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IMMEDIATE

TRANSCRIPT: NYC Transit Interim President Sarah Feinberg Appears on WCBS 880 with Paul Murnane to Discuss MTA's Ongoing Response to COVID-19

New York City Transit Interim President Sarah Feinberg appeared live today by phone on WCBS 880 with Paul Murnane to discuss the MTA's ongoing response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

A transcript of the interview appears below.

Paul Murnane: Five MTA employees have died from the coronavirus, the agency announced this afternoon. Five MTA workers, many of them tested positive, many more of them are in quarantine. The MTA's interim President Sarah Feinberg is on the news line. We appreciate your time, I know it's a difficult time. Can you tell us about these employees deaths? Were they involved in any particular area of operations and transit?

Sarah Feinberg: I mean, this is a devastating day, and it's been a devastating couple of weeks for New York City Transit. These individuals worked across various modes, so buses, subways, one was a train operator, one was a track worker. So you know, just like other cities and states are suffering, you know, these came from across the board at New York City Transit and we're just devastated.

Paul Murnane: About the level of staffing overall, are you seeing more employees calling out? Are you confident that you'll be able to keep up the level of service that you've been able to provide thus far?

Sarah Feinberg: Well, you know, for now we're providing the best service we can with the crews that we have, you know, anyone who's out in the system today or the end of last week is probably feeling like trains are not coming as often as they're used to, you know, we're running what we refer to as our essential service. But you know, we're running the best that we can right now, but it's not great. That's not what people are used to. We have a lot of folks who are out sick and we have thousands of people who are in quarantine at this point. So, you know, we want to keep people as safe as possible. And so if there's any kind of potential exposure, we make sure that we have quarantined anyone that that person has been in contact with. As a result, we do not have sufficient crews to run the kind of service that people are used to at this point.

Paul Murnane: We've been hearing about overcrowding on the trains. There's been some video knocking around on social media. The NYPD ready to take steps. What can you tell us about that? Is the MTA prepared to do some things to try and address this issue?

Sarah Feinberg: Well, I mean, the NYPD and the MTA Police actually are all out in force at our request, and we're pleased that they're working with us on it. You know, the crowding issues seem to be very sporadic. You know, we're not seeing it in a lot of places, we're asking people to use common sense to the best of their ability. If the train approaches, if you see a crowded car, please keep walking down the platform to a less crowded car. Some of the typical behavior you would probably use anyway. You know, it's sporadic. But it's not something that we want to see particularly at this moment in time. So we're working closely with the police at all of what I would call the sort of hotspots for crowding would be, to be honest, the feedback from the police today is they're really not seeing much crowding at all, and they're at a lot of our hubs. You know, Roosevelt, Parsons, Fulton those places, they're not seeing a lot of crowding, but to the extent where it's showing up they're trying to disperse it right away, keep people moving so that folks aren't bunched together.

Paul Murnane: We certainly appreciate your time on what is a very tough day for the MTA. The MTA Interim President Sarah Feinberg on the line. Thank you so much.

Sarah Feinberg: Thank you.

