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U.S. coronavirus death toll rises; New York, Los Angeles region confirm new cases



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Biden's Super Tuesday surge reshapes Democratic race, Bloomberg out



Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Joe Biden campaigns in Sumter, South Carolina

WASHINGTON/NEW YORK (Reuters) - The search for a Democrat to challenge Republican U.S. President Donald Trump in the Nov. 3 election narrowed on Wednesday to a choice between Bernie Sanders and Joe Biden, who staged a comeback in voting Super Tuesday to become the undisputed standard-bearer of the party's moderate wing. In an unexpectedly strong showing, former Vice President Biden was set to win 10 of the 14 states up for grabs on Tuesday, including the major prize of Texas. He stormed ahead in the overall tally of delegates who will choose a presidential nominee at the Democratic convention in July.

His strong performance ended leftist U.S. Senator Sanders' status as the Democratic front-runner and forced former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg out of the race altogether.

Bloomberg on Wednesday gave up his presidential campaign and endorsed Biden, after spending hundreds of millions of dollars of his own money on ads across the United States. But Bloomberg failed to deliver convincing results on Tuesday, the biggest day of voting in the Democratic nomination campaign with contests in 14 states across the country.

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"I'm sorry we didn't win," Bloomberg, 78, told a crowd of supporters in a New York City hotel. "A viable path to the nomination just no longer existed."

He said he was endorsing Biden because he had the best shot at beating Trump. "I hope you will join me in working to make him the next president."

The media billionaire did not say whether he would spend part of his fortune to help Biden, but Bloomberg's absence from the race will help the former vice president. Both men appeal to the centrist wing of the Democratic Party.

In a tweet addressed to Bloomberg, Biden wrote, "I can't thank you enough for your support—and for your tireless work on everything from gun safety reform to climate change. This race is bigger than candidates and bigger than politics. It's about defeating Donald Trump, and with your help, we're gonna do it."

Sanders, a democratic socialist who is popular with young voters, lashed out at what he said was "the kind of venom we're seeing from some in the corporate media," and attempted to draw a stark contrast between himself and Biden.

"What this campaign, I think, is increasingly about is: Which side are you on?" Sanders told a news conference in Vermont. He attacked Biden's record voting in favor of trade deals that he says had devastated parts of the Midwest, Biden's votes in favor of the Iraq war and a bankruptcy bill, and his past record on Social Security.

In another move that could reshape the race, Elizabeth Warren, 70, is "talking to her team to assess the path forward," a campaign aide said.

The liberal U.S. senator, who was seeking to become the nation's first female president, had disappointing results across the board on Tuesday, including coming in third in her home state of Massachusetts.

A resurgent Biden, 77, rolled to electoral victories across the South, Midwest and New England, setting up a one-on-one battle against Sanders, who won three states and led in California.

Democratic U.S. presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg departs after addressing supporters at his Super Tuesday night rally in West Palm Beach, Florida, U.S., March 3, 2020. REUTERS/Marco Bello

Biden, whose campaign had been on life support just weeks ago, registered surprise victories in Texas and Massachusetts. U.S. stocks jumped on Wednesday as investors cheered Biden's good night. Healthcare stocks provided the biggest boost as Sanders and his "Medicare for All" proposal, which would eliminate private health insurance, looked less likely to become a reality.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average .DJI was up 4% and the S&P 500 .SPX gained 3.5% in late afternoon trading, rising for only the second time in 10 days after being battered by fears about the coronavirus outbreak.

"For those who have been knocked down, counted out, left behind, this is your campaign," Biden told roaring supporters in Los Angeles. "We are very much alive!"

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U.S. coronavirus death toll rises; New York, Los Angeles region confirm new cases

LOS ANGELES/NEW YORK (Reuters) - Two more people have died of the new coronavirus in the United States, bringing the toll to 11 and new confirmed cases were reported on Wednesday around the two most populous cities: four near New York and six in Los Angeles. The first California death from the virus was announced by health officials as an elderly adult with underlying health conditions. It was also the first coronavirus death in the United States outside of Washington state. Placer County's public health department said in a statement that the patient tested presumptively positive on Tuesday at a California lab and was likely exposed from Feb. 11-21 on a Princess cruise ship to Mexico from San Francisco.

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"Preliminary understanding from the contact investigation is that this patient had minimal community exposure before returning from the cruise and arriving at the hospital by ambulance on Feb. 27," the statement said.

The person was the second confirmed case of the respiratory disease called COVID-19 in Placer County in Northern California.

In the greater Seattle area, the total number of coronavirus cases climbed to 39 on Wednesday, including 10 deaths, up from 27 cases and nine deaths a day earlier, the Washington State Health Department announced.

The Seattle area has the largest concentration of coronavirus cases detected to date in the United States. Several cases were connected to a long-term care facility for the elderly in the Pacific Northwest state.

In New York state, three family members and a neighbor of an infected man have tested positive, bringing the total in the state to six, officials said. About 1,000 people in



Medics load a person into an ambulance outside of the Life Care Center of Kirkland, the long-term care facility linked to several confirmed coronavirus cases in the state, in Kirkland, Washington, U.S., March 4, 2020. REUTERS/David Ryder

the New York City suburb of Westchester County where the family lives were under self-quarantine orders because of possible exposure to the virus, Governor Andrew Cuomo said.

"We are, if anything, being overcautious," Cuomo said.

Los Angeles officials announced six new confirmed travel-related cases in Los Angeles County, including three people who had been to Northern Italy, one of the areas hardest hit in the global outbreak.

Medics load a person into an ambulance outside of the Life Care Center of Kirkland, the long-term care facility linked to several confirmed coronavirus cases in the state, in Kirkland, Washington, U.S., March 4, 2020. REUTERS/David Ryder Of the six, only one has been hospitalized. The other five are recovering in home isolation.

Los Angeles County declared a local emergency and a public health emer-

gency intended to expand and hasten preparedness efforts.

In Washington, D.C., U.S. lawmakers reached bipartisan agreement on an \$8.3 billion emergency bill to help fund efforts to contain the virus, a congressional aide said. The bill was expected to be introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives later on Wednesday.

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Editor's Choice



A man wearing a protective face mask is seen on a crossroads as the country is hit by an outbreak of the novel coronavirus, in Shanghai



Yellow taxi cab driver Martin Oseseyi uses disinfectant while cleaning his cab amid the coronavirus outbreak in midtown Manhattan in New York City



U.S. Vice President Mike Pence speaks during a coronavirus briefing with diagnostic lab CEOs in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, U.S., March 4, 2020. REUTERS/Carlos Barria



A woman wears a protective face mask as she walks in Tunis, Tunisia March 3, 2020. Picture taken March 3, 2020. REUTERS/Zoubeir Souissi



A woman wearing a protective face mask stands on a London Underground platform in central London



Woman wears a protective face mask as she walks in Tunis



Pedestrians walk in Princes Street in Edinburgh, Scotland, Britain March 4, 2020. REUTERS/Russell Cheyne



Coronavirus drive-through test centre at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh

Here's Where The Jobs Are



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The September 2019 jobs report showed decent hiring during the month with the health-care and education industries seeing the biggest growth.

The government reported Friday that payrolls increased by 136,000, missing the 145,000 estimate economists polled by Dow Jones had forecast. The unemployment rate, however, fell to a new 50-year low of 3.5%.

CNBC studied the net changes by industry for September jobs based on data from the Labor Department contained in the employment report.

Health care and education — a consistent employment gainer — topped the list in September with a net gain of 40,000 payrolls. Stripping out the education components, health care and social services added 41,400 jobs amid strong hiring in ambulatory outpatient care, hospitals and nursing.



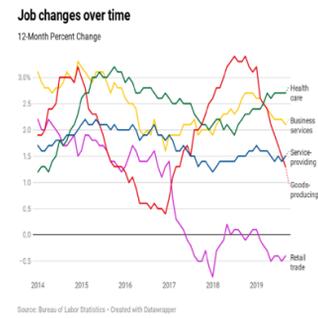
Professional and business services added 34,000 jobs amid gains in management consultant positions as well as an uptick in temporary help services. Manufacturing saw a net loss of 2,000 jobs.

The government, which doesn't tend to post big employment swings from month to month, added a hefty 22,000 positions in September after a whopping addition of 46,000 jobs in August. The government noted, however, that hiring is surging between local government adds; Washington posted strong gains in the prior month as the federal government works to staff up with temporary workers ahead of the 2020 census.

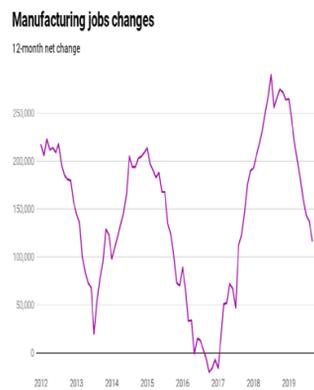
"In September, health care added 39,000 jobs, in line with its average monthly gain over the prior 12 months," the Labor Department said in a release. "Em-

ployment in professional and business services continued to trend up in September (+34,000). The industry has added an average of 35,000 jobs per month thus far in 2019, compared with 47,000 jobs per month in 2018."

Retail trade continued its streak of losses with a decline of 11,400 jobs for the month. Since reaching a peak in January 2017, retail trade has lost 197,000 jobs. The government also said wages increased at a slower pace, up little between August and September and rising just 2.9% over the year.

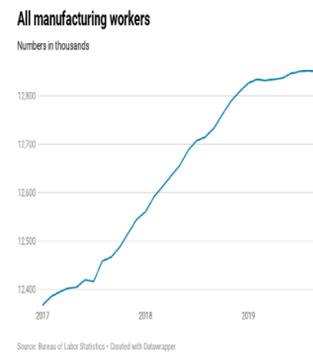


Manufacturing Jobs Getting Crushed



The U.S. manufacturing sector is not in a good place. The latest poor results came from the government's jobs report on Friday. The Labor Department reported that manufacturers lost 2,000 jobs in September, well below the 18,000 positions it added this time last year and even below the

2,000 gain it saw in August.



Machinery and transportation manufacturing, which includes the production of cars, trains and ships, have seen some of the worst deceleration over the last year. Machinery's net job gains over the last 12 months slowed to just 6,000 by September, while transportation's trickled to a 23-month low of 23,000. The fabricated metals subindustry, which transforms metal into intermediate or end products, lost 3,000 jobs last month.

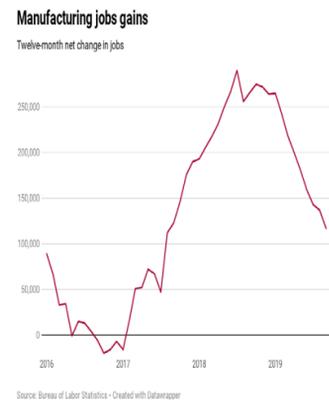
While the manufacturing sector as a whole has seen marked hiring since President Donald Trump's oath of office, the jobs gains have largely plateaued.

Eric Winograd, senior economist at AllianceBernstein, said in a note Friday that the president's trade war strategies appeared to be in part responsible for the slowdown.

"A big part of the story for the economy as a whole, of course, is the trade war. We can see that in the payrolls figures too," Winograd wrote. "Manufacturing has been the hardest hit industry by trade policy and, not coincidentally, manufacturing employment has suffered."

But it was more than job losses in the manufacturing sector that turned heads this week.

A gauge of U.S. manufacturing showed



the lowest reading in more than 10 years for September as exports dived amid the escalated trade war. The U.S. manufacturing purchasing managers' index from the Institute for Supply Management came in at 47.8% for September, the lowest since June 2009, marking the second consecutive month of contraction. Any figure below 50% signals a contraction. (Courtesy cnbc.com)

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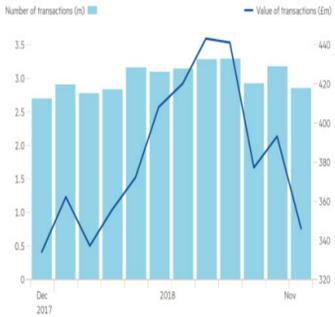
Americans Setting Record For Out-Of-Store Spending

Americans are now spending nearly as much money remotely as they are in person.

Why it matters: It's a nod to the e-commerce boom, where corporate giants like Amazon and other businesses that bulked up their online presence are cashing in like never before.

What's happening: For the first time, the value of online purchases with debit and credit cards in 2018 nearly equaled that of in-person card spending, according to a new report from the Federal Reserve, which cites the latest data available.

Credit card cash advances on the rise



Source: Money.com research from UK Finance data

What they're saying: The boom in remote buying is "driven by growing e-commerce and the use of cards for recurring bill payments," Fed researchers write.

•And the upward trend paired with a strong consumer likely means 2019 was the first year that the value of remote card purchases surpassed in-person card payments.

The data doesn't include cash payments, which account for a bigger share of in-person transactions than cards do, per a separate Fed report.

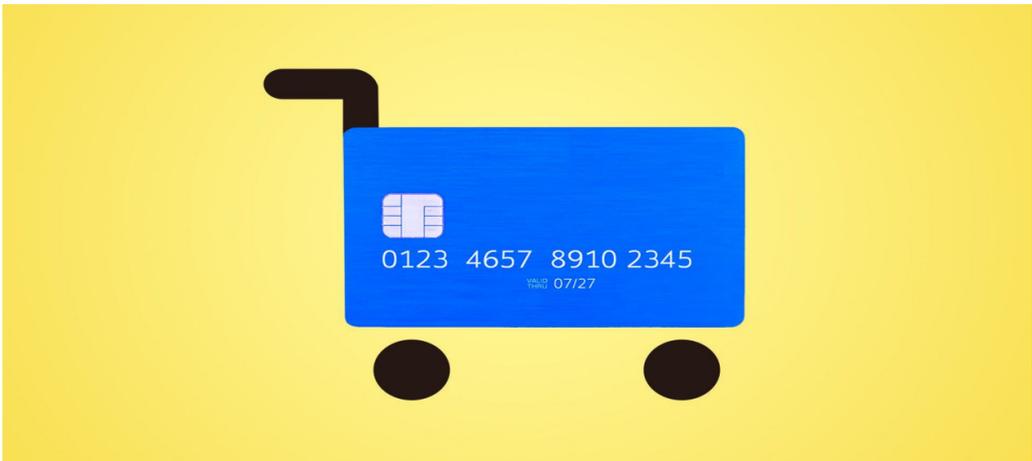


Illustration: Aida Amer/Axios

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Yes, but: While the gap in card spending in-person vs. remote has closed in dollar terms, the number of card transactions done in-person still far outpaces those done online.

By the numbers: 72% of purchases made with a card were done in-person, while just 28% of those transactions were made remotely.

•While mobile wallets have made it easier to pay by card in stores, the number of in-person purchases has still steadily decreased from 84% of all transactions in 2012.

•Those done online have steadily increased from 15% in 2012.

Between the lines: That means that spending at brick-and-mortar stores isn't completely dead, though people are spending less money there.

•To appeal to all shopping tastes, store operators (retailers and beyond) are stretched between heavy investments in online platforms or delivery perks and investments in physical stores.

•Take Walmart, for instance, which is revamping 500 of its stores and opening 20 more, as part of an \$11 billion investment plan. At the same time, it's planning to "aggressively scale" an in-home grocery delivery service.

The bottom line: Where consumers spend the bulk of their dollars is changing. But considering the vast number of card transactions still done in stores, American card spending habits haven't completely shifted to one side or the other yet. (Courtesy axios.com)



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