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Headlines for June 15, 2011

New Yorkers Erect "Bloombergville" Tent Camp Against Budget Cuts

New Yorkers are escalating protests against austerity measures contained in Mayor Michael Bloomberg's latest budget. In a major protest Tuesday, thousands of New York City union members rallied at City Hall demanding an end to layoffs and cuts to social spending. Sam Coleman is a third grade teacher at a public school in Brooklyn.

Sam Coleman: "So, I'm here today to let the city council know, to let the mayor know, that these budget cuts and the layoffs that they're proposing are totally unacceptable. I teach in a low-income neighborhood, mostly immigrants, and my school is going to lose funding. That's going to eliminate after school programs, going to eliminate art programs, going to eliminate materials that we badly need, as well as teachers getting excessed or laid off. And my message to the mayor is very simple: you can find the money. There are many, many, many wealthy New Yorkers who do not pay enough taxes, and the revenue is there, the money is there. And our schools need the money, and you cannot balance this budget on the backs of our children or our parents or our teachers."

More than 100 members of the group New Yorkers Against Budget Cuts have erected a tent camp next to City Hall and vowed to remain until Bloomberg reverses his proposals. Activists have dubbed the encampment "Bloombergville," recalling "Hooverville," the popular name for the shanty towns for the homeless during the Great Depression.

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