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



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

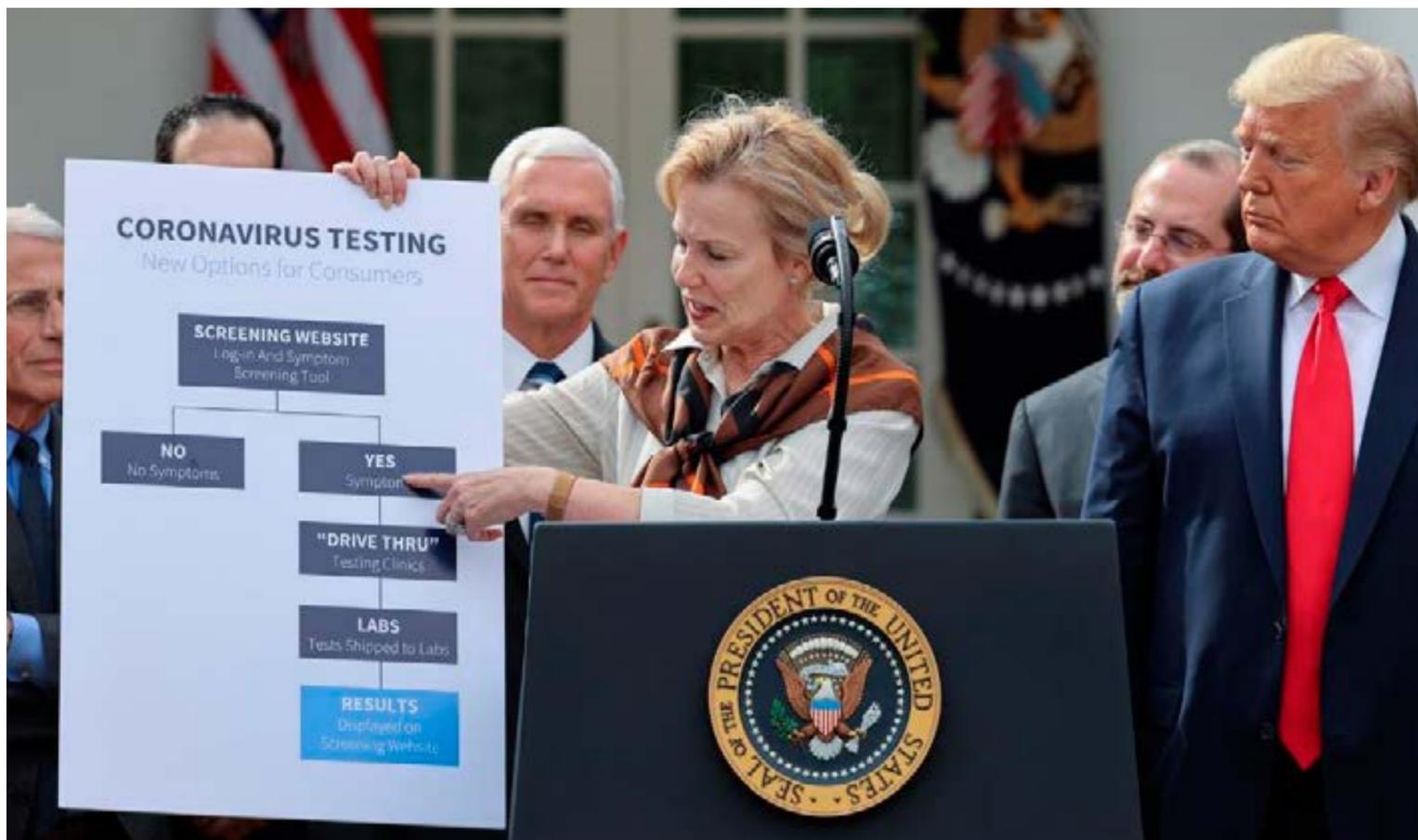
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**Publisher:** Wea H. Lee  
**President:** Catherine Lee  
**Editor:** John Robbins, Jun Gai  
**Address:** 11122 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, TX 77072  
**E-mail:** News@scdaily.com

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## Google, Walmart join government effort to speed up coronavirus testing, Trump says



Ambassador Debbie Birx, the White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator, displays the new testing protocols being deployed for coronavirus after U.S. President Donald Trump declared the coronavirus pandemic a national emergency during a news conference in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, U.S., March 13, 2020. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst

(Reuters) - Corporate America joined the fight against the spread of coronavirus on Friday, as President Donald Trump and executives announced that Google would offer a website to help people determine whether they needed tests and retailers set up drive-through tests in parking lots. Shares of Google parent Alphabet Inc (GOOGL.O), Walmart Inc (WMT.N), Target Corp (TGT.N) and drug-store owner CVS Health Corp (CVS.N) all closed up more than 9%, in line with the broad stock market.

Pressure has been rising on U.S. officials to increase and improve testing for the fast-spreading virus, which has spread to almost every U.S. state and infected more than 1,660 people in the country.

"I want to thank Google. Google is helping to develop a website, it's gonna be very quickly done, unlike websites of the past, to determine whether a test is warranted and to facilitate testing at a nearby convenient location ...," Trump said.

"Google has 1,700 engineers working on this right now, made tremendous progress."

An administration presentation showed the website would ask several questions and then indicate whether to get a test.

Verily, a healthcare tech company also owned by Alphabet,

said it was leading the effort to develop the web tool for testing with the help of Google engineers.

"We are in the early stages of development, and planning to roll testing out in the Bay Area, with the hope of expanding more broadly over time," Verily spokeswoman Kathleen Parkes said.

She did not respond to questions on how the effort originated, the extent of Google's involvement, and how individuals' data would be protected and used.

Visitors to the screening website that require a coronavirus test will be referred to a store that can provide assistance, potentially including a drive-through option, according to the administration's presentation. Results would be available in 24 to 36 hours

Neither Trump nor Verily provided more details, and U.S. Vice President Mike Pence said the website's launch date would be known by Sunday night.

Leading U.S. retailers will work with the government to assist with drive-through coronavirus testing, the Retail Industry Leaders Association said. Senior leaders of Walmart, Target, Walgreens Boots Alliance Inc (WBA.O) and CVS stood with Trump at the announcement.

The tests will be conducted in retail stores' parking lots and sent to labs to complete testing in partnership with local health departments and diagnostic labs. The testing sites will not be run by the companies.

### FINDING A TEST

The cooperation with the Trump administration comes as Alphabet faces several antitrust investigations from state and federal agencies over its search and digital advertising businesses.

Trump has accused Google of skewing its search results to portray him negatively. The company has also attracted the administration's ire for not renewing a contract to provide its artificial intelligence technologies for a military drone program.

"Google cozying up to the government doesn't hurt," said Andre Barlow, an antitrust expert with the law firm Doyle, Barlow and Mazard. "Obviously there are a lot of factors that are weighed in the antitrust investigation, which could go either way."

Trump also is eager to increase testing after efforts were hampered by flawed kits distributed by the federal government in February, which gave some false results.

In describing problems with past websites, Trump appeared to be referring to the Obama administration's troubled rollout of Healthcare.gov, a portal for securing healthcare insurance that had numerous loading delays and user registration glitches.



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# U.S. summons Chinese envoy over Beijing's coronavirus comments

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. State Department summoned the Chinese ambassador to the United States on Friday to protest against comments by Beijing suggesting the U.S. military might have brought the coronavirus to Wuhan, as tensions between the two global powers over the outbreak intensified.

David Stillwell, the top U.S. diplomat for East Asia, delivered a very "stern representation" to China's ambassador Cui Tiankai, a State Department official said, adding that Beijing's envoy was "very defensive."

The State Department official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said China was seeking to deflect criticism of its role in "starting a global pandemic and not telling the world."

"Spreading conspiracy theories is dangerous and ridiculous. We wanted to put the government on notice we won't tolerate it for the good of the Chinese people and the world."

China's embassy did not respond to requests for comment. Despite the signs of tension, U.S. President Donald Trump praised Beijing on Friday for its "data sharing."

Asked by a reporter during a White House news conference about "odd narratives" being offered by some Chinese officials, Trump appeared to brush off any concern, saying he had read one article on the subject, but that he did not think it was representative of his discussions with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump, who in a national address this week called the outbreak a "foreign virus" that started in China, added: "They know where it came from, we all know where it came from."

Tensions escalated after Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian took to Twitter on Thursday.



FILE PHOTO: China's ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai responds to reporters questions during an interview with Reuters in Washington, U.S., November 6, 2018. REUTERS/Jim Bourg - RC-1D2559A9C0

"When did patient zero begin in US? How many people are infected? What are the names of the hospitals? It might be US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe us an explanation!" Zhao tweeted in English.

The episode is the latest in an increasing war of words between Washington and Beijing, whose already strained ties over issues including trade, intellectual property rights and press freedom have further been tested

by the virus outbreak.

The coronavirus, which emerged in China in December, has spread around the world, pummeling financial markets, halting industry, bringing some flights to a standstill, closing schools and forcing the postponement of sports events and concerts.

Zhao's comments came days after Robert O'Brien, the U.S. national security ad-

viser, said China had reacted slowly to the coronavirus, probably costing the world two months when it could have been preparing.

Wuhan was ground zero for the outbreak, which the World Health Organization this week labeled a pandemic. It has infected more than 127,000 people worldwide, including nearly 81,000 in mainland China, and killed more than 5,000 people.

## 紐約時報證實特朗普通過了新冠病毒測試，成績斐然

【美南新聞記者泉深報導】特朗普的次子埃里克·特朗普 (Eric Trump) 在推特上發推說特朗普通過了新冠病毒測試，感謝上帝！該消息得到《紐約時報》的證實。

隨著恐懼和恐慌在全美各地蔓延，並威脅要摧毀經濟，特朗普正面臨著對總統職位最大考驗。儘管由於與民主黨人、有偏見的媒體和外國對手進行殘酷的戰鬥而使戰鬥變得艱難，但他面臨著新冠病毒帶來的不同程度的問題。

這是對美國宣戰的全球威脅。實話實說，尤其在最近幾週內，總統似乎是一個不太情願的總司令。

值得慶幸的是，截至週參

晚上，這種不情願已成為歷史，由特朗普總統接任，他毫無疑問地表示，他一直在與這一致命禍害作鬥爭。特朗普現在已有效地成為戰時總統，一再獲得勝利的保證在動蕩的國家耳中都是音樂。

他願意改變路線並提高自己的表現，這表明他認為這對國家和總統職位都是至關重要的時刻。他在某一時刻說：“歷史一次又一次地證明了事實，美國人總是面對挑戰並克服逆境。” 似乎在強調他接受了眼前的賭注。

仇恨者永遠不會承認這一點，但是特朗普現在開會的能力提醒了他為什麼當選，以及他如何設法將偉大的美國就業

機器推向前所未有的高度。唯一的奧秘是，為什麼所謂的左翼聰明人拒絕承認現在數百萬同胞的狀況比四年前要好。

這個問題將在11月決定，但是現在，整個國家應該團結起來對抗這個沉默的敵人。為此，他今天的演講取得了成功，因為它包括將有助於製止新冠病毒傳播的具體行動以及向遭受苦難的個人和公司提供援助的承諾。

歐洲禁止旅行30天當然是最強的藥物，但是這種疾病在那裏的蔓延，尤其是在意大利，是對這裏可能發生的事情的警告。



## 國會議員艾爾·格林宣布通過83億美元緊急救援資金以解決全球冠狀病毒的緊急情況



【美南新聞記者泉深報導】華盛頓特區消息：2020年3月4日星期三，美國國會議員艾爾·格林 (Al Green) 發表了以下聲明，內容涉及緊急救援資金的通過，這將有助於保護美國人免受冠狀病毒的傳播。

“在與休斯頓衛生局戴維·珀斯博士密切合作以詳細了解休斯頓的衛生需求之後，我很高興地宣布，HR 6074 在準備應對潛在冠狀病毒爆發時為州和地方機構提供了大量資金，” 格林說。

根據國會議員格林的說法，《冠狀病毒準備和響應救援撥款法》包括22億美元的資金，這些資金對於珀斯博士和其他地方衛生當局在

確診病例時預防，準備和應對冠狀病毒至關重要。該法案還提供了將近10億美元的必要藥品和醫療用品，以幫助確保備災和提高醫療救護能力。最後，該法案包括一項緊急遠程醫療豁免，允許衛生和公共服務大臣 (HHS) 放棄某些 Medicare 遠程醫療限制，以便 Medicare 提供商可以向受益人提供與冠狀病毒相關的遠程醫療服務，無論他們身在何處。

“我必須感謝眾議院撥款委員會主席尼塔·洛伊 (Nita M. Lowey) 先生在起草 HR 6074 時考慮了休斯敦衛生部等地方機構的需求。” 格林議員表示信心十足，“如果休斯頓若遇到冠狀病毒病例，這筆資金將更好地幫助醫療保健專業人員和公共衛生當局做好治療患者的準備，幫助他們康復，同時幫助確保該病毒不會傳播給其他人。”

休斯敦衛生管理局 David Persse 博士補充說：“在休斯敦準備其 COVID-19 響應計劃時，緊急救援資金對於確保我們在當地擁有足夠的人員，測試和監視資源以及基礎設施至關重要。我很高興有機會在這個重要問題上與國會議員合作，並期待繼續與他合作。”

Twitter post from Eric Trump (@EricTrump) with text: "Nice read. 🇺🇸🇺🇸 Trump passes coronavirus test with flying colors: Goodwin" and image of Trump at a desk.

New York Post article snippet: "Trump passes coronavirus test with flying colors: Goodwin" by Michael Goodwin, dated March 12, 2020.

# Editor's Choice



A worker makes face masks at a sewing shop after Cuba confirmed its first cases of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), in Havana



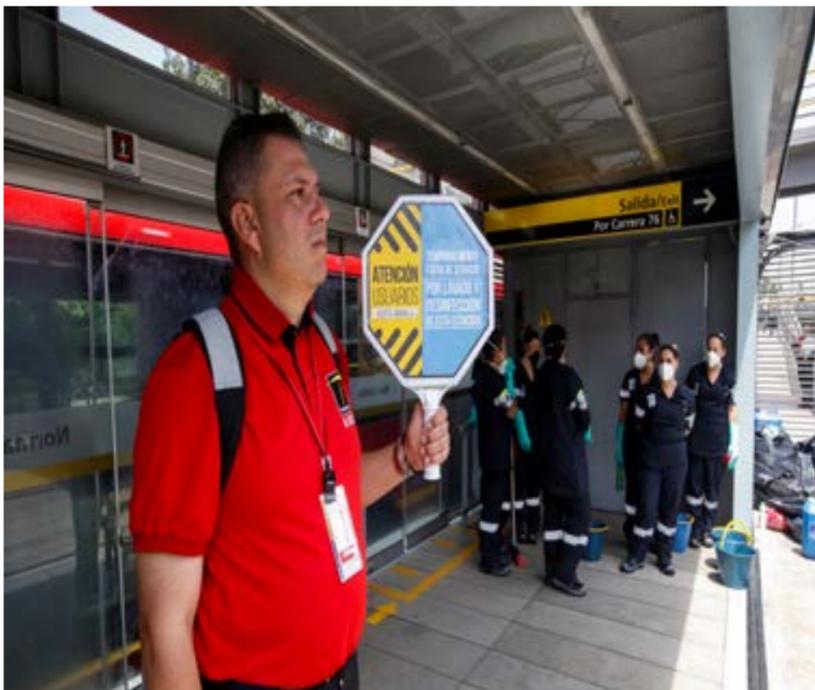
Shop assistants wear protective face masks after Cuba confirmed its first cases of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), in Havana



Mar 13, 2020; Salt Lake City, Utah, USA; A Utah Jazz fan was looking to return tickets to a future game as all was quiet Friday at Vivint Smart Home Arena, where the Utah Jazz would have hosted the New Orleans Pelicans, following the suspension of the NBA season after two Jazz players tested positive for the coronavirus. Mandatory Credit: Jeffrey Swinger-USA



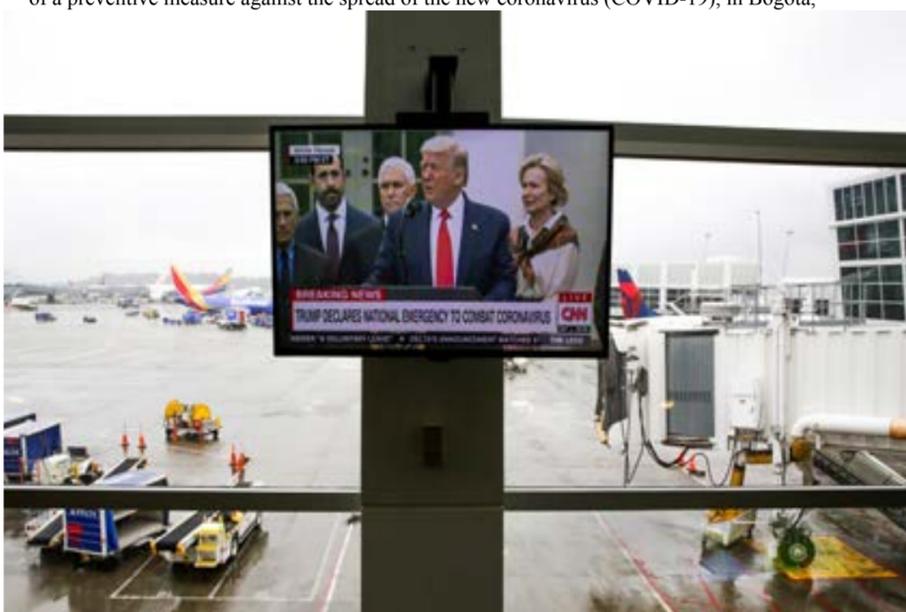
Mar 13, 2020; Salt Lake City, Utah, USA; A poster of Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert (27) hangs near an empty main entrance at Vivint Smart Home Arena, where the Utah Jazz would have hosted the New Orleans Pelicans, following the suspension of the NBA season after two Jazz players tested positive for the coronavirus. Mandatory Credit: Jeffrey Swinger-USA TODAY



An employee of the Transmilenio system holds a sign that reads "Attention users, yellow alert, temporarily out of service due to the washing and disinfection of this station", as part of a preventive measure against the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), in Bogota,



U.S. President Trump declares coronavirus pandemic an national emergency during news conference at the White House in Washington



U.S. President Donald Trump is pictured on a television at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport as he declares a national emergency over the coronavirus, in SeaTac Washington



Employees of the Bogota Cleaning Company are seen after cleaning a Transmilenio bus, as a preventive measure against the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), in Bogota

Partnership Between The Federal Govt. And Corporate World Revealed

President Trump Declares Virus Pandemic In The U.S. A National Emergency



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

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Friday declared the coronavirus pandemic a national emergency, as Washington struggles with providing Americans with relief and officials race to slow the spread of the outbreak.

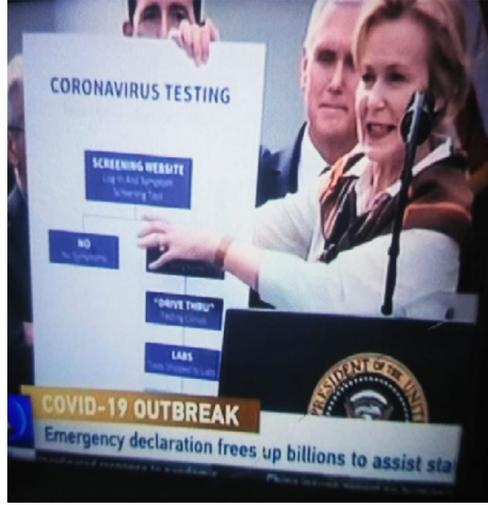
hospitals “flexibility” in treating patients. “Through a very collective action and shared sacrifice, national determination, we will overcome the threat of the virus,” Trump said.

He also announced a new public-private partnership to expand coronavirus testing capabilities, as his administration has come under fire for being too slow in making the test available. Trump said, “I don’t take responsibility at all” for the slow roll-out of testing.



(Photo AP)

The partnership will include drive-thru testing in some locations and an online portal to screen those seeking to get tested. Still, Trump said that officials don’t want people taking the test unless they have certain symptoms.



“Our nation, our great nation has faced crisis before,” Pelosi said. “And every time, thanks to the courage and optimism of the American people, we have prevailed. Now, working together, we will once again prevail.”

Central to the package is free testing for the virus and guaranteed sick pay for workers who are taking time away from jobs, along with an infusion of dollars to handle unemployment benefits and boost food programs for children, families and seniors.

Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, whom Trump tapped to negotiate for the administration, have engaged in around-the-clock negotiations that continued even as Trump was speaking.

But Republican leaders in Congress slowed the deal, wanting assurances that Trump would publicly support the agreement before signing off on it ahead of any vote.

ing assurances that Trump would publicly support the agreement before signing off on it ahead of any vote, according to a top congressional aide unauthorized to discuss the private talks and speaking on condition of anonymity. GOP leader Kevin McCarthy of California, the House minority leader, huddled with Mnuchin and Trump at the White House earlier Friday.



(Screenshot/Xiping Jing-Underscore) “We can only defeat this outbreak if we have an accurate determination of its scale and scope, so that we can pursue the precise science-based response that is necessary to put families first,” Pelosi said.

The White House is under enormous pressure, dealing with the crisis on multiple fronts as it encroached ever closer on the president.

The virus has swept in alarming ways across American life, sending the financial markets into a dangerous slide and shuttering schools and sporting events and limiting everyday interactions in communities across the country.

Trump said he was gratified that Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro tested negative for the virus, after the pair sat next to each other for an extended period of time last weekend. A senior aide to Bolsonaro tested positive. “We have no symptoms whatsoever,” said Trump, who has not gotten tested for the virus or taken steps to self-isolate.

(Courtesy https://apnews.com/)

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**CORONAVIRUS IN TEXAS**

**Gov. Greg Abbott also announced drive-through testing capabilities in San Antonio, which could expand to Dallas, Houston and Austin in the coming weeks**

**Texas Governor Declares Statewide Emergency, Says State Will Soon Be Able To Test Thousands**



Gov. Greg Abbott declares a statewide emergency amid new cases of COVID-19 in the state. (Photo/Gaspar/The Texas Tribune)

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

Gov. Greg Abbott declared Friday that the new coronavirus is a statewide public health disaster and said that Texas is on the verge of being able to significantly ramp up its testing capacity. At the same time, he announced that he was directing day cares, nursing homes and prisons to limit visitations and ordering state employees to work from home, where possible. He said San Antonio is opening the first state drive-through with testing capabilities Friday. It will initially prioritize health care workers and high-risk patients. Dallas, Houston and Austin should expect similar testing

sites to open in coming weeks, Abbott said.



The governor's disaster proclamation represents a turning point in the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and invokes emergency powers for his administration. It follows a flurry of recent actions by local officials to close school districts and cancel large-scale events. Abbott also finally clarified the state's testing history so far

and current capabilities. In total, he said there have been 220 Texans tested either by a state public lab or by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Another 75 or so Texans were being tested Friday, he said. The state's testing capacity at public health labs was roughly 270 people per day as of Friday, but he said capacity will expand into the thousands next week as more private labs come online.



First coronavirus drive thru testing facility in San Antonio.

There are at least 50 cases of COVID-19 in Texas, with the first instances of community spread happening in the state's two largest urban areas. State law gives broad authority to the Texas governor and health commissioner in times of crisis, including the ability to waive "laws that hinder state agencies' ability to respond to COVID-19," Abbott said, and he promised that "there will be many directives issued by this office over the coming days."



Restricting visitation at prisons, nursing homes and state-run facilities for people with disabilities was necessary "to prioritize protecting of the most vulnerable populations," Abbott said, adding that there would be exceptions for end-of-life visits and that visitors would



be screened for illness. State officials urged Texans to wash hands, cover coughs and stay home from work when sick — and not to hoard supplies. And the governor said private internet service providers were "stepping up" to increase bandwidth necessary to allow large numbers of people to work remotely. "We don't need people who are sick coming into work," Abbott said. State law allows the Texas health commissioner to impose restrictions, enforceable by a court, on any "individual, animal, place, or object, as appropriate." Those orders may include quarantine, isolation, detention or vaccination. (There is no vaccine available yet for COVID-19.) Abbott also has the authority to "control ingress and egress to and from a disaster area" — effectively giving him the power to order lockdowns. But the governor said such drastic measures were not yet necessary.



"Obviously, with the number of people who have tested positive in Texas right now, there's no reason for anything like that," he said. "We will obviously adjust what the response is based on the number of people who test positive." The governor's disaster proclamation does not affect plans to hold May elections, including a primary runoff, but Abbott left open the possibility of postponing them, saying he had "flexibility to address any issue that may come up." Texas joins more than 20 states in declaring an emergency over the virus. (Courtesy Texas Tribune)

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