



COVID-19 4/24 UPDATE

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Global

Total cases – 2,761,121

Total deaths – 193,671

United States

Positive tests – 880,112 (4% increase from prior day)

% Positive tests – 19%

Total # tests – 4,692,797 (4% increase from prior day)

Total deaths – 50,114 (7% increase from prior day)

Administration

- **President Trump** signed into law the \$484b relief package designed to replenish a small-business loan program, give aid to hospitals and provide funding for coronavirus testing.
 - The stimulus will provide “vital” relief for American families, Trump says at the White House
- **President Trump** said he may extend social distancing guidelines beyond May 1 if he doesn't feel the country is in a safe place.
 - "We may go beyond that," Trump said when asked whether he might need to re-up the guidelines when they expire at the end of the month.
 - "People are gonna know just out of common sense," Trump said after saying he thought the worse would be over by early summer.
- **Vice President Mike Pence** encouraged states to resume elective surgeries during the White House press briefing.
 - “The President and I will continue to urge states across the country, given the unique burden on hospitals, we are now encouraging states to restart elective surgeries wherever possible, either statewide or on a county by county basis,” he said. “We recognize the role elective surgeries play in finances for local hospitals and we’ll be working with states to enable that.”
- **Pence** also said Friday's call with the governors is expected to cover progress on testing and best practices.
 - “Our task force will convene a conference call with all of the nation’s governors to talk about their progress that they are making on testing, and we’re going to hear from

governors about the practices and methods that they are employing to significantly increase testing following our briefing on capacity and laboratories this past Monday," he said.

- **President Trump** thanked Harvard University, as well as other colleges and large businesses, for agreeing not to take federal funding provided to them through the CARES Act.
 - "Harvard and Stanford and Princeton, numerous other universities and colleges, also, large businesses have sent funds back to us and in some cases I stopped funds that I looked at and we are pleased to report that the funds have either not gone out or ... we've renegotiated it and they're not getting 'em," Trump said during Thursday's White House press briefing.
- **President Trump** was asked Thursday why he has stopped promoting hydroxychloroquine as a therapeutic treatment for coronavirus. He disputed that assertion, even though he has not brought up the drug, which he touted repeatedly, for over a week, with one exception Tuesday.
 - "I haven't at all. Why do you say I have? We'll see what happens we had a lot of very good results and we had some results that perhaps aren't so good, I don't know. I just read about one but I also read many times good," he said.
- **Dr. Anthony Fauci** said the country is in a "very critical time right now" as it pulls back from coronavirus mitigation.
 - "When we do start to see cases come back and I'll guarantee you they will — as we pull back from mitigation, we'll be seeing cases. If we have in place the capability to identify by testing, isolate, contact trace, get people out of circulation who are infected, that's called containment. If we are capable of doing that, effectively, then we should feel some good confidence that we can slowly move on," Fauci said during a Time 100 Talk today.
 - Fauci said the country is dealing with different stages of the disease, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach.
- **Dr. Anthony Fauci** said Thursday that he was doubtful of the country's [current testing capability](#), which is a key resource as several states and cities look to partially reopen their economies during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.
 - During a [Time 100 Talks](#) interview, Fauci was asked how confident he was that the country currently has sufficient capability to handle the potential increased coronavirus testing needs in order to inform leaders looking to reopen hard-hit areas.
 - "We absolutely need to significantly ramp up, not only the number of tests but the capacity to actually perform them," Fauci said.
- **President Trump** said he's not happy with Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp's decision to reopen his state's economy during the Thursday White House press briefing.
 - "I want the states to open, more than he does, much more than he does. But I didn't like to see spas at this early stage, nor did the doctors," he said.
 - Trump was referring to Georgia's decision to begin allowing fitness centers, bowling alleys, body art studios, barbers, hair and nail salons, and massage therapy businesses to reopen, as well as in-person religious services as early Friday, April 24.
- **President Trump** said that he disagrees with Dr. Anthony Fauci's comments earlier Thursday that he's not "overly confident" about the US' testing capacity.
 - "No I don't agree with him on that. No I think we're doing a great job on testing. If he said that, I don't agree with him," Trump said when asked about Fauci's comments.

- The **Federal Reserve** announces an interim final rule Friday that will allow bank customers to make an unlimited amount of “convenient transfers” and withdrawals from their savings deposits at a time when the coronavirus might make such transactions “more urgent.”
 - The Fed action enables banks to suspend enforcement of a six-per-month limit on convenient transfers, according to statement
 - Fed says rule change approved in 5-to-0 vote
 - The **Fed** says that its recent decision to reduce all reserve-requirement ratios to zero had rendered unnecessary the regulatory distinctions between “transaction accounts” and non-reservable “savings deposits”
- After a presentation Thursday that touched on the disinfectants that can kill the novel [coronavirus](#) on surfaces and in the air, **President Trump** pondered whether those chemicals could be used to fight the virus inside the human body.
 - “I see the disinfectant that knocks it out in a minute, one minute,” Trump said during Thursday’s [coronavirus press briefing](#). “And is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside, or almost a cleaning? Because you see it gets inside the lungs and it does a tremendous number on the lungs, so it would be interesting to check that.”
- The new executive order meant to “suspend immigration” may, in the end, only shift the numbers toward employment-based green cards and away from the family-based variety.
 - **President Donald Trump’s order**, [signed Wednesday](#), bars foreign nationals on foreign soil seeking U.S. residency from applying for green cards for the next 60 days, and doesn’t affect those who currently have valid visas or travel documents. It also exempts individuals seeking to permanently enter the country as a medical professional or researcher, as well as members of the armed forces, those seeking asylum or refugee status, and children being adopted by American parents.
- **Federal Reserve** is seeking to expand the range of lenders eligible to take part in its Paycheck Protection Program Liquidity Facility “as soon as possible.”
 - Fed notes in [statement](#) that currently, only depository institutions are eligible to participate in the PPPLF, and over 1000 have already been approved to access the program
- **Bill Bryan**, a senior official performing the duties of the under secretary for Science and Technology (DHS), explained during Thursday’s briefing that experiments with coronavirus samples indicate that the virus does not do well under sunlight, in warm temperatures or in humid conditions.
 - “Our most striking observation to date is the powerful effect that solar light appears to have on killing the virus — both surfaces and in the air. We’ve seen a similar effect with both temperature and humidity as well, where increasing the temperature and humidity or both is generally less favorable to the virus,” Bryan told reporters.
 - Domestic terrorists “probably will continue to threaten violence” in response to the Covid-19 pandemic until the virus is contained and the normal routine of US societal life resumes, according to the Department of Homeland Security.
 - The **federal government** has been warning that the pandemic is likely to be exploited by violent extremists.
 - In an intelligence note issued today, DHS warned the southwest region that recent incidents in Florida and nationwide highlight Covid-19 as a driver of violent threats.

- **Top US infectious disease expert [Dr. Anthony Fauci](#)** made a video appearance during Thursday's [NFL draft](#), thanking the league for adjusting one of the sport's most highly anticipated nights to [adhere to social distancing guidelines](#) in light of the coronavirus pandemic.
 - "I want to commend those involved in these decisions to show that we can have something as important as that in a way that safeguards the life, the safety and the health of the American public by doing the kind of physical separations, doing things virtually, avoiding that kind of contact that puts you at risk," Fauci said in his brief video appearance.
 - This year's NFL draft, which was originally supposed to take place in Las Vegas, is being held virtually because of the Covid-19 pandemic, with league commissioner Roger Goodell announcing draft picks from his basement.
- **The Federal Reserve** will disclose the names of borrowers from several of its emergency lending facilities backed by U.S. taxpayer money from the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus rescue bill, following congressional pressure for transparency. The Fed said yesterday that it will publish the names and details of participants in its facilities set up in the CARES Act, as well as the amounts that were borrowed and the interest rate charged on its website at least every 30 days. It will also report the overall costs, revenues and fees of each of the facilities
- **Mnuchin** said he's considering the creation of a government lending program for U.S. oil companies, who are looking for federal aid as they cope with a devastating plunge in prices. "One of the components we're looking at is providing a lending facility for the industry," Mnuchin told Bloomberg News yesterday. "We're looking at a lot of different options, and we have not made any conclusions." He would not say whether the lending program would be housed at his agency or at the Federal Reserve, which has created a number of loan facilities for businesses suffering from the economic collapse brought on by the coronavirus outbreak
- **Mnuchin** said the U.S. has no current plans to create a Federal Reserve facility to inject funding into non-bank mortgage servicers, as recent government moves will help the firms get through the risk of millions of borrowers missing their mortgage payments. Mnuchin pointed to Ginnie Mae's decision last month to facilitate payments to mortgage bondholders themselves, thus covering an obligation that would have fallen on servicers. That combined with steps taken this week by the Federal Housing Finance Agency, which regulates mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, will "deal with liquidity concerns,"
- **Mnuchin** will require public companies deemed critical to national security that seek a share of \$17 billion in virus-related relief to offer an equity stake to the government, according to a Treasury Department loan application posted last night. "This pot of money was designed to consider the needs of defense contractors, key suppliers to DOD and other companies that carry classified information," Mnuchin said yesterday in an interview, referring to the Defense Department.
 - The requirements are similar to those for passenger and cargo airlines seeking payroll assistance from the \$2.2 trillion coronavirus stimulus package passed by Congress. One obvious contender for the funds is Boeing, which has so far said it might not request government support. Mnuchin said he's had multiple conversations with Boeing's top executives but declined to say whether it intended to tap government funds
- A wide range of **Labor Department initiatives** are helping workers in need during the pandemic, even as the economy prepares for a big rebound, Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia said. "The year

started with a blue-collar boom. We're now working on the blue-collar bounceback," Scalia said during a call yesterday.

- Before highlighting his agency's efforts on unemployment benefits, safety, and paid leave, Scalia emphasized optimism in a nod to the White House's plan to assist states in reopening the economy. The secretary said Trump's "reopening plan puts forward a disciplined, scientific approach for states and locales to reopen for business as it's safe to do so."
- Americans relying on the federal **SNAP** program, formerly known as food stamps, to buy groceries during the coronavirus pandemic can now receive a temporary bump in monthly benefits. "USDA is providing a 40% increase in SNAP benefits to ensure that low-income individuals have enough food to feed themselves and their families during this national emergency," Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said in a statement yesterday
- The **FCC** is working with **Congress** and the **Education Department** on ways to sponsor remote learning, with an announcement expected "soon," Pai said during an Axios event on education yesterday. The FCC declined to provide more details and the Education Department didn't respond to a request for more information. During the coronavirus pandemic, more than 50 million school-aged children have been sent home to largely complete classes online and the digital divide between students who lack internet access has grown more stark.
- The **Environmental Protection Agency** on Thursday warned Facebook and other e-commerce platforms that they were being used to sell disinfectants that fraudulently claim to fight the coronavirus. [Facebook](#), [eBay](#), [Alibaba](#), [Shopify](#), Qoo10, JoyBuy.com, Wish.com and banggood.com should "take action against these dishonest dealers and immediately take these illegal products off of their sites," EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler said in a news release.
- A plan being weighed by **Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin** to steer financial aid to beleaguered oil drillers could set up a clash with Democrats who have warned against any bailout for the industry.
 - **Mnuchin** said he is considering a lending program for the companies that are seeking aid as they cope with a devastating plunge in prices.
- The Chinese government is probably hacking U.S. research labs and hospitals in an effort to steal information that can help it create a vaccine for coronavirus, a top **Justice Department official** said Thursday.
 - It would be "beyond absurd" to think China would lay off cyber attacks aimed at getting trade secrets related to the virus, said John Demers, head of DOJ's national security division
- The **Federal Reserve** is temporarily boosting the intraday credit extended by its banks amid liquidity pressures caused by coronavirus pandemic, aiming to encourage use of the credit by healthy institutions.
 - U.S. lenders may face "unanticipated intraday liquidity constraints and demands on collateral pledged to the Reserve Banks," the Fed says in Thursday statement announcing adjustments of its policy
 - The **Fed** is "suspending uncollateralized intraday credit limits (net debit caps) and is waiving overdraft fees for institutions that are eligible for the primary credit program"
 - The central bank is also "permitting a streamlined procedure for secondary credit institutions to request collateralized intraday credit (max caps)," according to the statement

- The changes will be in effect until Sept. 30, unless they are extended
- “These actions will not meaningfully increase credit risk to Reserve Banks,” the Fed says in its statement
- **Education Secretary Besty DeVos** said Thursday she was making billions in additional coronavirus relief dollars available to K-12 schools.
 - Congress provided \$30.75 billion for education in the CARES Act ([Public Law 116-136](#)), which President Donald Trump signed last month. After opening up funds for colleges and universities in recent weeks, DeVos is releasing more than \$13 billion for public education.
 - The money was allocated based on the share of low-income students in schools. California schools, for example, will get just under \$1.65 billion in aid from the CARES Act, according to [calculations](#) the Education Department released
- **Treasury Dept** is weighing taking control over key operations of the U.S. Postal Service by placing stringent conditions on an emergency coronavirus loan, Washington Post [reports](#), citing two people familiar with the matter.
 - Spokesmen for USPS and the Treasury confirmed that the two parties had begun preliminary discussions over the loan: WaPo
- Over 60 jurisdictions nationwide will get \$631 million from the **CDC** to track and trace the coronavirus as they plan how to reopen their economies safely, federal health authorities announced today. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention received \$2.2 billion through the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2020 passed in mid-March and another \$4.3 billion from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act passed a couple weeks
- The **US Food and Drug Administration** on Friday warned against the use of two drugs that have been touted by President Trump as potential treatments for novel coronavirus.
 - The agency said the drugs, hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine, should only be used in hospital settings or clinical trials because of the potential for serious side effects.
 - The agency said it was aware of reports of “serious heart rhythm problems” in Covid-19 patients treated with the drugs, often in combination with azithromycin or other medications that can affect the heart.
- **Vice President Pence** said that he thinks “by Memorial Day weekend we will largely have this coronavirus epidemic behind us” in a radio interview with Geraldo Rivera.
 - Pence emphasized that the White House’s recommended “phased approach” is the best way to ensure there is not a resurgence of the virus.
- **President Trump's top economic adviser Larry Kudlow** said the administration is “pursuing some kind of liability safeguard program” for businesses that reopen that would protect them from coronavirus-related lawsuits.
 - There would be exceptions for gross negligence, he said during an appearance on Fox Business this morning.
 - “If you’re just open in business and you conform to the guidelines” and a customer or employee contracted coronavirus, “I don’t think there should be a lawsuit,” he said.
 - **Trump** said he'd look into this kind of safeguard when asked in a briefing last week.
 - The U.S. will run “surveillance” to make sure ineligible companies are returning loans meant for small businesses, **Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin says at the White House.**

- **Small Business Administration** publishes additional guidance to supplement previously posted interim final rules on Paycheck Protection Program.
 - “Hedge funds and private equity firms are primarily engaged in investment or speculation, and such businesses are therefore ineligible to receive a PPP loan”: guidance
 - [Link](#) to interim final rule
- The **Trump administration** has awarded \$73.2 million in contracts to “quickly establish novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) self-swab testing locations nationwide,” according to [General Services Administration](#) website.
 - **Rite Aid, Walgreens, CVS Minute Clinic, Quest Diagnostics, Essential3 Health Solutions** among recipients
 - Contracts are set to be completed by May 30
- **President Trump** says he won’t authorize aid for the **U.S. Postal Service** unless it raises prices, which are too low and benefit Amazon.
 - Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin says any funding for USPS will include some reform criteria
- **President Trump** spoke with Kenya President Uhuru Kenyatta Thursday about coronavirus and offered additional assistance for Kenya’s response to the pandemic, according to White House statement
- Today, the **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** (HUD) announced four communities across the country will receive a combined \$130 million to redevelop severely distressed public housing and to revitalize surrounding neighborhoods. Provided through HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, these grants, and the more than \$1.5 billion they will stimulate from other sources, will transform long-struggling neighborhoods and distressed HUD-assisted housing. Read more about these transformation plans. ([HERE](#))
- **HUD** continues to update resources for stakeholders to help guide decisions on their response to COVID-19. ([HERE](#))
- To support small and community banks, the **Federal Housing Finance Agency** announced that Federal Home Loan Banks (FHL Banks) can accept Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans as collateral when making loans, called advances, to their members. ([HERE](#))
- Today, the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), awarded nearly \$5 million to Poison Control Centers across the country to improve their capacity to respond to increased calls due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ([HERE](#))
- The **Department of Health and Human Services** (HHS) is announcing upcoming action by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide additional resources to state and local jurisdictions in support of our nation’s response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). ([HERE](#))
- Healthcare providers have a unique opportunity to integrate telemedicine into their practice. As part of this effort, HHS has launched telehealth.hhs.gov. ([HERE](#))
- Today, the **Trump Administration** released a new [toolkit](#) for states to help accelerate adoption of broader telehealth coverage policies in the Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Programs (CHIP) during the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. ([HERE](#))

- A new strategic plan from the **National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)**, part of the National Institutes of Health, details the institute's plan for accelerating research to diagnose, prevent and treat COVID-19. ([HERE](#))
- COVID-19 is impacting all FDA-regulated industries, including tobacco product manufacturers. The agency has received numerous inquiries from the tobacco industry expressing concern they will be unable to complete premarket applications by the original May 12 deadline due to disruptions at all stages of preparation, including preventions or disruptions to in-person laboratory work and clinical studies or necessary foreign travel, or from the shuttering of manufacturing facilities abroad. ([HERE](#))
- Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are enduring strategic partners as we respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and plan for economic recovery. We commit to continue our collaboration with ASEAN to beat this pandemic and get back to the business of building a bright future for the region together. ([HERE](#))
- Today, the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** announced that it is advising eight technology companies that unscrupulous dealers are using their platforms to sell illegal disinfectant products. The companies include Facebook, Ebay, Alibaba, Shopify, Qoo10, JoyBuy.com, Wish.com and banggood.com. ([HERE](#))
- **U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos** announced today that more than \$13.2 billion in emergency relief funds are now available to state and local education agencies to support continued learning for K-12 students whose educations have been disrupted by the coronavirus. ([HERE](#))

Capitol Hill

- **The House** overwhelmingly [passed](#) and sent to President Donald Trump a \$484 billion coronavirus aid package, even as members are already at odds over the next phase of rescue legislation.
 - Thursday's bipartisan 388-5 approval was delivered by lawmakers wearing masks and entering the House chamber under strict health precautions. Trump said at a White House briefing he is likely to sign the bill Thursday night.
- The **U.S. House of Representatives** voted 212-182 to create a special panel to oversee the distribution of coronavirus relief funds. Majority Whip [Jim Clyburn](#) will chair the committee.
 - Voting took almost an hour and a half because it had to be carried out with carefully choreographed movement and spacing of lawmakers to guard against spreading any infection. House members entered the chamber in groups of 60, and most took the advice of the sergeant at arms to wear surgical-style masks or other face coverings.
- **Speaker [Nancy Pelosi](#)** told reporters there won't be another coronavirus relief bill without state and local aid.
 - Pelosi says Democrats will be ready soon with the next bill
- **McConnell's** opposition to Democrats' calls for billions more in aid to cash-strapped cities and **states** isn't stopping many of his Republican colleagues from lining up for a piece of the funding they fully expect to be in the next Covid-19 relief package.
- **McConnell** said after the Senate passed the billion interim package that he'd rather see states declare bankruptcy than give them money to cover lost revenue during the crisis. As the leader was delivering that message during a series of appearances on conservative media outlets,

others in the GOP were encouraging state and local officials to carefully draw up documents detailing their losses in anticipation of reimbursement down the road.

- **Democrats** are pushing for more long-term financial relief for those most affected by the pandemic, after the government issued checks and expanded unemployment benefits in its initial response packages.
 - Those familiar with current deliberations say that even a rapid economic recovery from the pandemic will leave lasting aftershocks, especially for low-income individuals and those who have lost their jobs. Expanding the earned income tax credit (EITC) and the child tax credit could help the most vulnerable in the years to come, they say. Such a change could do more for the most vulnerable individuals than the \$1,200 checks or the additional \$600 per week for those receiving unemployment benefits .
- The next pandemic relief bill could be the opening for **Democrats** to again make the case for tax credit expansions and also call for more cash, unemployment, and food assistance. House **Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.)** and **Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)** have said they want the next package to be “transformative and far reaching,” a sign that Democrats will push for generous provisions.
- **Pelosi** and **Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer** are united on most of their core demands, which also include more health-sector funding and a “Heroes Fund” for federal payments of as much as \$25,000 to health workers, grocery store employees and other essential workers.
 - “Our states and local governments are feeling the pain of slashed revenue from this pandemic,” said House Ways and Means Chairman [Richard Neal](#), a Massachusetts Democrat who will draft much of the package. “Without our support, essential workers who have been risking their lives are at risk of losing their jobs.”
- **Republicans** in both chambers want a more cautious approach on the next stimulus bill, and McConnell this week wouldn’t commit to completing it. House Minority Leader [Kevin McCarthy](#) said Congress should slow down.
 - “We have not seen the effects of all this money going out,” McCarthy, a California Republican, told reporters on Wednesday. “The states are going to have money coming to them already. Let’s see what’s working, what needs more help. And let’s craft a bill based upon knowledge, data.”
- One of the biggest battles ahead will be over aid to state and local governments, which are seeing tax revenue plummet and expenses escalate as a result of the pandemic.
 - I think there’s enough bipartisan support,” for state, local govt relief legislation despite resistance from **Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell**, the chamber’s Democratic leader [Chuck Schumer](#) says in NPR interview.
 - **Schumer** says he expects McConnell will have to walk back [comments made](#) earlier this week that he’d prefer states struggling with high public employee pension costs amid pandemic declare bankruptcy rather than giving them a federal bailout
 - **Schumer** adds he has discussed local govt assistance with President Trump, notes commitments from Trump can “come and go”
- **Sixty members of the New Democrat coalition** are asking House leadership to include policies in the next coronavirus stimulus bill to help communities start to reopen. In a [letter](#) to Pelosi and Minority Leader [Kevin McCarthy](#) (R-Calif.), the group details proposals on testing, surveillance and contact tracing, Emily Wilkins reports.

- “Congress must put the measures and standards for a National Recovery Strategy in place now so that widespread, economically challenging countermeasures are not needed again,” lawmakers said in the letter.
- **Four major unions** allied with **Democrats** this week called for \$200 billion for education, expanded Medicaid funding, and a federal backstop to help cover higher insurance premiums. The unions, which include the American Federation of Teachers and Service Employees International Union, also want an expansion of the Defense Production Act to bolster manufacturing in the U.S. of virus-related equipment and exemptions to allow union elections to be held electronically.
 - “I think it is important for us to say that incrementalism is not helpful in this moment,” said **Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**, a New York Democrat. “It is like putting a bandaid on an enormous wound.”
 - She and other House liberals want \$2,000 cash payments to individuals that automatically recur until the crisis is over, a government guarantee of people’s paychecks, government assistance for water utility bills, a bailout of the U.S. Postal Service, universal access to health insurance, and aid to undocumented immigrants. There also are calls to expand work share programs to allow individuals to collect unemployment insurance while working part time, and to provide money to asylum seekers.
- **House Freedom Caucus Chairman Andy Biggs**, an Arizona Republican, and **Senator Rand Paul**, a Kentucky Republican, are among GOP lawmakers warning of a national debt crisis if all the spending continues.
 - “I don’t want to see this massive accumulation of debt destroy this great country,” Paul said Tuesday on the Senate floor. “My advice to the Senate and to the American people is let’s be aware of what we are doing by creating all this new debt, and let’s think before we jump to a terrible, terrible conclusion.”
- Still, Republicans including **Senator Rob Portman** of Ohio have already said they want more state and local aid in the next package. So has Trump, who before the November election faces the prospect seeing states lay off millions of public sector workers or raising taxes in the middle of a steep recession because of the pandemic.
- **House Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal** (D-Mass.) said his committee intends to include assistance for the health-care industry, state and local governments, as well as another round of stimulus payments and extended jobless benefits into autumn. “Our states and local governments are feeling the pain of slashed revenue from this pandemic,” Neal said.
- **Senate Small Business Chairman Marco Rubio** (R-Fla.) is asking big bank CEOs if they favored certain borrowers in processing applications for small business rescue loans, Dow Jones reports, citing a letter
- **House Financial Services Chairwoman Maxine Waters** (D-Calif.) is pushing to include a \$100 billion renter assistance fund and \$75 billion for homeowner assistance in the next package. “We need to do much more to help renters, homeowners, people experiencing homelessness, and mom-and-pop landlords,” she said on the floor
- **The Federal Reserve** shouldn’t alter a stimulus loan program for medium-sized businesses as requested by the oil and gas industry, **Democratic Sen. Ed Markey** and **Rep. Nanette Diaz Barragán** write in a [letter](#) Thursday to Jerome Powell.
- “During the federal response to this unprecedented crisis, we urge you to deploy the Federal Reserve’s resources in a way that protects taxpayer interests and avoids the bailout of an

industry that has been struggling under its own short-sighted financial decisions for years,” the lawmakers write

- **The New Democrat Coalition** wants the Treasury Department, Federal Reserve and housing regulators to issue guidelines on how borrowers’ missed mortgage payments will be handled once the current period of coronavirus-permitted forbearance concludes.
 - They also urge the agencies to create a liquidity facility that will allow “mortgage servicers to fund the payments they must advance to loan owners during the forbearance period,” according to Thursday [letter](#)
 - The lawmakers say that any servicer that makes use of the liquidity facility should offer forbearance and loan-modification procedures to borrowers whose mortgages aren’t backed by the federal government
 - The three steps are important in preventing “the mortgage market from becoming a vector for damage to the financial system as it was in 2008,” the lawmakers write in letter to Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell, Federal Housing Finance Agency Director Mark Calabria, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie
- The **Treasury Department** should extend a deadline for using a production tax credit and investment tax credits utilized by the wind, solar and other clean energy industries, Senate **Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley** says in [letter](#).
 - Grassley and other lawmakers seek an extension to five years from four years of a “safe harbor” provision that allows companies that begin construction on a project in 2016 or 2017 to claim the tax credits
 - “This modest adjustment to the PTC and ITC guidance would help preserve tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in investments and provide some certainty in these challenging times,” according to the letter addressed to Treasury Sec. Steve Mnuchin
 - In addition to Grassley, letter is signed by Sens. **Ron Wyden**, D-Ore., **John Thune** R-S.D., **Maria Cantwell**, D-Wash., **Lisa Murkowski**, R-Alaska, and **Joe Manchin** D-W.Va.
- **Republican Sen. Mitt Romney** and **Democratic Sen. Kyrsten Sinema** are pressing CDC to quickly come up with a real-time national system for tracking the pandemic.
 - The senators in [letter](#) to CDC Director Robert Redfield say they are deeply concerned that federal public health officials are “behind the curve in assessing public health threat levels, because they lack immediate visibility into population health data
- **Rep. Anna Eshoo**, the chairwoman of the House’s Health subcommittee, told CNN she plans to call in Dr. Rick Bright to testify before her panel as she reviews the circumstances of his removal from a key position after he raised concerns about the safety of a drug that President Trump touted as a potential vaccine to coronavirus.
 - “I think the American people deserve to hear Dr Bright’s story,” Eshoo told CNN. “He really has worked for the American people — they are the ones who have paid his salary. A thoroughbred professional — and to set him aside in one of the most key positions to develop vaccines in the midst of the pandemic? The story doesn’t make sense to me. So I think it deserves examination.”
 - Eshoo said she also wants to call Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar and Bob Kadlec, the assistant secretary for preparedness and response, to testify before her panel.

- Relief loans program should be relaunching Monday morning, [Sen. Marco Rubio says in a tweet](#).
 - Paycheck protection program will include not only the \$310b from the bill President Trump plans to sign today, but also additional “significant” amount of money returned by several publicly traded large companies, Rubio says
- **Sens. Cory Booker** (D-N.J.), **Ed Markey** (D-Mass.), **Angus King** (I-Maine), **Ron Wyden** (D-Ore.), **Richard Blumenthal** (D-Conn.), **Dianne Feinstein** (D-Calif.), **Bernie Sanders** (I-Vt.), and **Kirsten Gillibrand** (D-N.Y.) will reintroduce the [Community Broadband Act](#) after the Senate reconvenes, which is expected to be May 4. The bill aims to improve internet access to low-income communities that lack broadband connections to be able to complete remote education or access telehealth services. The bill aims to preserve and protect the rights of cities and localities to build municipal broadband networks by banning any state, local or tribal regulation that prohibits cities from providing high-speed internet.
- **A bipartisan group of lawmakers** sent a [letter](#) yesterday to President Donald Trump urging him to include funding for small broadband providers to support low-income families in a future coronavirus stimulus bill. **Sens. Amy Klobuchar** (D-Minn.), **Kevin Cramer** (R-N.D.) and Reps. **Peter Welch** (D-Vt.) and **Roger Marshall** (R-Kan.) are asking the administration to provide small broadband funding to support low-income families in a future coronavirus stimulus bill. They want broadband providers to be able to keep students and low-income families connected to the Internet during the Covid-19 crisis. The CARES Act didn’t include funds for small broadband providers. “Without support from your administration, small providers may be unable to ensure that the communities they serve have access to critical internet connectivity,” they wrote.
- **Sen. Dick Durbin** (D-Ill.) and 22 senators urged the Treasury Department to ensure stimulus checks reach Americans who lack internet and didn’t file their tax returns electronically. Durbin, the second-ranking Democrat in the Senate, wrote to Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. [The letter](#) called on the Treasury to make sure the more than 21 million Americans without internet receive their economic stimulus checks from the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act.
- **House** and **Senate** members are pushing to expand the federal government's powers to target price-gouging. **FTC** and **DOJ** officials met (virtually) with members of the **House Judiciary Committee** on Wednesday to report on their efforts. The Justice Department, which has taken the lead on efforts to stop hoarding and price-gouging of essential goods, has 180 open investigations throughout the country. The FTC is focusing on coronavirus scams such as fake cures and testing kits and has sent more than 100 warning letters since the pandemic started.
- A group of **bipartisan senators** is asking the Trump administration to remove limits on the amount of direct coronavirus relief that farmers can receive under USDA's new aid package
 - [In a letter to Trump](#), 28 senators led by **Jerry Moran** (R-Kan.) and **Dianne Feinstein** (D-Calif.) said the limits could disproportionately hurt some of the hardest hit corners of agriculture, like livestock, dairy and specialty crop producers. They're asking USDA to scrap the payment limits for those groups before it finalizes the aid program, which Perdue is aiming to launch in May.
- **House Speaker Nancy Pelosi** at her weekly press conference criticized President Trump over his suggestion that [sunlight and injecting disinfectants](#) could help cure coronavirus and linked the comments to recent comments from Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell suggesting that he thinks that bankruptcy and not more federal money might be best for state and local governments.
 - “The President is asking people to inject Lysol into their lungs and Mitch is saying that states should go bankrupt. It’s a clear, visible, within 24 hours, of how the Republicans

reject science and reject governance. If you don't believe in science and you don't believe in governance. That's their approach ... we know that governance has a role and we know that science as a role and without science in our decision making we are not going to be on a very successful path," she said.

State/Local

- **Alaska** is set to be one of the first US states to begin loosening business restrictions on Friday.
 - Under the loosened restrictions, restaurants can resume table service but are limited to 25% capacity with 10 feet (3 meters) between each table. Only family members can sit together. Salons will accept customers by appointment only.
 - The city of Anchorage, where 40% of the state's residents live, is putting off the looser restrictions until Monday.
- **Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee** outlined today the first steps from the "Tennessee Pledge," the state's guidance for reopening businesses during the coronavirus pandemic. These guidelines apply to 89 of the state's 95 counties. The first industries to receive guidance through the plan include the restaurant and retail industries. According to the plan
 - On Monday: Restaurants are able to reopen at 50% occupancy.
 - On Wednesday: Tennessee retailers are able to reopen at 50% occupancy.
 - The state recommends that employees in both industries wear cloth face coverings and that business owners follow federal guidelines for hygiene and workplace sanitation standards related to the pandemic. You can read the full full guidance offered by the state [here](#).
- **Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer** will extend the state's stay-at-home order until at least May 15, according to her spokesperson Zack Pohl.
- **Mayor Bill de Blasio** said that May will be a "decisive" month for New York City, adding, "I feel very good about things getting substantially back to normal by September."
 - De Blasio said that "somewhere between, you know, the end of May and the beginning of school is going to be a point where we start to loosen up," speaking on a radio program Thursday.
 - The mayor said the reopening process will be done in slow, careful stages.
 - De Blasio rehashed the city's "aggressive" plan to get testing done by hopefully the hundreds of thousands, and reiterated that the federal government needs to help the city in terms of testing resources.
 - The testing sites the city set up in minority communities are seeing a good response, he said, adding that new sites he previously announced will come online soon including those in New York City Housing Authority communities.
 - **De Blasio** also added that the "status quo before Covid-19 is not acceptable to me" addressing the racial disparity he says has been exposed by the virus.
- **Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam** extended the state's current ban on elective surgeries by a week until May 1, according to a statement from the governor's office today.
 - He also extended the closure of Department of Motor Vehicle offices by two weeks until May 11.
- **Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker** says surgery centers and hospitals will be able to start rescheduling delayed surgeries if they meet specific criteria.

- These medical centers must have proper personal protective equipment, testing to make sure the patient is Covid-19 negative and enough overall bed and ICU availability in case of surge in coronavirus patients, Pritzker said.
- Pritzker said the exact guidelines will be announced by the Illinois Department of Health. Surgeries can begin May 1, he said.
- **Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz** announced Thursday he will allow some businesses to reopen, beginning April 27, which will allow 80,000 to 100,000 people in the industrial, manufacturing and office settings to go back to work.
 - “Today’s order was developed with consultation with hundreds of businesses, with labor groups, with worker’s organizations, and with public health experts,” he said. “None of this would be done without a sign-off of independent health experts.”
 - To reopen, businesses must create, share and implement a Covid-19 preparedness plan that outlines measures they are taking to ensure social distancing and worker hygiene, the governor said.
 - He added that businesses must also engage in health screenings of employees and make ensure that sick workers stay home.
- **Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz** announced Thursday an order to keep schools closed for the remainder of the academic year to contain the spread of Covid-19.
 - “Today’s executive order will continue distance learning until the end of the school year,” Walz said at a news conference.
- A new recovery plan from the **Idaho governor’s office** says many nonessential businesses could reopen in just over a week, as long as progress in fighting the coronavirus does not backslide.
 - The state’s stay-at-home order is currently effective through April 30.
 - The plan calls for easing economic restrictions in four stages, with two weeks in between each stage. However, stages could be postponed if the state begins to see the Covid-19 case rate go up or hospital capacity go down.
 - The first phase: Bars, gyms and theaters would remain closed and restaurants would continue carryout service, but some other businesses and places of worship could open with social distancing plans.
 - The second phase: Restaurant dining and salon businesses would be permitted, although gathering would still be limited to fewer than 10 people.
 - Idaho’s plan says, even under the best-case scenario, bars and theaters would not be allowed to reopen until June 13 at the earliest.
- **North Carolina** will extend their stay-at-home order until May 8, Gov. Roy Cooper said at a news conference Thursday.
 - Cooper unveiled a three-part plan to open up after May 8, if trends continue in a downward trajectory:
 - With phase 1, stay-at-home orders would remain, but some businesses would be allowed to open.
 - Phase 2 would actually lift stay-at-home orders vulnerable populations would be encouraged to stay home. Places of worship, bars and restaurants could operate with reduced capacities.
 - Restrictions for vulnerable populations would lessen during phase 3 but also allow increased capacities at businesses and public gatherings.

- **Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot** said she agrees with Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker's extension of the stay-at-home order until May 30.
 - **Lightfoot**, speaking at a news conference Thursday, said it is not safe to remove all restrictions.
 - Lightfoot said she also agrees with telling people to wear masks when they are not able to socially distance, but said the city will not arrest or charge people who do not use masks.
- **Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker** will sign a modified version of the state's stay-at-home order that will go into effect on May 1 and extend it through May 30, he announced in a news conference today.
 - In the new order, face coverings or a mask must be worn by anyone over the age of two when in public, if a 6-foot social distance can't be maintained.
 - Retail stores that are not considered essential may take phone and online orders for delivery or outside store pick-up.
 - Some state parks will have a phased reopening, and groups of no more than two people will be allowed to go fishing or boating. Golf will also be permitted under strict conditions.
 - Animal grooming, greenhouses, garden centers and nurseries are now considered essential businesses. The businesses may open if the stores are following social distancing. Employees and customers must wear face coverings.
- **Californians** who saw their federal stimulus checks vanish after being garnished by banks will get that money after all.
 - Gov. Gavin Newsom signed an executive order today that retroactively denies banks the ability to collect debts from CARES Act payments. The order is effective immediately.
 - For those people who had money taken, Newsom told banks, "You gotta give 'em back."
 - The governor noted one major caveat in the debt relief; it does not apply to child support or spousal support. Any deductions for that will remain in force.
- **South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster** said that when it comes to reopening, "we want to go as quickly as we can, as safely as we can to restore our economic vigor while also restoring our economic health."
 - At the first meeting of [accelerateSC](#) — the advisory team created to revitalize South Carolina's economy — McMaster said "the last thing any of us want is to have a relapse...it's probably going to happen some places, but we do not want that to happen here."
 - The governor said his state has approached reopening "a little bit differently" from other states, with a "lighter touch."
 - While other states designated businesses as essential or nonessential, South Carolina looked at what activities posed the greatest risk and focused on minimizing those activities.
- **South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem** said she is anticipating "substantial decreases" to state sales tax revenue and says the federal relief funds that have been allocated to her state come with too many conditions to be of use.
 - "Congress did send South Dakota \$1.25 billion to us, but they tied our hands on how we can spend it," Noem said today at a news conference.
 - But, she explained that "the only way I can spend this money is on Covid relief."

- Noem wants to be able to use the money "to replace revenue loss."
- The governor asserted that Congress wants her to "go out and create a bunch of new government programs" with the relief fund.
- **California** is pulling back on issuing permits for events and activities, including protests, at all state facilities, California Highway Patrol Officer John Ortega told CNN.
 - California Highway Patrol manages security at state sites and requires organizers to obtain a free permit for a protest to be staged.
- **Dekalb County CEO Michael Thurmond** issued an executive order Thursday that urges residents and businesses to take additional steps beyond [Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp's mandates as the state reopens](#). The executive order...
 - Recommends all citizens wear face masks in public
 - Advises businesses to follow a list of precautions that includes implementing front-line pay and expanding leave policies
 - Encourages houses of worship to continue providing remote services
- **Rhode Island schools** will extend distance learning for the rest of the school year, Gov. Gina Raimondo announced. She said she made the decision in accordance to the data and with the consultation of state public health officials.
 - Students' participation rates have been "truly remarkable," Raimondo said during a press conference this afternoon. There has been a more than 90% participation rate across the state since schools switched to distance learning, she said.
- **New Jersey** will test all residents and staff at each of the five state developmental centers for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities next week, Gov. Phil Murphy said at a press conference today,
 - The state will use a saliva-based test created by Rutgers University, Murphy said.
- City officials in **Indianapolis, Indiana**, announced a new initiative on Thursday to expand testing in Marion County for communities disproportionately hit by Covid-19.
 - "Minority residents in our city are suffering a disproportionate share of the worst consequences of Covid-19," Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett said at a virtual briefing with city officials and community leaders.
- Public Beaches in **Sarasota County, Florida**, will reopen on Monday for "essential" recreational activities, according to Nicole Rissler, director of Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources in Sarasota County.
- The beaches in **Bay County, Florida**, are officially back open as of today with limitations during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The beaches reopened just one day after the Bay County Board of Commissioners approved an emergency order allowing recreational use of county beaches during the hours of 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. ET, [according to the ordinance](#).
- **Hawaii's** state tourism agency, typically dedicated to welcoming visitors, is now paying for them to leave.
 - The Hawaii Tourism Authority has set aside \$25,000 for the costs of sending tourists away if they refuse to abide by the state's 14-day quarantine.

International

- **U.K. Health Secretary Matt Hancock** promised to roll out a contact-tracing program and ramp up testing dramatically after weeks of criticism the government was falling behind in two areas seen as vital to stemming the coronavirus.
 - Hancock said Thursday he will make test appointments available to all key workers and their families through a website. The U.K. will also hire 18,000 people to operate the planned tracing program, he added.
 - The health secretary signaled the measures are a necessary step if the government is to avoid a second surge of the virus as it relaxes a nationwide lockdown that's brought the economy to a near-halt.
- The **United Arab Emirates** is donating coronavirus test kits to the US, according to a readout of a call between President Trump and UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed.
 - "The President and the Crown Prince discussed cooperation in the fight against the coronavirus, including the donation of coronavirus test kits from the United Arab Emirates to the United States," the readout from the White House said.
 - Trump also "encouraged the Crown Prince to take steps toward resolving the Gulf rift in order to work together to defeat the virus, minimize its economic impact, and focus on critical regional issues."
- **France** says it will not make a decision on when to lift Covid-19 restrictions on restaurants and cafés until the end of May.
 - "Nothing would be worse than a hasted reopening that would entail new closure later. We prefer to take the time to plan a reopening in the best sanitary conditions possible," French finance minister Bruno Le Maire said.
 - Le Maire added "solidarity" must be shown by landlords toward restaurant owners who are unable to pay their rent, otherwise restaurants will have to declare bankruptcy and they "won't be any money anyway" he added.
- **EU** leaders have agreed to create a fund that could raise at least 1 trillion euros (\$1.1 trillion) to rebuild [regional economies](#) ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic.
 - "This fund shall be of a sufficient magnitude, targeted towards the sectors and geographical parts of Europe most affected, and be dedicated to dealing with this unprecedented crisis," leaders of the 27 EU countries said in a statement after they met via video conference on Thursday.
 - The heads of the EU governments asked officials at the European Commission to come up with detailed proposals "urgently" that will include how the recovery fund will relate to the bloc's budget for 2021-2027, they added.
 - The EU is planning to expand its budget from about 1.2% of GDP to 2% of GDP and then use those additional funds as a guarantee to borrow at low rates from financial markets.
- **Malaysia** has extended its nationwide lockdown order for an additional two weeks, now lasting through May 12, according to state news agency Bernama.
 - The restrictions were set to end on April 28.
- A travel ban preventing millions of **Indonesian Muslims** to travel home from Jakarta came into effect at midnight, on the first day of Ramadan fasting.
 - The travel ban, which will block this migration, includes air, ground, and sea transportation from Jakarta.
- The **Czech government** on Thursday laid out its plans to lift restrictions that had been imposed to curb the spread of coronavirus.

- Starting Monday, some shops, gyms without locker rooms and showers, libraries and outdoor areas in zoos and botanical gardens will be reopened.
- Religious services for a maximum of 15 people will also be allowed.
- From May 11, all shops in shopping malls and those larger than 2,500 square meters (26,900 sq ft) will reopen, as will restaurants, bars and cafes that have outdoor patios.
- Hairdressing salons, barber shops, beauty salons, massage parlors, museums and galleries will also open on May 11.
- From May 25, hotels, theaters, tattoo and piercing parlors will reopen, and weddings "under specific hygienic terms" will be allowed to go ahead, the statement says.

Other

- **Publix** is buying extra food from farmers and donating it to food banks, [NBC reports](#). So far some 150,000 pounds of produce and 43,500 gallons of milk are expected to be donated
- **Automakers** are cautiously coalescing around plans to reopen North American assembly plants next month, following what will be a roughly six-week shutdown for virtually the entire autos industry. **Toyota, Tesla, Hyundai, and Volkswagen** are among the major automakers who have said they intend to restart production in the first week of May. Even if they stick to that schedule, many won't re-open all of their factories at once, and the facilities that do restore output will run assembly lines at slower rates than they did prior to the pandemic.
- A **new sports advocacy group** founded by organizers of events including Ironman triathlons and Spartan Race obstacle competitions are seeking aid from Congress to compensate for the impact that social distancing policies are wracking on their multibillion-dollar industry. The **Endurance Sports Coalition** has been lobbying for the replenishment of a small business loan program designed to help struggling businesses keep workers on their payroll, in addition to underscoring with lawmakers the industry will need further help.
- **United** will require flight attendants to wear cloth face coverings or masks while they're on duty starting April 24, according to an employee memo the airline shared with CNN.
 - United says it's the first major US carrier to adopt the requirement.
 - The airline will not replenish the supply after every flight and rather, it will do so "as needed and as supplies permit," the airline said in the memo.
 - Flight attendants also will have the option to wear their own face coverings or use the ones United provides.
 - United noted that the requirement "is in line" with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations that people wear cloth face coverings in public when social distancing isn't possible.
- **A major union of flight attendants** wants federal officials to discourage or even prohibit leisure air travel due to the coronavirus pandemic.
 - The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA on Thursday urged the US departments of Transportation and Health and Human Services "to take further action to limit the spread of the virus by restricting air travel to only that necessary to continue essential services."
 - The letter also asked the agencies to require all travelers in airports and on airplanes wear face masks to reduce the likelihood of transmitting coronavirus.
 - The Department of Transportation and Department of Health and Human Services did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Thursday afternoon.

- **Tyson Foods** will be closing their plant in Shelbyville, Tennessee, for a deep cleaning and sanitation, according to a company spokesperson.
 - In a news conference yesterday, Tennessee Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Lisa Piercy said the state was aware of coronavirus cases at the Tyson Foods Shelbyville plant, but neither the state nor company has released the number of positive cases associated with the facility.
- **Public health laboratories** throughout the United States and its territories are still unable to meet the demand for Covid-19 testing, the Association of Public Health Laboratories says.
 - “Although the overall amount of tests performed has expanded, the testing environment continues to be resource constrained and supply shortages persist,” Kelly Wroblewski, APHL director of infectious disease, told reporters Thursday.
 - Wroblewski said public health labs are still reporting shortages, including, for example, only having two days' worth of the items needed to continue testing, such as swabs and or chemical reagents — the compounds needed to get a sample off a swab and into a form that can be processed and tested.
 - “In many parts of the country we're still not in a place to meet the demand, particularly if that demand expands significantly. Some things have improved but others have not,” Wroblewski said.
- **Zoom** will begin rolling out a [long-awaited security update](#) this weekend to deal with widespread complaints of video-conferencing interruptions and other potential meeting vulnerabilities, the company said Wednesday.
- **Tyson Fresh Meats** announced the company will temporarily stop production at a beef processing facility in Washington state.
 - The plant has been linked to 91 cases of Covid-19, according to the Walla Walla county health department.
 - “Health officials in Walla Walla, Benton, and Franklin Counties will work with the company to test its more than 1,400 team members for Covid-19 as soon as possible,” Tyson said in a statement.
- The maker of **Lysol** issued a [statement](#) Friday clarifying that under no circumstances should its products be administered into the human body, after US President Donald Trump suggested the possibility of injecting disinfectants to treat the coronavirus.
 - Manufacturer Reckitt Benckiser said that the range of disinfectants and cleaners must not enter the body “through injection, ingestion or any other route.”
 - “We have a responsibility in providing consumers with access to accurate, up-to-date information as advised by leading public health experts,” the company said.
 - The statement followed [remarks](#) from President Trump on Thursday on the use of disinfectants.
 - “And then I see the disinfectant where it knocks it out in one minute. Is there a way we can do something like that by injection inside or almost a cleaning ... it would be interesting to check that,” Trump said. “It sounds interesting to me,” he added.
- **Amtrak's ridership** has all but disappeared because of the coronavirus, dashing the company's hopes of breaking even on an operating basis for the first time in its nearly 40-year history, the railroad's chairman said Thursday.
 - Ridership is down about 95%, and the passenger railroad stands to lose more than \$700 million on an adjusted operating basis, or possibly more, in the current fiscal year,

Chairman Tony Coscia told reporters. The metric is Amtrak's preferred method of evaluating operations, and excludes depreciation and other expenses.

- **Ruth's Chris** owner says the company will be repaying \$20 million in funds it received through the federal small business coronavirus loan program, [CNBC reports](#).