test and trace, we are going to show this nation how it can be done on a vast, vast scale. So, thousands and thousands of tracers out there right now. On Monday, June 15th, we will give you an update. The people of the city will get an update on the work of our Test and Trace Corps. So, you're going to see the sheer reach that they have been able to achieve in terms of making sure that folks get the support they need. And I always think of it this way – this is not just about testing people, it's about making sure that anyone who needs help to safely separate, gets it; anyone who needs help to isolate at home. It is about making sure that the disease doesn't spread, because people get the

guidance and support to not be in a position to spread that disease. It doesn't happen accidentally. It happens with painstaking work. We will have a report on Monday, June 15th of those results.

Let's talk about today's indicators and thresholds. So first, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19 – threshold is 200. Today's report, 67 patients – well within the threshold. Daily number of people in the Health + Hospitals ICUs – that threshold, 375. Today's report, 341 – that's also well within the threshold. And percentage of people test citywide positive for COVID-19 – that threshold 15 percent. Today's report, three percent – excellent number, also well within the threshold. So, another very good day for New York City. Let's keep focused – as we go through phase one, and it starting really well, let's keep focus of the social distancing, the face coverings, and when you don't need to be outside, don't be outside. It's working.

A few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

And with that, we will turn to questions from the media. And please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: We will now begin our Q&A. As a reminder, we're also joined by Deputy Mayor Vicki Been and Dr. Ted Long. First question today goes to Gloria from NY1.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I want to ask you, because I'm not sure you've had a chance to comment publicly on the arrest of the officer that we saw in the video shoving the protester. Your thoughts on that? Was the police in agreement with you? And I have another question.

Mayor: Yeah. Gloria, this is not something I discussed with the police leadership. It's a matter for the DA. The DA, who I respect, made a decision. He obviously based it on evidence. And look, there has to be accountability for everyone and I respect that our justice system is going to work and treat everyone equally. So that's the decision the DA made and I respect his decision.

Question: Thank you. My second question – can you still hear me?

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: Okay. My second question is about the announcement that you're making today. And part of what you said was, you talked about how these activists and these people that are part of the Cure Violence movement go into the communities without a gun and without a badge. I wondered if you are having any conversation, or have given any thought to parts of policing that perhaps should be done differently. We've heard about this in the past, whenever there was a case of someone who is in mental distress and the police responds. There's been a lot of calls in the past for the police not to be involved in these kinds of calls. Traffic enforcement – are you having those conversations? Are you thinking about it? And do you think that there is room in some of these areas of policing to rethink who and how they'll respond?

Mayor: Thank you. Thank you for the question – a very important question. So, I think you're putting the pieces together very correctly. We see with the Cure Violence movement, the crisis management system, a different approach to peace. And I think what we have to recognize, Gloria, is – I've spent a lot of time in communities all over the city, I've spent a lot of time in public housing developments, there's still way too much violence out there. And as we're fighting for justice, as we're addressing the coronavirus, we cannot forget the decades and decades of violence. Now, that violence stems from the same – I said, 400 years – you cannot separate that violence from 400 years of broken American history and the oppression that happened sowed the seeds of that violence. And we have to unpiece that, we have to address that a thousand ways. But when you look at what people have done, authentic community leaders, who've done painstaking work over decades to fight back violence as community leaders – a different kind of guardian, without badges, without guns. It's inspiring and is a reminder of the direction we have to go in more and more. And then there's another question, which is – while I absolutely believe that there is a central role for police to play in keeping us safe and that we need to do that through a neighborhood policing strategy, and that, when that is done right, it actually creates some of the same dynamics of cooperation and trust and less use of violence, and you've seen it. You've seen de-escalation in so many cases, you've seen fewer and fewer gun discharges. There is a reality of neighborhood policing and the training that goes with it that helps make policing better and more respectful and sensitive to communities. So, we need that. But to your question, are there areas where, like we said, we're taking police away from street vending, we can do that with civilians. Yes, we're looking at all such options, but we want to do it from a prism of both what's fair and what's going to help people stay safe. That's a conversation we're having right now. The Racial Inclusion and Equity Task force, the three co-chairs are focused on this now with all the commissioners, deputy commissioners, the other members of that task force, talking through, inside this government, how to approach that future. And you'll be hearing more from them on that, for sure. But that is an active conversation now. What should the future look like? What is best done by community? What is best done by civilian government employees? What is best done by police officers?

Moderator: The next is Alex Zimmerman from Chalkbeat.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor, can you hear me?

Mayor: Yeah. Alex, how you doing?

Question: Good. How are you?

Mayor: Good.

Question: So, I have two questions, but I'll ask one and then a follow up. So, school systems across the country are considering, or have actually cut ties to police departments. But last year, you rejected a proposal from the School Diversity Advisory group to even study moving school safety from NYPD to DOE control. And so, I'm wondering why you think the Police Department should control school safety and whether you're reconsidering that position?

Mayor: Alex, it's a very important question. It's also, again, it's a topic that the task force is looking at, but I will tell you, I am also looking at the sweep of the last not only six years, the last 10, 20 years, and how much work had to be done to make our schools safer. I'm thinking about all the parents I heard from at town hall meetings all over the city who are worried about the safety of their kids in schools. I'm thinking about the weapons that have to be seized. It's not just one way or another, Alex. I think we have to think about the fact that school safety as is currently configured has done a lot to reduce crime and violence in our schools and has been adopting a neighborhood policing approach, and I think there's a lot more of that that has to happen unquestionably. In its current form, it still needs to create a paradigm for closer connection between the officers and the families and the students. I'll always consider things, but I want you to understand my honest belief that this is a situation where we have to think about the reality of safety and what each agency knows how to do. And there still is a huge safety challenge in our schools. Parents talk about all the time and I'm really respectful of the parents of our school system, who are overwhelmingly people of color, who live in the outer boroughs, and who I've spent a lot of time with. And I'm a New York City public school parent myself in terms of what my own kids went through, safety is the number one concern of all parents, there is not a doubt in my mind. So, whatever we do, it has to start from a safety perspective first, but it can also come with a lot of transformation in terms of building relationships, hearing young people, hearing families differently and better. And that's the direction I'm thinking about. Go ahead, you got another one?

Question: Yeah. So, I'm just not trying to understand – are you considering it or not?

Mayor: I personally believe that the better approach is to continue what we have, but improve it, reform it. I know that the task force is looking at a whole range of issues, again, about what is better handled by civilians and what is handled best by the Police Department and how to do that work. It's not just about where it's housed, but how it is done. So, I'll be listening to what they come back with, but I'm telling you my honest feeling that the safety issue is not resolved in schools at this point. And that school safety is necessary in its current form to keep ensuring the safety of our kids and all personnel in our schools.

Moderator: Next is Matt Chayes from Newsday.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, at the top of the call you said that 50-a would change everything, your words. Will you instruct the NYPD not to invoke existing FOIL law to block disclosure records related to discipline and I'll have a follow up as well?

Mayor: Yeah, Matt, as we speak, the lawyers at City Hall, Police Department are reviewing the legislation to determine everything that it means. So, I'll only put one asterisk on my comments to begin with, which is I need to hear a full report from the legal team to understand the exact reality. And, Matt, I'll also say, I'm not going to say that every situation is the same and there aren't unusual situations that should be handled differently. But I can tell you directionally, I'd like to see the maximum disclosure at this point. I think the goal here is that all existing personnel actions be put out publicly. But, again, I'll have a lot more to say on that as we develop, you know, the specific plan off the details of the legislation.

Question: Do you have a deadline for the legal team for when the celebrating and the congratulation stops and the disclosure begins?

Mayor: Well, Matt, I'm going to say I would not act like, and respectfully, if the day after a historic vote, we commend the Legislature. I don't think that's undue celebration. This is something that happened hours ago. We'll have this team review it over the next few days and I'm sure we'll have something to say very soon.

Moderator: Next is Abu from Bangla Patrika.

Question: Hello, Mayor. Good morning, how are you?

Mayor: I'm good, Abu. And I also just want to say one more thing before I hear your question. Just one follow – additional point on the previous. You know, a lot of us have been saying for years that 50-a had to go. So, I know everyone wants to see the moment – the moment is powerful, but I also think it's important to look at the years and years of work that it took to change the political dynamic to get rid of 50-a. And that's another reason to celebrate, [inaudible] reason to celebrate the politics that were broken that protected a broken law in 50-a. Those politics changed profoundly, and I've been calling for that change for years. And a lot of building blocks came together to make it happen. Go ahead, Abu.

Question: Thank you so much, Mayor, for your kind comment. My first question is, you know, the social distance in the mosques is [inaudible] reducing the virus. So, you have plans for the people who are not using the mosque in the city, impose any kind of fine or anything?

Mayor: No, Abu. Look, I don't think that's going to be productive and I'm answering your question straight up. Do we have a plan to do that? No, we do not have a plan to do that. I think you're right, that we're seeing the face coverings are having a really powerful impact and we've got to keep figuring out how to get people to use them. I do empathize with anyone who doesn't really enjoy the experience. I don't either, but it works and it protects people and we've got to make it easier and easier. So, you know, we're just going to keep constantly giving them out for free. I think that has been very productive, Abu, constantly educating people. And I think education, reminders, free face coverings, let's take a positive approach to it. I also think it's true, every workplace, every institution needs to keep sending the message how serious it is, and there's going to be – and there should be, for example, when folks are going into grocery stores, they're going into supermarkets, people have to have on those face coverings and if they don't it's appropriate for –

Question: Okay –

Mayor: I'm just finishing, Abu – it's appropriate for a store to say, you can't come in. So, that's not a fine, but it's a reminder to people that there are rules that have to be met. Go ahead.

Question: Okay. The second question is about the [inaudible], you know, people who are you know, the tenant and they both have kind of anxiety right now because a lot of people they're not

paying and the landlord [inaudible] the rent. So, what is the exact message to the people, both sides?

Mayor: Abu, it's such an important issue. There are some people who are working and now there's going to be more and more people who are working and those who can pay the rent, obviously, that's what we aspire to for everyone because buildings have to keep moving and they have expenses, etcetera. So, anyone who could pay the rent should pay the rent. People who can't pay the rent, we want as much flexibility as possible for anyone who can't pay the rent. I believe the State still needs to codify an approach, and it can only be done at the State level, to allow people who can't pay the rent to be on a long term payment plan, to give them an exemption for a substantial period of time until they have income again, then give them an opportunity to make up the rent over time. Look, the bigger solutions – would I like to see a massive stimulus that covers those rent payments? Of course, but right now we see no action in Washington on any form of stimulus.

So, at least what we could have at the State level is action to give time to all renters who cannot pay. So, if they can't pay now, they can be on some kind of long term payment plan once they have an income back, but only once they have an income back, obviously. I also think the State needs to be much stronger on saying no evictions – no evictions now, no evictions until this crisis is fully over, no evictions for months thereafter. Because we cannot run the risk that people don't have a roof over the head in the middle of this crisis.

Moderator: The next is Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

Question: Hey, good morning, Mr. Mayor. I just have one question and it sort of ties into what you discussed yesterday about health care. And I guess seeing all the Queens elected officials on the call, I just wanted to ask, I've asked it obviously [inaudible] previous, but it's about health care disparities within the boroughs. And this is more of a forward looking question. Given that Queens has the lowest number of hospital beds per capita and health care inequities is an issue that you said that you've tried to work on, I want to know what your administration plans to do to address this. I know last fall, there was announced a plan to expand Elmhurst Hospital's emergency room. I want to know if you know the status of that. The work was supposed to begin around now. So, knowing that there are – this borough has the fewest hospital beds, it keeps expanding, closed hospitals become apartments. So, what is your plan to expand what is a real disparity in the second most populous and the most diverse borough in New York City? Thanks.

Mayor: No, thank you, Katie. Very important question. And I'll start and if Dr. Ted Long has an update on the Elmhurst expansion he'll jump in and if he doesn't, we'll get you more, but we absolutely have to provide more affordable health care to people in Queens. So, the first part, the guaranteed health care plan to reach the 600,000 people citywide who don't have health insurance, remember that's NYC Care, that's getting people on MetroPlus, that's making sure that people who don't have insurance and can get insurance get it, or people who can't get insurance get a primary care physician assigned for free. If they cannot pay, it will be for free. And all the other services. That's never happened in any other city in America. Queens is one of the places that needs that the most. And as we said, we are deepening and speeding all the efforts around NYC Care. So, they'll be in place in all five boroughs by September.

And then the point about expansion, the COVID centers of excellence one of them being focused in Queens, making sure we keep adding, adding, adding because I think your point is very well taken. This is a borough that needs a lot more health care support. However, we can do it, we're going to do it even though our resources are going to be horribly constrained. Addressing health disparities is going to be a central focus for the next year-and-a-half. So, Ted, do you want to add on the specifics around Elmhurst? Ted, are you out there? Maybe you're on mute, Ted.

Dr. Ted Long: Hi, can you hear me?

Mayor: There you go. Yup.

Dr. Long: Okay. We'll get back to you with a precise update on the Elmhurst expansion.

Mayor: Okay, go ahead, Katie.

Question: Oh yeah, my follow up – I mean you said that Queens is one of the places that needed this health care, New York City Care, the most. So, I think I even asked this, I felt like a lifetime ago in the Bronx, why wasn't it rolled out? Why won't it be rolled out until September? I understand there's a ramp up to these programs. But given the facts of the lack of health care and the lack of hospital beds. Why wasn't it rolled out sooner?

Mayor: Katie, again, you know, we ought to put this in the true perspective in my view – job one, years ago before we ever knew we'd be in this situation, was to save the public hospital system, which, as you remember, a few years ago, people were talking about closing hospitals, not adding new ones. And Health + Hospitals was dealing with hundreds of millions of dollars, sometimes billions of dollars, of deficit. And I made a decision back then, it wasn't something that was really focused on much in the public discourse, but I made a decision to double down on public health care, save those hospitals, save those doctors' and nurses' jobs, keep them in place. Having no idea we would ever end up with a pandemic or with a situation where Elmhurst Hospital would be the epicenter within the epicenter. And it held because those investments had been made.

The fact is that NYC Care and guaranteed health care was supposed to play out over a longer period of time, obviously, because it's such a huge endeavor trying to reach 600,000 people who have no health care coverage whatsoever. That's the size of a lot of major American cities. That's more people than live in Miami, for example, is the number of people that don't have any health care coverage in New York City. And I said it very openly and I'll say it again. That is people who are documented and undocumented alike, but the fact is we can get it done by September. That's what we believe while all the other efforts have been put into addressing the coronavirus, that to actually be able to have that service available for everybody in Queens who needs it, that we can have it done – and for all five boroughs – we can have it done by September. That's the timeline we know we can achieve.

Moderator: The next is Yoav from The City.

Question: Hi, everyone. Mr. Mayor, I wanted to ask you – you said a few times recently that the police discipline process is moving faster already and you pointed to a couple of high profile cases in which the City's taken action, but I haven't heard of any changes to the discipline system, either from the NYPD or from your office. So, I'm trying to understand how are they already moving the discipline process faster or is it just that the high-profile cases are moving to the top of the queue? Unless you've hired more people or mandated investigators to use overtime, I'm just not sure what's changed. So, I'm wondering if you can be specific to what has allowed the process to move faster, if that's indeed the case.

Mayor: So, Yoav, I don't have the exact statistics in front of me and to your very good point about if it took more investigators or whatever it took, I would support that. But the proof is just in the actions that we've seen now. A series of disciplinary actions that have moved more quickly than what we saw in the past and it proves it can be done and it has to be done a lot more. We'll make more systematic announcements in the days ahead, but I'm actually very tangible in my worldview when I see something move that's what I care about, seeing that process that used to take longer now is going faster. It certainly happened in the case of the officers in the Lower East Side. It certainly happened in the case of the officers in recent activities with the protest. I want to see it go a lot faster than that still. But I'm going by just tangible proof. Something is moving and we'll have more to say on how we make that systematically clear going forward.

Question: Okay. I'd like to follow up on that, but I actually have another question to ask. So, I wanted to ask you, Mr. Mayor, you've ended solitary confinement for use under 22 in city jails. Is it time to end it for all inmates, to end solitary confinement for good in city jails?

Mayor: Yoav, it's an important question. I think we need a process to evaluate and not one that has to take long, but should be very thoughtful where we're going out front. Look, I'm someone who made the decision – and it was one that is not the norm still in this country – but I made the decision that we don't want to see young people in solitary and we kept raising that age up, as you said, and I believe it was the morally right thing to do and I believe we've been able to do it in a way that's effective. And I think it's a valid question to say, can we go even farther now? I really have great respect for Jennifer Jones Austin, as you know, co-chair of my transition when I came into office – I think a voice of conscience in this city. I know she, in her role at the Board of Corrections, is looking at this issue, talking to the stakeholders, determining what is a smart way forward. Our Commissioner, Cynthia Brann, is always looking at these issues. She's been a reformer her whole life. First Deputy Mayor Dean Fuleihan, who has the Department of Correction under him, is looking at these issues. So, I think it's something we need to evaluate in a thoughtful process with all the stakeholders and then decide if there's the right time to take the next step.

Moderator: Next is Brigid from WNYC.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. I have two questions also. My first is related to 50-a –and at the top of the presser and at previous press conferences, you've talked about how it's really on the State Legislature to make the changes, how passing it is how you build faith and trust, but it was your own administration – in fact, your Law Department – that was responsible for the reinterpretation of the law in a more restricted fashion, which essentially blocks some of the

disciplinary records that had been [inaudible] under the Bloomberg administration. So, I'm just wondering to what extent you acknowledge your own administration's role in preventing some of this police transparency sooner.

Mayor: Brigid, look, I've spoken to it before. I'm going to do it again. The Corporation Counsel at the time, Zachary Carter – highly respected legal mind, the guy who prosecuted the Abner Louima case, the guy who was settled the Central Park Five case – he said to me, this is in fact, even though it does not conform with our ideal of transparency, this is the law in New York State, and this is how it has to be dealt with. I would have unquestionably wanted to see more disclosure if it was not legally blocked. I had been working for years to get 50-a changed so that we didn't even have a question because, you know, Brigid if you think, well, it would be fine to just go do something, even though it was illegal, that would be overturned really quickly. That's what my Corporation Counsel told me, that no matter how much we wanted transparency, it would not hold up in court. We would be enjoined from doing that. And that was the end of the discussion. But the much better path was to change the law. And for the first time in a long, long time that law has changed and now we have the ability to be transparent.

So, I don't accept – honestly, I don't accept the notion that somehow my Corporation Counsel – I'm not the lawyer here, he was – that he had a reason to want to be un-transparent. No, as a lawyer, he believed that's what the law required and we all set ourselves to the work of changing the law. Go ahead.

Question: Thanks. So, and then reflecting on the political moment, you know, yesterday there was a very heated City Council hearing over some police reform legislation, specifically the chokehold bill, which you voiced support for some version of yesterday. It's legislation that's been around for six years and now there are versions that are being discussed at the state and federal level, given that you ran for president calling New York a progressive beacon, I'm just wondering if you wish the city made this legislation a priority sooner, so we really were a leader on it?

Mayor: Brigid I believe we were a leader because it was banned by the NYPD and had been banned for a long time. I think the legislation is now the right thing to do and I think there's been other actions in the law that make me comfortable that it's the right thing to do, and it's the right way forward here and everywhere. So, I don't – I think there's always things that, you know, we need to do better. I – if every question is, should we do better now? Could we have done better in the past? I'll always say yes to both, but I do stand by why we are a progressive beacon and I'm not going to let anyone denigrate that honestly, or underestimate that.

What we talked about earlier today, that work with the Cure Violence Movement, it has been going on for years and years. And honestly, I don't think it got a lot of attention. I think it deserved a lot of attention. I wanted the people of this city to know these leaders and know the work that they're doing. I don't think a lot of the things that were done to change policing, you know, stop and frisk a lot attention, getting rid of that. The settling the Central Park Five case got a lot attention. I don't think de-escalation training, the retraining of the entire police force got the attention it deserved. I don't think neighborhood policing and all the changes that is led to got the attention they deserved. I think we've been trying to incessantly change our police, including

when I say 180,000 fewer arrests in 2019 compared to last year at the Bloomberg administration, I keep pointing to that as profound, tangible change, but I don't see that as something that people who govern our public discourse are as interested in as some other topics and that doesn't make sense to me.

If 180,000 fewer New Yorkers went through arrest, if there's 4,000 people incarcerated today versus 11,000, when I came into office, these are the human realities. So I'm very, very comfortable about the fact that we have incessantly moved to a progressive change agenda. I don't feel like it's been listened to honestly, but the people who are experiencing the change know it. And if you talk to these grassroots leaders who are living the life of communities of color in the outer boroughs, they know what's changed and they know what still has to change. I think a lot of folks who don't live those lives don't understand it, but I'm going to keep doing this work because it has to be done. And I want to reach everyday people that's what I'm in it for.

Moderator: Next is Dana from the New York Times.

Question: Hi Mr. Mayor, just to follow up on Matt Chayes' question, I'm curious if you have any thoughts on why anyone should have faith at the repeal of 50-a will change anything given its reliance on New York's notoriously weak Freedom of Information Law and your, and prior administrations, own record on fulfilling foil requests?

Mayor: I think you're going to see the change, Dana. I don't think it should be about faith. It should be about results, and I want to see the maximum information flow now, and now how to do that within the law, the right way to do that, as I said, we'll have more to say on that in the next few days. But now people judge, you know, again, I think there are folks who look at the world from one perspective, and then there are folks who live the lives of the issues we're talking about. The change is what people feel and know. It's not words, it's not ideas. It's what happens to people on the ground, in their communities. You're going to see more transparency in police discipline. You're going to see faster police discipline. People will know it and feel it. That's the standard I have to hold myself and the NYPD too, and that's what we'll do.

Question: Can you hear me?

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: Okay, and second question, unrelated, I'm curious if you're giving any thought to establish suing HOV lanes into Manhattan like New York City did after Hurricane Sandy and 9-11?

Mayor: I think that's a real interesting idea, Dana. We haven't been to date focused on that. There's been obviously more focused on how to get the subway and the buses to be safe and for people to feel comfortable coming back, and obviously you've seen the numbers, people are starting to come back. Increasing the service on the Staten Island Ferry, I mean, the things that we can do right now that will affect most people. But I think it's also true, and we've talked about that, some people are going to only be comfortable in a car in the short term. I think that's a

really good question, and we'll look at that as to whether that might be an approach that would relieve some of the impact.

Moderator: Next is Erin from Politico.

Question: Mayor, I'm just wondering if we can get an update on how the reopening is going, as far as you have any numbers at this point on how many people are back to work? How many businesses have reopened? Has there been any enforcement or warnings or just any sense of compliance with the social distancing requirements at the newly reopened businesses and has anything you've seen –

Mayor: Okay, okay. That's a lot of questions Erin and hold on, let me take the broad point. Vicki Been is on the line with us, I'll start and pass to Vicki and she can give you what she has. Obviously look were two full days have passed so far, Erin. I'm pleased by what we have seen so far, but it's obviously a very, very small sample size in the scheme of things, as I said, we know people are coming back to the subways. That's noticeable. We know people coming back to the Staten Island Ferry. We're seeing as much as so far, we're getting reports back, you know, some real adherence to the rules that people understand it matters to practice social distancing and use face coverings. But I think it's early to tell you sort of the larger trend, if you will, the larger reality, but let me have a Deputy Mayor Vicki Been give you an update that as far as the information she has. Vicki, are you out there? Let's try that again. I know she's in the lineup. Vicki, can you, I think I might be on mute if you are talking or else we have a technical problem, we'll come right back around.

Moderator: We can move on.

Mayor: All right. Let's figure that out. We're going to come right back. Erin, if you have another question, why don't you go to that? And then we will see if we can get Vicki right back.

Question: No, that's it for me right now.

Mayor: All right, so what we'll do is we'll give you a credit line for, I'll take one more question and then come back, back to you, as we find Vicki.

Moderator: Last question for today goes to Jacob from the Jewish Insider.

Mayor: Jacob?

Question: [Inaudible] Mr. Mayor. So, I want to follow up a little on Erin's question which is, I took the subway for the first time yesterday returning to my office for the first time in three months. But what I've encountered, I didn't go in rush hour time, was empty trains and empty streets. The question is, are people just complying with the restrictions and as we turn more towards Phase Two people will start to get comfortable taking the subways, going out to the streets, or is it just an indicator that all the measures that were taken until now, and based on the numbers that you are released, that everything is working accordingly, or is it even going giving better than expected?

Mayor: Well, Jacob has a lot of options, I'd say to you again, it's only been two days. We do have factual data from the MTA about increase in ridership. So we know something is moving. You will certainly find, you should find just by the sheer facts emptier trains and streets than what we knew back in February. That just stands to reason it's going to be phases. So Phase One, as I said, it is – we don't have the final number. We hope to have a good read on it in the next days, but it was going to be in terms of people actually showing up to work in the five boroughs, somewhere between 200,000, 400,000 people. Anywhere else in the country, that would be a huge, huge influx of people into their city. But here that's actually very small compared to where we were. Remember in February, we had over 4.5 - 4.6 million jobs in the five boroughs. So there's been a huge dislocation.

For the first days. I didn't expect miracles, Jacob. I expected people to start testing and seeing if they were comfortable. People starting to see what their colleagues experienced before they made a decision. There's still obviously people who have to take care of family realities. So I don't think it's surprising that you saw some empty trains and streets. Some of the places I went over in the last 48 hours, I saw a fair amount of activity. I think the bigger question will be Phase Two as is a much more substantial phase, and that could be quite soon, obviously. So that's where I think you're going to see a, a bigger uptake, but the question is a qualitative one. If folks go on the subway and they go on the buses, they feel good about the experience. They will tell their family. They will tell their friends, people will start to try it more and more. You're going to see some natural movement. And obviously we have to keep reminding people that the maximum social distancing, maximum face coverings on the buses and the subways and the more people see that the more comfortable or feel, and they don't see it, they're going to feel less comfortable. So, we've got to keep doing that, work, that education, giving out the free face coverings, et cetera. What's your next question, Jacob?

Question: You answer [inaudible] –

Mayor: What's that now?

Question: I'm good with your response.

Mayor: Okay. Excellent. Thank you, Jacob. Let's see if we have Vicki Been now. And do we have Erin back? Let's try and see we can get all this technology. Erin, Vicki, are you there?

Deputy Mayor Vicki Been, Housing and Economic Development: I'm here.

Mayor: Okay.

Deputy Mayor Been: I'm here, yes.

Mayor: Okay, so you can speak to – Erin's question. You heard, so go ahead.

Deputy Mayor Been: Yes, so, and to the question also that was just asked. I mean, we are seeing upticks in ridership, for example, on the ferries, on the Staten Island Ferry, on the New

York City Ferry. Obviously as - as the mayor said, in terms of the subway, we are monitoring that carefully and trying to both ensure that people do have a good experience when they come back. We are seeing first of all, just tremendous interest. We have a small business hotline about questions on the restart. And even just in the first 24 hours of that, we got almost 3,900 calls of people asking very specific questions about their restart in our own assets, where we have the greatest visibility, for example, in the Brooklyn Army Terminal, the Brooklyn Navy Yard, we're seeing about 60 percent of the businesses back in operation. We've seen that uptick just in the last, you know, week. Some of those businesses were essential. Some of them are coming online and so we are seeing people come back. So we're, you know, certainly seeing the restart kick in, but as the Mayor said, we're only a few days in and we're going to be seeing much more of it, I think, in the coming days.

Mayor: And Erin, did you have a follow up?

Question: No. I guess I'll ask on something else if that's okay. On 50-a, you've been calling for changes for it for a long time but in the past you've supported a reform as opposed to a full repeal. Lately you talked about repealing and replacing. I'm just wondering, are you satisfied with just what the Legislature did and leave it alone? Or are you going to be looking for some kind of replacement or other protections for officers?

Mayor: No, Erin, I think they did it right. In February I was up in Albany, I testified, I said, because I heard there was a big desire for repeal rather than revision, and I said, great repeal, but then replace with language, you know, binding language that protects the identities of the personal information, personal home address, et cetera of officers so they're not endangered. Their families are not endangered. The Legislature did a good job with that. They did address that. So, I think – no, I'm very, very pleased, very moved by the package of legislation that was passed and all that I think was exactly right.

And the look it's amazing, Erin, I mean, this is – a lot of us were fighting for a long time for a different State Senate. I just want to put this in perspective for a moment. The whole time I was in this administration, and you will remember starting in 2014, I was fighting to change the State Senate. Well, before that I was working to change the State Senate. State Senate changed a Democratic majority. We saw extraordinary progress, extraordinary progressive legislative achievements last year from the state legislature. Now we see a really breathtaking package of police reforms and criminal justice reforms passed in the last 48 hours. That is the result of painstaking work over years and decades to change that State Senate and to support progressive candidates for the Senate and for the Assembly. It is the result also of a lot of us calling for a change in that law, and I want the history to be written accurately, I've been calling for change that law for years, my Police Commissioners have as well.

So the fact that this has happened is seismic. It will open the doors to a tremendous transparency, and I think it's going to help intensely, it also is a statement on the declining power of the police unions in Albany. And this was something goes back to my years serving in the administration of Mayor Dinkins. We had to see a change in the political dynamics and the power dynamics of police unions in the City and State long ago, the power, the political grip in the city started to loosen, that's I'm your Mayor. It would never would have been possible with some of the

political dynamics of the past with the police unions and the other conservative forces that govern this place. But there's no question that it used to be in Albany that police unions got their way right or wrong. I'll say it again, I believe in a union movement and not every police union is the same, and I welcome police union leaders to now come forward in the spirit of the moment and actually embrace change, embrace transparency, embrace reform, say what happened to George Floyd was wrong and they want to see policing change. They could be agents of good. Too often in Albany they've only been there to block progress. They couldn't block it this time. So this is a watershed moment, not only in terms of the laws changing and the opportunity to provide real justice and fairness to the people in New York City in New York State. It's a moment of transcendent political change too. And I believe, and I'll conclude on this. This is just the beginning.

For us, it's 18 more months of relentless activity to change this city, but I also think we're in a transformative moment for the City, for the State, for the nation. This is our New Deal moment. This is, despite the pain, and I assure you and I heard it from my own relatives, what they went through in the Depression, what they went through in World War II, that trauma and pain was also the foundation for fundamental change that we came to know as the New Deal and all the things that still exist today that made this a better country. This is our transformative moment, and I intend with the power I have as Mayor to make that vivid and clear and sharp and tangible over these next 18 months. And one of the things – as I started today, I'll end – is empowering grassroots leaders who have been doing the work for years and years, who are the people who can bring change and peace. I want to redistribute money to them so they can do this work and give people faith that we can actually have a fairer society. Thank you, everyone.

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