4.18.20 Notes from the Governor’s Briefing:

- Total hospitalizations are down.  Question - past the apex, and on the descent?
- Negative net change in total hospitalizations, which is a positive.
- ICU Admissions are down / intubations are down.
- Still 2k new COVID hospitalizations per day.
- 540 deaths yesterday (504 hospitals / 36 nursing homes).

TESTING:
- Tension in reopening, and Gov reiterates that testing is key.
- Infection rate is 1 to .9 person to person, credits NY PAUSE policy as reducing rate from 1.4. Reopen too fast, and infection rate rises.
- Testing informs the calibration of reopening. Identify, Trace, Isolate.
  - NYS needs thousands of tracing investigators.
  - Establish synchronized efforts in testing.
  - Challenge is bringing it scale. Despite state's efforts on its own more testing is needed.
- Gov refers to New Rochelle cluster as a success story of Identify, Trace, Isolate.
- Gov states about 30 large, private companies producing testing equipment, each with different methods of testing. They sell product to local labs, which then must adhere to requirements specific to each company.
  - Company specific equipment and reagents create complications in producing uniformity.
- State reached out to top 50 labs in state and questioned how to double output:
  - General response: Reagent supply chain is unreliable.
  - Empire City Labs: Capacity is 2800 per day, but company limiting 400 tests per day.
  - Federal gov't regulates large manufactures, and companies distribute product according to Fed directives.
  - Gov requests federal coordination of supply chain, as well as federal partnership.
- Gov reiterates request to provide funding to state governments. Argues that funding state government is funding business, hospitals, schools, reopening efforts generally.
  - National Gov's Assoc. still calling for $500B in funding.
  - Feds sent 1.5M cloth masks to NYS., helpful with Exec Order.

GOV OPINION:
- The country is frustrated, anxious, scare & angry.
- Gov states that politicizing emotion
  - "I'm going to be Governor of the State of New York until the people kick me out, and then I'm going to spend time with my family."
- Calls COVID response the greatest challenge since WWII, and using unity language.

Q&A:

MASKS:
- Gov not wearing a mask, why should I? (Campbell): Gov states he's wearing a mask while walking the dog, and in situations where he could come across other people. Recommends same for general public.

POLITICS:
- McKinley questions on piecemeal approach to states reopening. Gov reiterates effort to remove politics out of process, and notes that Feds placing responsibility with governors will lend itself to a variety of approaches. Gov still attempting to coordinate efforts as a region.
- Gov states that the President is correct that the states have different situations based on numbers.

UPSTATE:
- McKinley referring to above rationale for different states, applies it to regions within the states.
- Gov states that we're not at a point where we're going to reopen anything immediately.
- Strategy will be balanced with understanding of mobility. Gov references "pent up demand", and that it must be factoring.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION:
- Gov: "it's totally up to them." "I spoke with the Speaker yesterday."
Gov credits the Legislature with working harder than usual, based on how much he's talking to them. "I'm talking to them much more than usual."
- Passing legislation is totally up to them.
- Gov does not think that negotiating difficult topics (recreational marijuana) over Zoom is a good idea.

MARRIAGE BUREAUS:
- DeRosa: Exec Order - clerks to perform remotely.

PRISONS:
- DeRosa: DOCCS prisoners over 50 years old with less than 90 days on sentence (non-violent offenders) are being processed for early released.
DeRosa states that it's a rolling policy.
- Gov: There are not enough tests being performed anywhere, with any population, including prisoners. Refers to need to increase capacity.
- Prisons are a concern, and Gov mentions that nursing homes are at the top of the "congregate care" priority list.

NURSING HOMES:
- Gov: nursing homes are mostly private facilities, state has basic regulations, but not a "fine detail" set of policies.
- "I don’t know what else we could release" that doesn't violate privacy policies.
- If there is a complaint of nursing home non-compliance, the state will address it.
- Gov states that more than anything, nursing homes are overwhelmed.
Staff is getting sick, large numbers of people are dying, and nursing homes are balancing reporting mandates with caring for people. He doesn't think that anything nefarious is happening.
- (Question from Josepha Velasquez) Gov states that the State doesn't typically perform testing in nursing homes and are contracting for tests with companies.

TESTING:
- Awaiting on approval from FDA for scaling up testing.
- Gov references that private companies are also in the
- McKinley questions certainty of R-naught number. Malatras states that the state is extrapolating the numbers from existing data.
- McKinley also questions on former patients testing positive again.
State has no official statement on that.