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Press Release

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MTA Headquarters

IMMEDIATE

TRANSCRIPT: MTA Chairman and CEO Patrick J. Foye Appears on 1010 WINS with Larry Mullins to Discuss MTA's Ongoing Response to COVID-19

MTA Chairman and CEO Patrick J. Foye appeared on 1010 WINS with Larry Mullins to discuss the MTA's ongoing response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

A transcript of the interview appears below.

Larry Mullins: A couple of weeks ago, I spoke with MTA Chairman Pat Foye about the status of the trains and his own health as we discussed whether or not he had been checked for the coronavirus. Things have changed quite a bit. Pat Foye is back with us now live on the 1010 WINS news hotline. Good afternoon, Mr. Foye. Okay, before we get into the latest on the subways and buses, let's keep it real. Let's check in with you personally, it's been about a week since you announced you had tested positive. How are you feeling, sir?

Pat Foye: I feel fine. You know, look, this is not about me. 744 of my colleagues have tested positive throughout the MTA, some of them are struggling. And our thoughts and prayers are with our colleagues at the MTA who are performing unbelievably heroic service in terms of moving first responders and essential employees to and from work, healthcare professionals, utility workers, transit workers, people working in supermarkets and pharmacies, and the MTA family is really rising to the occasion.

Larry Mullins: Okay Pat, I knew you were going to say that always putting everybody else first, and to that, and what steps are being taken to keep the frontline workers safe? What kind of strain is it putting on the system by the way?

Pat Foye: Well, look, it's putting a great strain on the MTA system. It's putting a strain on every public transit agency in the country. Since March 1, we've distributed 3.2 million gloves to MTA workers, 240,000 masks. This week, we distributed 75,000 masks the week ends for this purpose on Friday tomorrow. And next week, we'll distribute an additional 100,000 masks to bus operators, train operators, conductors, and people whether they're customer facing or whether they're doing the cleaning work. We're going to continue that distribution of gloves in masses. We've also put in a number of steps. First of all, we're recommending that if you don't have to ride subways or buses, don't. At this point our service is dedicated to those first responders and essential employees. We've eliminated rear door boarding on our buses to minimize contact between customers and drivers. We've eliminated cash collection, subways, buses, Metro-North, Long Island Rail Road. We're disinfecting stations, workplaces, stations, rolling stock, etc., keeping crews home. And the message of the Governor that stay home if you're not an essential employee, our ridership is reflecting that. I ordinarily don't root for lower ridership, but in this case we do and New Yorkers are responding to that.

Larry Mullins: Okay. We talked a few weeks ago, you were mentioning that we wouldn't be making any changes to train schedules. Obviously things have changed. You know, this isn't a told you so kind of a thing. What do you anticipate, anything else coming down the pipe that folks can be at least preparing themselves for?

Pat Foye: Well, look, we're running the MTA essential service now and we're doing that largely successfully. Obviously, the limitation there is on crew availability. And as I mentioned at the beginning, the MTA forces are really rising to the occasion. We're engaged in a really important mission moving essential workers and first responders, and we're going to continue doing that as long as we can.

Larry Mullins: Okay, MTA Chairman Pat Foye, thanks a lot, take care of yourself.

Pat Foye: Thanks Larry, thanks so much.

