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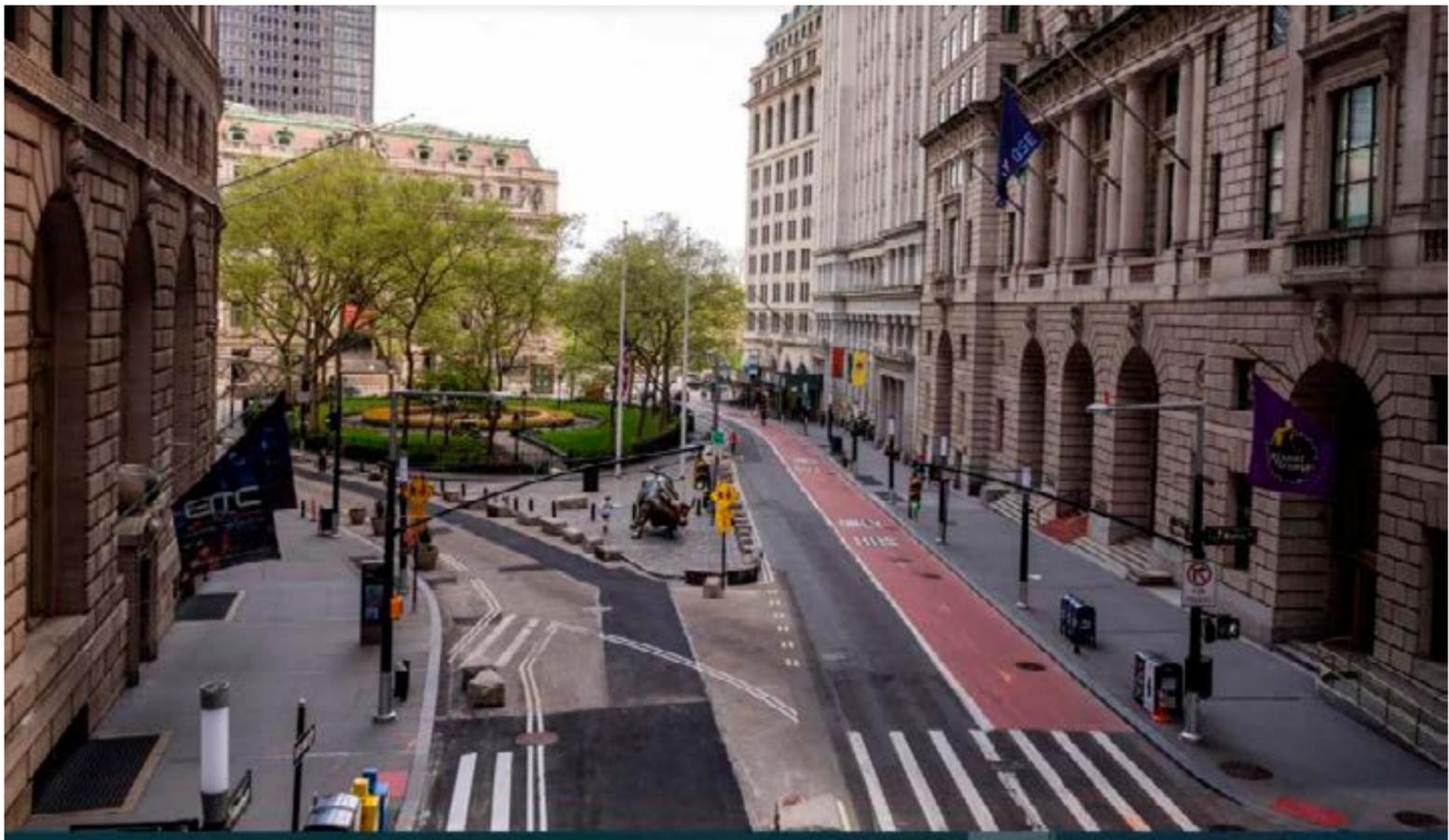
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U.S. pandemic aid program saved 51.1 million jobs, but wealthy and connected also got loans



FILE PHOTO: A woman runs past the Charging Bull sculpture in the Financial District as streets remain less busy due to the continuing outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in the Manhattan borough of New York

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Some 51.1 million jobs were protected by a high-profile pandemic aid program, the Trump administration said on Monday as it revealed how a firehose of \$521.4 billion in taxpayer cash washed across the landscape of America's small businesses.

U.S., May 5, 2020 at 6:42PM. REUTERS/Lucas Jackson But the data underlined that in addition to mom-and-pop shops, the funds went to several well-heeled and politically connected companies, some of which got between \$5 million and \$10 million. Those include firms which lobby in Washington such as Wiley Rein LLP and APCO Worldwide, as well as law firms Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP, which has represented President Donald Trump, and Boies Schiller Flexner LLP.

Sidwell Friends School, an exclusive private school which educated former President Barack Obama's daughters, took out a loan for between \$5 million and \$10 million, as did Saint Ann's School in Brooklyn, which - with tuition exceeding \$50,000 per year - is attended by the children of hedge fund managers and celebrities.

Some investment firms, such as those that run hedge funds for wealthy clients, also received checks. That included Advent Capital Management LLC, a New York-based debt investor with \$9 billion in assets; Metacapital Management LP, a New York-based fixed income investor with more

than \$1 billion in assets; and Semper Capital Management LP, which invests nearly \$4 billion in mortgage-backed securities.

None of those companies or schools immediately responded to a request for comment.

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The colossal data set released by the Trump administration after some initial resistance, gives Americans their first full look at who got cash from the first-come-first-served program that has been dogged by technology, paperwork and fairness issues.

Senior administration officials at the U.S. Treasury Department and Small Business Administration (SBA), which jointly administered the Paycheck Protection Program, hailed it as a "wild success," supporting about 84% of all small business employees.

To date, the SBA has released broad distribution figures for states, industries and the largest lenders. But the new data paints a much more detailed picture of which local communities and sub-sectors received support and whether it helped save jobs.

The Treasury and SBA released data for more than 660,000 loans of \$150,000 or more, including recipient name, address, lender, business type, jobs supported, and some demographic information. That accounts for roughly 73% of the dollars granted, but only 14% of the 4.9 million loans, according to a summary of data the agencies released on Monday.

While the data does not say exactly how much money each borrower received, borrowers are placed in one of five bands: \$150,000-350,000; \$350,000-1 million; \$1-2 million; \$2-5 million; and \$5-10 million. More than 4,800 loans were issued in the top band, while the overall average loan size was \$107,000, the data shows. The Treasury released aggregate data on loans below \$150,000 but did not name the borrowers.

Despite some eyebrow-raising recipients, the funds reached a wide swath of businesses - more than \$67 billion for the healthcare and social assistance sector, \$64 billion-plus for construction businesses, \$54 billion for manufacturing and, at the smaller end, more than \$7 billion for religious organizations, the data showed.

LINGERING QUESTIONS

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin had initially refused to name any recipients, saying it could expose borrowers' proprietary business information, particularly if they are sole proprietors and independent contractors. Under pressure from lawmakers, he agreed to shine a light on large borrowers.

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the time and we need to act now. Please use your vote and donate money to your candidate to show your support.

The coronavirus pandemic has brought the world to its knees and caused the greatest economic downturn along with the political turmoil we now have. The reason for this situation is related to a natural disaster as well as politicians' ability to respond.

The presidential election is less than four months away now. We as the leader of the world must understand that this election is not just related to our own future, but also will influence the future of the world.

We want to urge all our brothers and sisters, because we love this land and we are here in our adopted home, this is the time and we need to act now. Please use your vote and donate money to your candidate to show your support.

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We must all participate in this election, not only for ourselves, but also for our next generation.

How Can We Wait?



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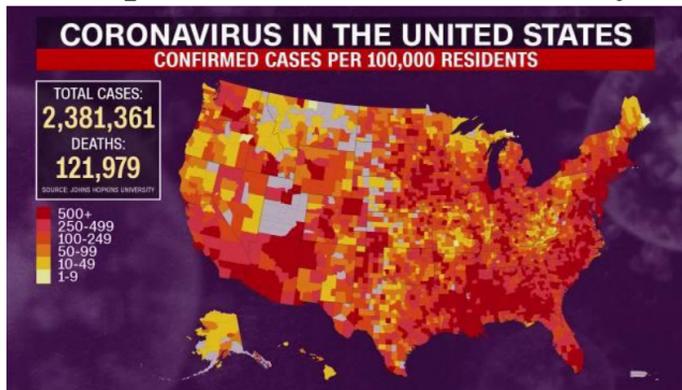
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BUSINESS

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Many Texas Cities Could Experience 'Apocalyptic' Jump In COVID-19 Numbers Texas Sees Largest Daily Rise In COVID-19 Cases -- More Than 8,000 Hospitalizations Last Wednesday



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

New cases of the novel coronavirus rocketed past the 8,000 threshold Wednesday in Texas, and hospitalizations reached an all-time high.

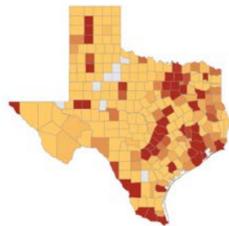
According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, the state reported 8,076 new cases Wednesday — a jump of 1,101 cases from the previous record of 6,975 cases Tuesday. It's the largest single-day high in Texas since the start of the pandemic, and the first time new cases have surpassed both the 7,000 and 8,000 benchmarks.

Hospitalizations of COVID-19 patients rose to 6,904 Wednesday, an increase of 371 from Tuesday's previous high of 6,533. The state also reported 57 more deaths — the second highest number since the start of the pandemic — bringing Texas' total COVID-19 related deaths to at least 2,481. Just last Tuesday, Texas had passed the 4,000 threshold in new daily cases. Hospitalizations have risen nearly every day of June and have more than quadrupled since the 1,511 patients hospitalized on Memorial Day.

The infection rate — the number of positive cases out of those tested — has also been trending upward since late May. Since last Friday, the state's seven day-average infection

rate has been above 13%. It was at 13.58% as of Tuesday. Those are the highest levels since mid-April.

Texas COVID-19 Cases



Amid all-time highs in new cases and hospitalizations, Gov. Greg Abbott struck a newly urgent tone and took some of the most significant steps yet to reverse Texas' phased reopening of businesses and curb the virus' spread.

On Tuesday, Abbott extended his ban on elective medical procedures to four South Texas counties in an effort to ensure sufficient capacity to treat COVID-19 patients. Across the state, hospitals in eight counties — including Bexar, Dallas, Harris and Travis — must postpone surgeries and procedures that aren't medically necessary to correct a serious medical condition or to preserve the life of a patient. Procedures

that would not deplete hospital capacity needed for COVID-19 patients are exempt. Elective procedures have not yet been banned in Tarrant County. Local hospital officials have emphasized that they have sufficient capacity to treat patients, and Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley said hospitals could add roughly 2,300 beds if necessary.

But if new cases of the coronavirus continue to grow at the current pace, Tarrant County hospitals could reach their base capacity in about three weeks, said Rajesh Nandy, an associate professor of biostatistics and epidemiology in the UNT Health Science Center's School of Public Health.



Current Harris County Threat Level

As of Wednesday afternoon, DSHS reported 12,894 available hospital beds, 1,322 intensive care unit beds and 5,622 available ventilators across the state.

A Houston doctor is now warning that the state's big cities could see what can only be described as an "Apocalyptic" rise in coronavirus case numbers.

Peter Hotez is a professor at Baylor College of Medicine who is working on a potential COVID vaccine. He says if the situation continues as is Houston could become the worst affected city in the country. Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, predicted over the weekend that Houston is on the brink of a disaster, based on the latest trends in increasing numbers.

Hotez pointed out that infections are also accelerating in Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio. Hotez says this is a consequence of the state not having a "sufficient" level of public health infrastructure in place when it reopened.

"My observations if this trajectory persists: 1) Houston would become the worst affected city in the US, maybe rival what we're seeing now in Brazil 2) The masks = good

1st step but simply won't be enough 3) We would need to proceed to red alert," Hotez tweeted.

The number of people in Texas hospitalized from the coronavirus hit a record high of 2,287 on Sunday, an increase from the previous record of 2,242 cases on Saturday. The state has continued to move forward with its reopening plan, with restaurants being allowed to increase capacity to 75% and almost all businesses allowed to operate with 50% capacity on Friday.

According to the Texas Department of Public Health, the state has more than 55,000 hospital beds, with more than 14,000 available and more than 1,500 ICU beds available. Texas Governor Greg Abbott said Friday that he saw "no real need to ratchet back the opening of businesses in the state" due to the number of hospital beds available, according to the Texas Tribune.



Coronavirus test samples are organized into coolers at a mobile testing site in Uhl-land. (Photo/The Texas Tribune)

Abbott said he is "concerned, but not alarmed" about the test numbers, citing the high volume of tests being conducted. The state has conducted more than 1.4 million tests, aggressively targeting certain areas. The highest number of cases is in Harris County, the largest county by population in the state. Harris County, which includes Houston, has more than 16,000 cases of the coronavirus, according to the state. The other counties with large number of cases are also in major cities: Dallas County reported more than 13,000 cases; Tarrant County (which includes Fort Worth) reported more than 7,000 cases; Travis County (which includes Austin) reported more than 4,000 cases; Bexar County (which includes San Antonio) reported more than 4,000 cases; and El Paso County reported more than 3,000 cases.

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner echoed

the concern in a Monday press conference. "Today we have another grim reminder that the virus is very much alive in our community," Turner said. "We're moving very fast in the wrong direction."

Houston reported 1,789 new cases of COVID-19 and five new related deaths Monday, which includes numbers from Sunday, Turner said. There are 14,322 total cases in the city. There is about a 5.2% increase in the number of occupied hospital beds, and 13% of all beds are occupied by COVID-19 patients, including 24% of beds in intensive care units, said Dr. David Perse, public health authority for the Houston Health Department.



Texas Gov. Greg Abbott with signed proclamation reopening the state.

When Gov. Greg Abbott let businesses start reopening, he pointed to two metrics as encouraging signs: the hospitalization rate and the infection rate. Both of those metrics are on the rise now in Texas. As Texas' coronavirus cases and hospitalizations continue to break records for a second straight week, leaders and health experts in the largest cities are warning that the state is heading down a dangerous path and hospitals could soon be overwhelmed.

Gov. Greg Abbott struck a more urgent tone Monday, calling the increases in hospitalizations and cases across the state unacceptable. He said the state would only shut down businesses again as a last resort but cautioned that if trends don't reverse in the coming weeks, he'd be forced to take action.

"To state the obvious, COVID-19 is now spreading at an unacceptable rate in Texas, and it must be corralled," Abbott said during a news conference at the Texas Capitol in Austin. (Courtesy texastribune.com, https://www.newsbreak.com/news/, cbsnews.com and https://www.star-telegram.com/)

Editor's Choice



Drones fly over the Han river showing messages to support the country, as measures to avoid the spread of the coronavirus continue, in Seoul, South Korea. Yonhap via REUTERS



Red and blue smoke is fired at the Ellipse of the White House during the "Salute to America" event held to celebrate Fourth of July Independence Day in Washington. REUTERS/Sarah Silbiger



New York Yankees starting pitcher Masahiro Tanaka reacts after being struck in the head by a line drive by New York Yankees right fielder Giancarlo Stanton (not pictured) during workouts at Yankee Stadium. Brad Penner-USA TODAY Sports



People listen to the speaker at a rally against restrictions to prevent the spread of the coronavirus in Phoenix, Arizona. REUTERS/Cheney Orr



A customer wearing a face mask gets his hair cut at a barber shop after its reopening, in New York City. REUTERS/Jeenah Moon



Miki Sudo (2nd R) competes in a socially distanced women's leg of the Nathan's Famous Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest with a women's world record 48.5 hot dogs consumed in Brooklyn, New York. REUTERS/Andrew Kelly



A police officer walks away from local residents protesting closed beaches on the 4th of July in Galveston, Texas. REUTERS/Adrees Latif



Lavinia Tomassini uses her iPad to take part in an online French class in Milan, Italy.

Drug Resistance Could Kill 10M People Per Year By 2050, Experts Say



(Illustration/S. Grillo/Axios)

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

Infectious disease experts agree with a dire scenario painted in the UN report posted earlier this week saying that, if nothing changes, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) could be “catastrophic” in its economic and death toll.

Threat level, per the report: By 2030, up to 24 million people could be forced into extreme poverty and annual economic damage could resemble that from the 2008–2009 global financial crisis, if pathogens continue becoming resistant to medications. **By 2050, AMR could kill 10 million people per year, in its worst-case scenario.**

“There is no time to wait. Unless the world acts urgently, antimicrobial resistance will have disastrous impact within a generation.”

— per the report

What they’re saying: Experts tell Axios action must be taken or the scenario will come true.

“Unfortunately, I think if we don’t do anything differently, the estimates are absolutely realistic. ... Like global warming, the longer we delay action, the worse it’s going to get.”

— Amy Mathers, director, The Sink Lab at the University of Virginia

“If global action fails to stem the tide of AMR, a century of medical advancement will be lost, damage to the environment will be irreparable, more people will fall into extreme poverty, [and] global health security will be imperiled.”

— Tarik Jasarevic, spokesperson, World Health Organization

“We are currently losing the arms race against bacteria! ... Soon routine surgeries and treatments for diseases like cancer ... may become life-threatening and too risky to be implemented because of the probability of bacterial infections.”

— Stéphane Mesnage, lecturer, The University of Sheffield



By the numbers: Currently, at least 700,000 people die each year due to drug-resistant diseases, including 230,000 people from multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, per the UN. Common diseases — like respiratory infections, STDs and urinary tract infections — are increasingly untreatable as the pathogens develop resistance to current medications.

•The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says AMR causes more than 23,000 deaths and 2 million illnesses in the U.S. annually.

•“In India, the CDC estimates that more than 58,000 babies under the age of 1 die every year of a drug-resistant pathogen,” Mathers points out.

What needs to be done: Jasarevic says the economic and health systems of all nations must be considered, and targets made to increase investment in new medicines, diagnostic tools, vaccines and other interventions.

1. The mindset around current antibiotics usage must be altered.

“We need to think about antibiotics as a shared and finite resource,” Mathers says. Usage to promote animal growth “must be eliminated” and doctors need to stop prescribing medicines “just in case” their patient needs it.

•Pamela Yeh, assistant professor at UCLA, agrees. “An enormous amount of antibiotics — around [roughly] 80% — used in this country [are] used in industrial agriculture. Not to make sick animals healthy, but to make healthier animals grow a little faster. ... There needs to be political will to stop using our few and precious antibiotics in these situations”.

2. Incentives for companies to develop new antibiotics need to be fostered.

“We need to think of antibiotics (developing and protecting them) as a public good — much like we invest in things like national parks, public libraries, roads, bridges, traffic lights,” Yeh says.

•Mathers says the traditional drug manufacturing process doesn’t work for public companies because investors prefer drugs that need to be taken regularly rather than ones with sporadic usage. She points to the case of Achaogen, a California biotech company that generated buzz when it won one of the few antibiotic approvals in recent years with Zemdri, but was recently forced to file for bankruptcy.



But: Some progress has been made.

•**Some new antibiotics are proving to be life-saving**, Mathers says, pointing to a new type of combination antibiotics that is “saving lives.”

•**Research continues**, such as this study published today in the journal PLOS Pathogens that says they’ve figured out how the superbug Enterococcus faecalis is able to cause disease — it modifies a polysaccharide on its cell surface — although they’re

still trying to figure out why the immune system doesn’t recognize it. But, the discovery of this change “will allow the design of novel drugs targeting this process critical for the infection,” study author Mesnage says.

•**Antibiotic use in animal husbandry** is slowly being tackled, although Mathers says “the reworking, cost and investment that will need to take place to overhaul the food chain is really enormous.” Still, the FDA issued a 5-year plan to promote the proper use of antibiotics, and a group of companies and trade groups representing the entire food chain process recently agreed on a shared stewardship framework. **The bottom line:** Action must be taken to avoid a catastrophic future. (Courtesy axios.com)

Related

Growing antibiotic resistance is dire concern, health experts say



Better screening and increased drug research into new antibiotics and antiviral medications are greatly needed to head off what some health experts say could be a future in which there will be no effective medications to fight common infections like gonorrhea, syphilis, E. coli and staph.

Why it matters: Antimicrobial resistance is currently projected to be the number one killer by 2050 — “outpacing even cancer” — according to Amy Mathers, assistant professor at the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

The specter of increasingly drug-resistant diseases made news this week when CDC officials announced America reached a record high of new cases of sexually transmitted diseases. They also warned of increasing signs that one of the most common STDs, gonorrhea, is becoming more resistant to front-line antibiotics.

The threat: This disease has proven to be a “smart bug,” developing resistance to multiple antibodies in the past, Elizabeth

Torrone, who leads surveillance and special studies for CDC’s Division of STD Prevention, tells Axios.

•If left untreated, gonorrhea can cause infertility, miscarriages, chronic pain and blindness in newborns.

•Currently, there’s one last antibiotic (ceftriaxone) that remains effective against the disease.

•It’s often prescribed as a dual therapy, with a single shot of ceftriaxone plus an oral dose of a second antibiotic (azithromycin), in an attempt to preserve the ceftriaxone’s effectiveness, Torrone says.

•CDC officials warned they recently found an uptick in the portion of lab samples showing resistance to azithromycin — from 1% in 2013 to 4% in 2017.



Despite being a small percentage,

this is a concern because genes from the resistant strains could crossover with gonorrhea genes and reduce its susceptibility to ceftriaxone, Torrone says.

•In addition, 3 severely resistant cases found outside the U.S. this year are causing alarm.

•The WHO, which has a separate program to monitor this problem, continues to report growing resistance to multiple antibiotics in many countries.

What’s needed is both better diagnostic testing and the development of new antibiotics, Mathers says. She says next-generation sequencing is where testing should head, so that physicians know which specific antibiotic is best to prescribe, instead of having the patient take multiple ones. Plus, she adds, this can help track antibiotic resistance more carefully.

This is a complicated problem,” Mathers says. More antibiotic resistance research is needed not only in people, but also the role resistance plays in other areas like animal husbandry and wastewater. (Courtesy axios.com)

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