

10.26.20 Notes from the Governor's Briefing:

COVID:

- Day 240
- 3.2% positive rate in red zones
- 1.1% statewide rate without red zones
- 1.4% statewide rate with red zones included
- 82,000 tests conducted yesterday
- 12 fatalities
- 1,059 hospitalizations
- 237 ICU patients
- 118 intubations

Hotspots on 7-day average:

- Brooklyn: 4.19%
- Rockland: 4.08%
- Orange: 2.58%

- NY is now third lowest infection rate nationally

Federal:

- Gov. said WH Chief of Staff Mark Meadows' comment that virus cannot be controlled has been administration's belief from the start, which is why action was never taken
- Gov. asserted closure and phased reopening was the proper way to control the virus and continues to be
- Gov. discussed success of micro-cluster approach, and the efficacy of extensive testing
- Gov. criticized federal government's reduction in testing, arguing this perpetuates denial, viral spread
- Gov. noted a vaccine could be a year away, citing challenges in administration
- Experts at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation estimate another 160,000 Americans may die by February 2021 if uncontrolled
- Gov. reiterated politics need to be removed from public health

Mask Up Campaign:

- Gov. said 130,000 lives could be saved by next spring if masks are worn
- TheRealReal and NY designers are partnering to design masks
- Profits will go to COVID relief charities
- Masks can be purchased at therealreal.com
- Gov. announced a Mask Up challenge on Instagram, encouraged users to share photo wearing mask, and challenge 5 friends to do the same

Q&A:

- On why positivity rate is used as a metric, as opposed to number of cases:
 - Gov. said several measures are used, but hospitalizations and case number only provide outlook for one day
 - Transmission rate, positivity rate can better provide projections

- Follow up on why positivity rate is made public, but other metrics are not:
 - Gov. said hospitalizations are the clearest day-to-day metric, and are provided
 - Rhodes added positivity indicates rate of spread and if enough testing is being done
 - If positivity rate is low, enough testing is being conducted and infection rate is low

- On COVID outbreak at Elmira Correctional Facility:
 - Gov: "DOCCS has done fantastic job overall with COVID"
 - DeRosa added 3 prisons are being closely monitored
 - State deployed rapid testing, is ensuring quarantine and contact tracing being implemented
 - DeRosa said these outbreaks are believed to be result of community spread, many asymptomatic cases
 - Visitation at these three facilities has been rolled back

- 70 active cases in prisons currently, entire population will be tested by the end of November
- On a delay in banning visitation in congregant facilities in red zones:
 - Gov. said when numbers surge, congregant facilities are among hardest hit
 - Micro-cluster program accounts for change in guidance
- On whether Gov. has been in contact with NJ Gov. Murphy on hotspots:
 - Gov. said he has been in contact with border states, is concerned about increase in border states
 - Gov. reiterated there is no way to enforce quarantines in those regions
 - DeRosa added all governors have discouraged non-essential travel
- On if Gov. anticipates adjustments in red zones in coming weeks:
 - Gov. said he expects changes in coming weeks
- On issues with voting in NYC, and de Blasio's comments to revamp NYC BOE:
 - Gov. said NYC BOE did "terrible job", and he is open to entirely redesigning the system
 - Mujica added NYC BOE has had issues for years, has been given additional funding, and "needs to fix itself"
- On whether Gov. can prohibit large political rallies:
 - Gov. stated it could be argued that political rallies pose a public health threat, but the first amendment and right to assemble would make it difficult
- On whether spread of COVID could be negligence:
 - Gov. called this is an "interesting legal question"
 - Gov. compared this to HIV transmission, and said he could see where there would be a legal debate if one knowingly transmitted COVID