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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS APPEARS LIVE ON NY1'S MORNINGS ON 1

Pat Kiernan: The Adams administration is moving forward with a policy change in the way it deals with mental health. It's designed to get people in severe crisis off the streets, off the subways, and into places where they can get treatment, even if that means the treatment is on an involuntary basis. Joining us to explain more about this is Mayor Eric Adams. Mr. Mayor, thank you for being here.

Mayor Eric Adams: Hey Pat, how are you?

Kiernan: I'm well.

Mayor Adams: Happy holidays.

Kiernan: Thank you. It's the word involuntary that seems to have prompted a lot of the questions about how this will work. Talk to me about that. What will happen in those moments when a police officer or someone else identifies someone who might need treatment?

Mayor Adams: That is so important and what we are going to do is like what I learned in college, we're going to do a FAQ, frequently asked questions, step by step because the sensationalism, unfairly, I think, that the media has placed on this, has caused a lot of stress among people. And we are very clear — our clarification of the policy is dealing with this specific small group of people. Just because you live on the street, just because you don't have shoes on or you don't have a coat on in inclement weather that doesn't fall into this category. And say, can't meet your basic needs, and you're clearly displaying a level of mental health illness that is dangerous to yourself and to others, we are going to take you to a doctor that's going to make the determination of the next steps.

Police officers are not leading this. Mental health professionals have been partnering with us for the last few months to execute this. We gave a clarification to our officers. And we have found that if you spend time to interact with this person, you don't have to reach a person in a moment where you're strapping someone down. No one is being arrested here. All of this is just incorrect, Pat. We are dealing with a specific small group of people who display this level of behavior.

People are actually trying to say, "Let's wait until they harm someone. Let's wait until they harm themselves," and we are not going to have that policy in this city while I'm the mayor of this city.

Kiernan: You know how this is going to play out at some point, which is, and you've been out there on the beat as a cop. A cop makes a judgment call that somebody needs help. They try to get them to come with them. Somebody's got their camera phone and it looks like the person is being dragged off. What do you say to your fellow police officers and how to handle this?

Mayor Adams: Oh, what I've been saying since I've been the mayor, I got your back. I am not going to send police officers out and place them in harm's way, and allow someone to place a video up on social media, and all of a sudden, we are not going to give that officer the support that he deserves. My EMS workers, my doctors, my first responders that are in the subway system, my mental health professionals — this is extremely complicated work. We're going to give them the training they deserve, the support they deserve. And yes, we have to build out a system. But something that we should all realize, we are walking past our fellow New Yorkers that we know cannot make the decision of taking care of themselves to the point that they can meet their basic needs. This is just unacceptable and I'm just not going to do it and I'm not going to have a city that is going to allow that to happen.

Kiernan: Mayor Adams, you talked about the media coverage of this. I want to also note the public advocate and some Council members have a rally planned for this morning. They're going to gather on the steps of City Hall. They are accusing you of endangering mentally ill and vulnerable New Yorkers. What are you going to say to them?

Mayor Adams: I'm going to walk by them and give them the thumbs up that I normally give them. If you look at the same group, this is the same group that stated we could not take care of COVID and we shouldn't allow our schools to stay open. This is the same group that's stated we should not do anything with the asylum seekers. These are the same usual people who come forward to say, "Let's throw a rock." A rock is not a plan. A plan is being able to stand up during these difficult moments and state, you can't run a city where fellow New Yorkers are on the street in a capacity that they can't take care of themselves and make the right decision. So they have a right to protest. They have a right to do all those things. When they finish, come inside City Hall and let's sit down together so they can fully understand the plan that we are executing and that other New Yorkers are calling for. This is what New Yorkers believe we should be doing.

Kiernan: Mayor Adams, I want to get to some other topics. You were in virtual court yesterday contesting a \$300 fine that alleged that you failed to get rid of rats on your property in Brooklyn. It's unusual for a mayor to be in this position. The New York Times reported this morning that this is like City Hall fighting City Hall. Why didn't you think that fine was justified? Why are you challenging this?

Mayor Adams: Oh \$6,800. \$6,800. That's how much I spent to do rat mitigation on my property and throughout that block, the entire block. There is a rodent problem in the city and you don't have to go far to know that I hate rats. And that is why we are bringing on the rat czar, that is why we are doing what's necessary. And I want other New Yorkers, if you believe you were

fined unfairly, utilize your right to go in front of a person to state, "Here's my case. My receipts are clear." I did a good job of mitigating the rats. I speak with my neighbors about it. We make sure that we do everything possible to deal with these rodents. Sometimes I hear the counts of the number of rats compared to New Yorkers and it's frightening, but we are going to bring on a rat czar. We're going to clean our city with Jessica Tisch, the sanitation commissioner, and we're going to push these back. I think she says it best, "Rats don't run New York."

Kiernan: Yeah. That's Tisch's talent. It is the TikTok sensation of the fall. Hey, I want to get to one serious topic before we finish up because you were on Staten Island last night talking about the arrest of somebody in the antisemitic attack there, and these words were interesting. You said, "We advocate and pass laws to protect those who commit crimes. Let's start protecting those who are victims of crime." That's the message we heard from Lee Zeldin a lot in this election campaign we just went through. Is this a sentiment among voters that is lasting beyond the election that police don't have the tools they need?

Mayor Adams: Prior to Lee Zeldin wanting to run for governor, this is what I've been saying, do an analysis of all the laws we've passed, not only in New York but across the country. Analyze them. Where is the law that protects innocent people? That's my question. Years ago we did a victim service legislation. What do we do for a family member who's the victim of a homicide and they're the primary breadwinner and now their entire family is thrown into turmoil? We passed laws to protect the person who killed the individual. What have we done for those who are the victims of crimes, who have devastated?

I say it's time for us to start focusing on people or are doing the right thing, who are taxpayers, and that are victims of those who have made up their mind they're going to prey on innocent New Yorkers and innocent Americans. That is who I speak on behalf of, the innocent people of this city that are victims of those small number of people who are inflicting violence in our city. And I'm not going to apologize for them and I'm not going to continue to promote the concept that we should be protecting them over innocent people.

Kiernan: Mayor Adams, glad you could find some time for us for this conversation this morning. Thank you.

Mayor Adams: Thank you very much.

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