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U.S. manufacturing contracts; private payrolls post first drop since 2017



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Trump's May 1 target too optimistic for U.S. coronavirus reopening, Fauci says



A scientist works in the lab of Linqi Zhang on research into novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) antibodies for possible use in a drug at Tsinghua University's Research Center for Public Health in Beijing, China, March 30, 2020. REUTERS/Thomas Peter

WASHINGTON/NEW YORK (Reuters) - President Donald Trump's May 1 target for restarting the economy is "overly optimistic," his top infectious disease adviser said on Tuesday, after a battle erupted between Trump and state governors over who has the power to lift restrictions aimed at curbing the coronavirus pandemic.

Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said public health officials must be able to test for the virus quickly, isolate new cases and track down new infections before social-distancing restrictions can be eased.

Trump's administration has recommended stay-at-home guidelines through the end of April, and the president has floated May 1 as a possible date to start reopening some areas.

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That date may be "a bit overly optimistic," Fauci, who has become a trusted national figure during the pandemic, said in an interview with the Associated Press.

"We have to have something in place that is efficient and that we can rely on, and we're not there yet," Fauci added.

Fauci, who frequently appears with Trump at White House coronavirus briefings, has previously contradicted Trump on issues including an unproven treatment touted by the president. Trump on Sunday reposted on Twitter a call by a conservative political figure calling for Fauci's firing but the president later denied plans to dismiss his adviser.

Trump, a Republican running for re-election on Nov. 3, lashed out at Democratic state governors, suggesting they were "mutineers" after New York's Andrew Cuomo said he would refuse any order by the president to reopen the economy too soon.

"If he ordered me to reopen in a way that would endanger the public health of the people of my state, I wouldn't do it," Cuomo told CNN early in the day, referring to Trump.

At a news conference later, Cuomo said Trump was "clearly spoiling for a fight on this issue" and that he did not want a partisan battle, but added, "We don't have a king in this country, we have a Constitution and we elect the president."

The coronavirus restrictions have crippled the U.S. economy, with businesses forced to close and million of Americans becoming unemployed, in a development that could hurt Trump's re-election prospects.

U.S. President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting with recovered coronavirus disease (COVID-19) patients and family members in the Cabinet Room at the White House in Washington, U.S., April 14, 2020. REUTERS/Leah Millis
The U.S. death toll from COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the virus, stood at nearly 25,300 on Tuesday, out of more than 600,000 known U.S. infections.

Offering an expansive assessment of the powers of the presidency, Trump on Monday asserted he has "total" authority to decide on reopening the economy even though he earlier had deferred to the governors in putting social-distancing orders in place.

Cuomo, a Democrat whose state has been the epicenter of the U.S. outbreak, and governors of six other northeastern states have announced plans to formulate a regional plan to gradually lift restrictions. On the Pacific Coast, the governors of California, Oregon and Washington state announced a similar regional approach

'MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY'

Trump, whose attacks on Democrats appeal to his conservative political base, posted tweets attacking Cuomo individually and Democratic governors in general.

"Tell the Democrat Governors that 'Mutiny On The Bounty' was one of my all time favorite movies," the Trump wrote on Twitter on Tuesday, referring to a classic film about a rebellion against the commanding officer of a British naval vessel in the late 18th century.

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Emails show U.S. officials brushed off state concerns on drive-through virus tests

(Reuters) - As coronavirus infections exploded in New Orleans, state and local officials repeatedly told the Trump administration that its new drive-through testing effort wasn't going well. Those tested often waited more than a week for results, and local officials had no information on who had been notified by a federally contracted call center, according to emails between local and federal officials reviewed by Reuters.

FILE PHOTO: A medical technician takes a sample to test for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) at a drive through testing site in Medford, Massachusetts, U.S., April 4, 2020. REUTERS/Brian Snyder/File Photo
As deaths mounted, local officials requested details on the notifications as they increasingly fielded calls by those left in limbo - including health workers. But Washington officials largely brushed off their concerns, according to the correspondence, which has not been previously reported.

Frustrated city officials started their own operation to notify people after the state began receiving test results on March 26, nearly a week after testing started. One big problem: The lab initially sent many results with no phone numbers to reach those tested.

The delays and confusion created new problems for local officials managing the crisis in one of America's emerging hot spots. As of Tuesday, Louisiana had more than 21,500 confirmed cases, including more than 1,000 deaths. Timely test results are crucial to containing the virus and enabling essential workers such as doctors and nurses to stay safely on the front lines. The problems in New Orleans underscore the challenges the Trump administration faces in ramping up testing nationwide in hopes of reopening the U.S. economy.

On March 25, city health director Jennifer Avegno sent one of the many requests for information to federal officials.

"We are receiving many calls today from citizens who went through the drive through testing in the earliest days



FILE PHOTO: A medical technician takes a sample to test for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) at a drive through testing site in Medford, Massachusetts, U.S., April 4, 2020. REUTERS/Brian Snyder/File Photo

and have not gotten a call," she wrote. "Can you update us on how many results have been received, turnaround times, and how many individuals have been contacted?"

Kristina Harder, an official at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) who was working with the federal call center, did not address the information request and instead suggested telling people to be patient. "The call center should be contacting those folks who were at your sites in the beginning days," she wrote. "I hope

this is helpful!"
Harder did not respond to a request for comment.
A day later, Avegno forwarded a doctor's plea to the Trump administration's new testing czar, Brett Giroir, and other federal officials. "I'm just looking to get my results," the surgical resident at Tulane University had written.

HHS never provided an accounting of who the call center had notified, city and

state officials told Reuters.
In a statement, HHS called the drive-through sites "a profound success" with more than 77,000 people tested nationwide. HHS didn't address specific questions about problems with the operation in Louisiana or elsewhere. The agency said delays in getting results and notifying patients were resolved and results were now being given within three to five days.

BUSINESS

Trump Declares Major Disaster In All 50 States –1st Time In History



President Trump

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

President Trump issued a major disaster declaration for Wyoming on Saturday, meaning that there is now such a declaration within all 50 states due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
It is the first time a president has ever declared a major disaster in all 50 states at once, according to Deputy Press Secretary Judd Deere.
The move comes as confirmed cases of the coronavirus reached at least 519,453 as of Saturday afternoon. At least 20,071 people have died in the U.S. due to the disease, a death toll surpassing the one in hard-hit Italy — and a figure that has doubled, from 10,000 to more than 20,000, in just five days. Worldwide, confirmed cases have surpassed 1.75 million, and more than 100,000 people have died.
Wyoming Gov. Mark Gordon formally sought the declaration on Thursday in a letter to the president. The state had seen more than 200 cases of the coronavirus at that time.
"Though Wyoming has not reached the dire situations of some states, this

declaration will help us to prepare and mobilize resources when we need them," Gordon said.

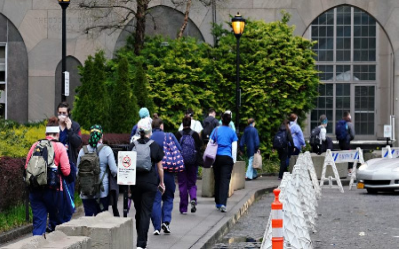


The declarations make federal funding available for state and local governments, as well as some nonprofit organizations, according to the White House. They can also help state governments coordinate with federal resources like the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Army Corps of Engineers.
The virus is highly contagious, and authorities at various levels of government around the country have been urging social distancing guidelines or implementing stay-at-home restrictions in an

attempt to slow the spread. Americans are being urged to avoid close contact with one another, maintain good hand-washing hygiene and avoid leaving their homes as much as possible. Symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — and they can range in severity from mild to deadly. But there are signs that the social distancing guidelines are helping, according to the president.
"Nationwide, the number of new cases per day is flattening substantially, suggesting that we are near the peak and our comprehensive strategy is working," President Trump said Friday at the daily White House coronavirus briefing.



With an eye on the future, the president also said that he would formally convene an "Opening our Country Council" next week composed of doctors and business leaders who will aim to help reopen the U.S. economy, which has been snarled by widespread social distancing shutdowns. (Courtesy <https://nypost.com/>)
9 US States Plan Reopening of Economies After CCP Virus Shutdown
A total of nine states on the U.S. East and West coasts said on April 13 they had begun planning for the slow reopening of their economies and lifting of strict stay-at-home orders amid signs the worst had passed in the CCP virus pandemic.
The Northeast states of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut will work with Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island in coordinating to gradually reopen their economies together, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.



Medical staff arrive for their shift at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/ Weill Cornell Medical Center during the CCP virus pandemic in New York City, on April 13, 2020. (Cindy Ord/ Getty Images)
"Nobody has been here before, nobody has all the answers," Cuomo said during an open conference call with his five counterparts. "Addressing public health and the economy: Which one is first? They're both first."
The governors of California, Oregon, and Washington said they also had reached an agreement on a shared approach to restarting businesses, although they gave no firm timeline and said they would be guided by the health of residents first.
President Donald Trump said earlier on April 13 that any decision to restart the economy was his to make.
Tensions between state governors and Trump have bubbled up since the outbreak worsened a month ago and emerged in the debate about when and how to restart economic activity. Legal experts say a U.S. president has limited power under the U.S. Constitution to order citizens back to their places of employment, or cities to reopen government buildings, transportation, or local businesses to reopen.



"It is the decision of the president, and for many good reasons," Trump wrote on Twitter on April 13. He went on to write that his administration was working closely with the governors.
"A decision by me, in conjunction with

the governors and input from others, will be made shortly!" Trump's tweet stated.
Political leaders said a reopening of the economy may hinge on more widespread testing and cautioned that lifting of stay-at-home restrictions too early could reignite the outbreak. The Trump administration has signaled May 1 as a potential date for easing the restrictions. The U.S. death toll from COVID-19 topped 23,000 on April 13, according to a Reuters tally with a total of nearly 570,000 U.S. cases. The United States, with the world's third-largest population, has recorded more fatalities from COVID-19 than any other country.
But fatalities reported on April 12 numbered 1,513, the smallest increase since 1,309 died on April 6. The largest number of fatalities, more than 10,000, was in New York state with the concentration in and around New York City. Cuomo said on April 13 that "the worst is over" for his state but warned that gains achieved through social distancing could be undone if "we do something stupid" and relax those restrictions too quickly. (Courtesy <https://www.ntd.com/>)



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German Health Minister Jens Spahn, German Chancellery's Chief of Staff Helge Braun and Hesse's State Premier Volker Bouffier talk to medical student Mina Thon during their visit to the University Hospital of Giessen and Marburg in Giessen, Germany April 14, 2020, as the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) continues. Frank Rumpenhorst/Pool via REUTERS TPX



Brazilian 99-year-old former WWII combatant Ermando Armelino Piveta gestures as he leaves the Armed Forces Hospital, after being treated for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and discharged, in Brasilia, Brazil, April 14, 2020. REUTERS/Ueslei Marcelino



A United States Postal Service (USPS) worker works in the rain in Manhattan during outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in New York



Relatives wearing protective gear prepare to bury the body of a man who died from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at a graveyard in New Delhi, India, April 14, 2020. REUTERS/



Residents comb through the wreckage of a collapsed house after an Easter Sunday tornado ripped through the Cherry Blossom Drive neighborhood in Monroe, Louisiana, U.S. April 12, 2020. Picture taken April 12, 2020



Health workers wearing protective face masks react during a tribute for their co-worker Esteban, a male nurse that died of the coronavirus disease, amid the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak, outside the Severo Ochoa Hospital in Leganes, Spain, April 13, 2020.



U.S. Navy sailors practice social distancing as they attend Sunday Easter sunrise service on the flight deck aboard the hospital ship USNS Mercy, serving as a referral hospital for non-coronavirus disease (COVID-19) patients currently admitted to shore-based hospitals, in Los Angeles, California, U.S. April 12, 2020. Picture taken April 12, 2020



A woman wearing a protective face mask walks in the rain during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Bangkok, Thailand, April 13, 2020. REUTERS/ Soe Zeya Tun TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY

South Dakota Launches Clinical Trial Of Hydroxychloroquine



Gov. Kristi Noem (R) of South Dakota

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

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem on Monday announced a statewide clinical trial of hydroxychloroquine for the possible treatment of COVID-19, making her state the first in the country to institute a program exploring the potential effectiveness of the drug in treating and preventing coronavirus.

“From Day One, I’ve said we’re going to let the science, facts and data drive our decision-making in South Dakota,” Noem said in a statement provided to Fox News.

Noem, a Republican, announced the “comprehensive” clinical trial Monday after communicating with White House officials in the last week to “let them know that South Dakota’s medical community was ready to step up and lead the way on research efforts.”

“I made direct requests to President Trump and Vice President Pence to supply us with enough hydroxychloroquine so that it could be made available for every hospitalized person the state may have, as well as those for health care workers on the frontlines and those in the most vulnerable populations,” Noem said.

The governor said South Dakota has

received doses of hydroxychloroquine to begin the trial.



“Today, I’m pleased to report we have received the initial doses we need, and thanks to the leadership of Sanford Health and the assistance of medical teams at Avera and Monument Health, we’re going to be the first state in the nation to do a comprehensive clinical trial to assess whether hydroxychloroquine can treat and perhaps even prevent COVID-19,” she said. The effort is being led by Sanford Health system, the largest rural health provider in the country. “Our goal is to meaningfully advance the science around COVID-19 so physicians can be better prepared to respond to and treat this novel virus in the future, especially for our populations most at-risk,” Sanford Health’s chief

medical officer, Allison Suttle, said in a statement. “By doing clinical trials during this pandemic, we are trying to find treatments and, thereby, hope.” The study initially will include 2,000 outpatient individuals exposed to COVID-19, including front-line health care workers and other high-risk patients.

Hydroxychloroquine is used to treat malaria and rheumatic conditions such as lupus and arthritis. However, its effectiveness at treating COVID-19 has never been proven, despite its embrace by President Trump.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) last week announced it was also beginning a clinical trial on the use of hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19. However, the NIH trial is focused on people who are already hospitalized with the disease, while the South Dakota study will initially test the possible preventive use of the drug.

Sanford said it has clinical guidelines in place to prescribe hydroxychloroquine to hospitalized COVID-19 positive patients.

Sanford Health is the largest provider of rural health care in the country, according to Noem. With the help of Avera and Monument Health, they will treat “up to 100,000 people including outpatient and hospitalized patients with COVID-19, in addition to frontline health care workers, and high-risk individuals who have been exposed to the virus.”

“The health care community in South Dakota consistently works together with the state for the benefit of all our patients,” South Dakota Secretary of Health Kim Malsam-Rysdon said Monday. “I am excited patients across the state will have access to this drug, and we will learn more about its benefits in treating and even preventing COVID-19.”

The drug has been a source of political controversy as President Trump has repeatedly touted it as a possible treatment for COVID-19. Critics of the president have pushed back by emphasizing that scientists have not yet determined

whether the drug works or is safe in



treating coronavirus.

The effectiveness of hydroxychloroquine has been a source of debate within the medical community, with some warning it’s too soon to know if it’s an efficacious option in treating patients with the novel virus.

Dr. Anthony Fauci of the White House coronavirus task force has urged caution when it comes to the drug. “We still need to do the definitive studies to determine whether any intervention, not just this one, is truly safe and effective,” Fauci recently said on Fox News.

South Dakota’s announcement comes days after the National Institutes of Health said it would run a human clinical trial for hydroxychloroquine, which typically serves as an antimalarial drug, as an option to treat patients with COVID-19. The trial, which started last week, began with 500 adult participants enrolled at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tenn.

The trial is placebo-controlled and randomized, meaning some of the patients will be treated with hydroxychloroquine while others will not. However, “all participants in the study will continue to receive clinical care as indicated for their condition,” the NIH said.

“The drug has demonstrated antiviral activity, an ability to modify the activity of the immune system, and has an established safety profile at appropriate doses, leading to the hypothesis that it may also be useful in the treatment of COVID-19,” the NIH said in a news release last week, though warned: “The drug is not without risks, as even short term use can cause cardiac arrhythmias, seizures, dermatological reactions and hypoglycemia.”



Last month, the Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization allowing health care providers to use the medicine for patients hospitalized with the coronavirus, despite the drug having never been approved as a specific treatment for COVID-19.

Hospitals have widely administered the drug to patients with COVID-19 in the hope that it would help, but there has not been much evidence of its effectiveness.

Even though the drug has been in use since World War II, the NIH has warned that even short-term use can cause cardiac arrhythmias, seizures, dermatological reactions and hypoglycemia.

“While this drug has been widely administered in the hope that it can help people, without controlled research studies we aren’t able to say for sure that it really works,” Susan Hoover, principal investigator of the study, said in a statement.

“Conducting this study allows us to do everything we can to help our patients now, and at the same time gather critical information that will help patients in the coming months and years.”(Courtesy thehill.com and https://www.foxnews.com/)



無症狀者也能檢！ 休斯頓市擴大篩檢範圍與數量，前提是要先預約

【美南新聞記者蕭永群報導】隨著休斯頓市區與哈裏斯郡感染人數突破 5500 人，休斯頓市長特納於 13 日的記者會上宣布，要將城市內兩個「免下車檢測站」免費開放給沒有出現症狀者使用，擴大篩檢範圍。

過去，這些檢測站僅開放給已經出現症狀的居民，如今不僅對無症狀者也開放，還希望能將每個測試站每日可測試的數量，從 250 人提升至 500 人，然而要完全倍增需要一段時間。若是擴大篩檢，平均整個休斯頓地區（不限於休斯頓市）每日可以

進行將近 2200 人的檢測。

休斯頓市內的兩個公營檢測站都將對外開放，但是休斯頓市健康官員 David Persse 指出，民衆想要做檢測務必事先撥打以下電話事先登記：832-393-4220，未登記者無法直接到現場排隊。此外，做檢測將不會被計算在移民申請的公共收費評估項目。

哈裏斯郡也在極力擴大每日檢測人數，但是與休斯敦不同的是，人們仍然需要進行事先篩查過程，並滿足某些標準（如出現

症狀），才能接受測試的標準。郡長說：「我們的測試用品仍然有限，因此我們必須優先考慮那些最需要測試的人。」

哈裏斯郡長伊達戈爾（Lina Hidalgo）宣布，該郡正在通過增加兩個「移動測試站」來擴大其測試範圍。有了這兩個站，平均每天將能夠多進行約 1200 次冠狀病毒測試。



月底復工？ 特朗普打算組復工小組，各州領袖意見相佐

【美南新聞記者蕭永群報導】美國經濟已經因為冠狀病毒大流行，而失去了 1600 萬個工作崗位，對此，特朗普總統在 13 日記者會上表示，正想方設法迅速復甦經濟，還暗示 5 月 1 日為可能的開放日期。

據悉，特朗普政府預計最早將於週二，正式宣布成立的另一支專門負責復甦經濟的團隊，以解決對特朗普總統至關重要的另一件事：如何開始重啟美國經濟。特朗普對此表示總統在這件事上，總統依法有完全的決定權。

該委員會將不包括衛生官員在內，而是以白宮內部的經濟學家組成，恐造成公共衛生官員與經濟學家之間的產生緊張關係，涉及到問題比如重新開放經濟的速度、如何確保該病毒不會再次爆發。

隨著該國在 11 月大選前大步走向可能的

衰退，特朗普急於刺激經濟復甦，希望穩定金融市場並恢復因大流行而已經失去的 1600 萬個工作中的一些。他最初希望在復活節之前讓這個國家再度引起轟動，但現在他希望至少在本月底之前重新開放。

政府中的許多醫學專家，包括安東尼·福西（Anthony Fauci）博士和德博拉·伯克斯（Deborah Birx）博士，都警告說，太早放寬社會隔離限制，可能會導致該病又再度爆發，到時恐怕又要再次關閉經濟，造成災難性的後果。

對於新小組，特朗普表示，他希望「小組將為我們提供一些好的建議，但不只如此，我們希望會非常非常安全。」「同時，我們也必須開放我們的國家。」

有一些道德專家和參與者對此表示擔心，

特朗普將組織的這個小組內，觀點可能會不夠多元，無法找出對大局最好的一條路。

據悉，有望加入這個新團隊的名單有：財政部長史蒂夫·姆努欽（Steve Mnuchin），商務部長威爾伯·羅斯（Wilbur Ross），住房與城市發展秘書長·卡森（Ben Carson）和白宮過去與現在的經濟顧問凱文·哈塞特（Kevin Hassett）和拉裏·庫德洛（Larry Kudlow），新白宮辦公廳主任馬克·梅多斯（Mark Meadows）。

特朗普於 13 日表示，這個小組和副總統邁克·彭斯（Mike Pence）所領導的冠狀病毒工作組負責的工作不同，儘管參與者可能有所重疊。

一些外部企業領導人，甚至可能是州長都可能加入這個行政小組，並已經正式與總

統舉行過電話會議。

與特朗普意向一致的，比如德州，州長格雷·艾伯特（Greg Abbott）也於 13 日記者會上指出，希望能在 5 月 1 日前重啟德州部份的工作。

艾伯特表示：「德州去年是美國就業機會最多的州，國內生■總值領先。」「從經濟角度而言，這對美國的未來至關重要。美國需要德州重啟經濟。」

然而，紐約州長庫莫（Andrew Cuomo）對此大力反對，認為特朗普濫職，並表示絕對無法在 5 月開放。庫莫堅持，過早重新開放學校，企業和公共場所，將導致更多的感染和更多的死亡，這就是為什麼有些決策需要因地制宜的原因。

而特朗普也在推特上反擊：「（庫莫）現在看似想自作主張，是不可能的事。」

模型預測新冠大流行病將在 5 月「消退」，專家對此表懷疑

【美南新聞記者蕭永群報導】白宮引用的一種有影響力的冠狀病毒模型，預測大流行將在 5 月份「消退」，但專家憂心，這個預測的前提是夏天時這種病毒不會再湧現。

該模型是由華盛頓大學衛生計量與評估研究所提供的，由克裏斯托弗·默裏（Christopher Murray）博士創建，他 13 日對 CNN 表示，美國預計

能在今年夏天停止冠狀病毒的傳播。

默裏表示「我們可以肯定的一件事是，社交距離措施是可行的。」「這會導致一種情況，就是每個確診案例所能影響的人越來越少，這意味著，如果堅持下去，病毒的傳播率將基本降低到零。」

根據默裏的模型，13 日是美國每天死亡人數的高峰，模型預計星期一將發生約 2150 例新冠肺炎死亡案例，預計未來數字會下

降。

據該模型指出，紐約是該病毒的熱點地區之一，叁天前死亡人數達到了峰值。此外，截至 8 月，預計美國將有 6 萬 8841 人死亡，這高於上週五的預測數字 6 萬 1500 人。

華盛頓大學的這個模型，恰好服膺了白宮希望「重啟美國」的願望，因為新案件的數量已經連續兩天下降。但是專家警告說，不同州的情況相異，因此高峰期會有所不

同。

根據約翰·霍普金斯大學的數據顯示，自病毒抵達美國沿岸以來，已有超過 2 萬 3600 人因此喪命，但上周六和上周日的每日死亡人數有所下降，情況變得較樂觀。感染數量在上周末也有減少，截至星期一下午，來到超過 58 萬例。

