

**STATEMENT OF POLICE COMMISSIONER DERMOT SHEA
BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEES ON FINANCE AND PUBLIC SAFETY
ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 EXECUTIVE BUDGET
THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2020 – 10:00 A.M.**

Good morning Chair Richards, Chair Dromm, and members of the Council. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Mayor's Executive Budget for the 2021 Fiscal Year.

Before highlighting some key budget items, I want us all to remember – and to truly try to get our minds around the fact – that we have lost 41 members of our NYPD family since March 26th. That's 41 people in less than two months. Forty-one servants of our city who dedicated themselves in one way or another to our core public-safety mission – to keeping New Yorkers safe, and to keeping those who protect New York City safe.

So far, we have held some small, solemn, dignified memorials to send off our fallen members. And when this unprecedented global health crisis is finally behind us, we will arrange a department-wide service for all of our brave and cherished colleagues – of all ranks and titles – that is properly befitting the NYPD's rich tradition. For the time being, remaining in our daily prayers are their loved ones, and each of our five Detectives, one Police Officer, 10 Traffic Enforcement Agents, 10 School Safety Agents, three City Custodial Assistants, three Police Communications Technicians, one Principal Administrative Associate, one Police Administrative Aide, one Senior Police Administrative Aide, and six members of our Auxiliary Police program. God bless all of them.

As I said – and as each of you is fully aware – these are unprecedented times. We have a public-health crisis that will continue to stress our resources, and we have crime indicators that are of great concern to us in both the short- and long-terms.

In the first three months of this year, prior to the pandemic gripping the five boroughs, we saw increases in crime across multiple categories. I am on record as saying that I believe those increases are tied to the criminal-justice reforms that took effect in January and were already showing signs of cause-and-effect in the fall of 2019. Now, amid our battle against a disease that has already killed more than 20,000 New Yorkers, we continue to see a spike in overall crimes.

Specifically, year-to-date through last night, Murder is up nearly 7 percent; Robbery is up more than 9 percent; Burglary is up nearly 32 percent; and Grand Larceny Auto is up almost 63 percent. Felony Assault, however, is down about 6 percent; Grand Larceny is down 12 percent; and Rape is down 27 percent.

Some of the reasons for the jumps in crime are obvious to us, and I and my leadership team look forward to going into detail about that during the question-and-answer portion of this morning's testimony. I will tell you now, though, that whether up, down, or flat, every crime number concerns me because each represents a victim.

Of particular concern to me is the 13 percent increase in shooting incidents year-to-date. So far in 2020, we have seen 250 versus 221 last year – an increase of 29. The last three full years

in a row saw fewer than 800 shooting incidents in this city of nearly 9 million people. Prior to that in the modern era, the number of shootings in New York City had never fallen below 1,000 – tremendous progress, by any metric.

This year threatens to undo much of our past success – and this, at a time when we have already had to delay a Police Academy class due to the coronavirus. What this ultimately means is that almost 600 fewer police officers will not be in our communities beginning in the fall – proactively fighting crime, responding to 911 and 311 calls from concerned residents, and working hard at strengthening neighborhood ties and bolstering our at-risk youth.

We know that 42 percent of the shooting incidents we've seen so far this year are related to disputes between various gangs and crews – entities largely comprised of young men. Our knowledge and understanding of these members is essential to our efforts to intercede with gang culture, and to pull these individuals out of criminal life before they are arrested or killed.

It is not uncommon for us to see kids as young as 16 with 10 or 20 prior arrests. And we have to wonder if we, as a city, are doing enough to prevent these and other young people from making truly self-destructive choices. Clearly, we are not. We can do far better, both within the NYPD and in coordination with a range of city agencies, private enterprises, and community-based organizations. And that is what the NYPD's youth strategy is all about: Drawing on our talented, committed personnel, and on the accumulated previous encounters with these young people to make a lasting and positive difference in their lives.

In establishing and institutionalizing far closer cooperation with our law-enforcement partners and community-based service organizations, I believe we can identify the opportunities for intervention with young people early in the progression that risks turning them into victims or criminals. What we have to do is organize and focus all of our resources – and there are so many quality programs already in place around the five boroughs – so that a troubled kid doesn't go from 12 years old to 18 years old without us ever intervening in a life going wrong.

There is no cookie-cutter answer to anything in our line of work. But the renewed focus on our city's young people is part of our evolution now – as a police department and as a city. And whatever we do, whatever approach we take, it has to always be about all of us sharing that responsibility, working together to reduce crime and violence. And when these things are happening together, we are building the bridge between the public's safety and the public's trust.

We are determined to breathe new life into existing programs all across the city, and to help establish new ones. At the NYPD, we envision our Youth Coordination Officers as force multipliers who bring people together in every neighborhood. It is essential for everyone to come to the table and lock arms.

Turning to budgetary issues, the NYPD plans to apply again for, and to obtain, federal assistance to protect members of the public and critical infrastructure, including the financial district, the transit system, bridges, tunnels, and ports.

In April, we submitted project proposals under the Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Homeland Security Grant Program, and under the Transit and Port Security Grant Programs. As in the past, the NYPD is requesting funding to continue the purchase of critical equipment related to explosive

and radiation detection, personal protection, mitigation and rescue, and continued maintenance and support costs for our counterterrorism projects and equipment. In addition, our submission includes a request for cyber-security, and funding to cover the salary costs of our Intelligence Research Analysts, and overtime costs for counterterrorism training and deployment of specialized teams throughout the city.

As I mentioned in my testimony on the preliminary budget in early March, the NYPD relies on these funds to strengthen our homeland-security preparedness and to protect all New Yorkers and visitors to our city against terrorist attacks. We are hopeful that the NYPD will receive the same, or more, funding than last fiscal year. We anticipate these grants will be awarded no later than September 30, 2020.

In addition, the NYPD is working closely with the Mayor's Office to acquire funds for all COVID-19-related expenses. This includes masks, sanitizer, gloves, and other personal protective equipment that is critical for officers to safely and effectively perform their duties – which includes distributing masks to the public. In addition to the cost of these supplies, the police department has incurred overtime expenses, redeployed a significant amount of resources to perform social-distancing education and enforcement, while also maintaining adequate patrol-staffing levels at a time when our department-wide sick rate skyrocketed to nearly 20 percent due to the pandemic. In addition to the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, FEMA and DOJ Justice Assistance Grants were created to cover such expenses incurred because of the disease.

Regarding the Executive Budget and its impact on the NYPD: The NYPD's Fiscal Year 2021 City Tax Levy Expense Budget is \$5.3 billion. The vast majority of this – 92 percent – is allocated for personnel costs. As part of this last budget cycle, the NYPD has put forth \$90 million in savings through several initiatives. Some of the identified savings include:

- a delay in April's Police Academy recruit class (\$6.4 million)
- overtime savings tied to canceled events (\$10 million)
- accruals and baseline vacancy reductions of 63 non-safety positions (\$8 million over two years)

It is important to note that, cumulatively, the NYPD has decreased its non-safety budget headcount by more than 500 through multiple savings initiatives.

The NYPD's Executive Capital Budget contains \$1.18 billion for fiscal years 2020 through 2024. This represents a decrease of \$459.4 million in fiscal years 2020 through 2024. A majority of this decrease (85 percent) is due to funding for a new consolidated Property Clerk warehouse being pushed out to fiscal years 2025 through 2027. We are continually working with the Mayor's Office to assess our capital budget needs, and we understand that this stretch is needed due to the current fiscal climate.

Across the NYPD, we will continue to leverage every tool available to us to keep New York City safe, including the use of new and innovative technology. We are keenly focused on such advances, and how they can be applied to fighting crime, creating safer and more-efficient

ways for police officers to do their jobs, and contributing to the important work of building trust and strengthening relationships throughout the five boroughs.

As we take Neighborhood Policing to the next level by way of our invigorated youth strategy, I thank you for your ongoing partnership. New York needs even more of our ideas, and all of our actions, now. And that goes for the entire public safety spectrum – from traditional crime to terrorism, to the seedbed-activities that can draw young people down paths of criminality. This is our mission, and we owe every New Yorker nothing but our best efforts.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify this morning, and I'm happy now to take your questions.