

COVID-19

NEWS UPDATES 03/18/20

Senate approves multi-billion dollar coronavirus aid package

Source: Politico

Publication: 3/18/20, 4:12 PM

The Senate passed a multi-billion dollar emergency aid package to help Americans suffering from the economic impacts of the coronavirus. The package, which the House had already approved, now heads to President Donald Trump's desk. The Senate will now begin negotiating on a third, much larger stimulus package that could inject \$1 trillion into the economy. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has said the Senate will not leave Washington until it finishes the deal.

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Trump to invoke Defense Protection Act to expand production of hospital masks and more

Source: CNN

Publication: 3/18/20, 2:27 PM

President Donald Trump said during Wednesday's White House press briefing that he will be invoking the Defense Production Act to help make up for potential medical supply shortages and deploy two hospital ships as the US battles [the coronavirus pandemic](#).

Trump said that he sees the country on wartime footing and himself as a wartime president amid the coronavirus crisis. "I view it -- in a sense as a wartime president," Trump said after announcing he was invoking the Defense Production Act, which was established in 1950 in response to production needs during the Korean War. The Federal Emergency Management Agency describes the act as "the primary source of presidential authorities to expedite and expand the supply of resources from the US industrial base to support military, energy, space and homeland security programs."

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Senate GOP expects to vote on third coronavirus package next week

Source: The Hill

Publication: 3/18/20, 1:51 PM

Senate Republicans say they expect to vote next week on the third coronavirus funding package as they race to negotiate and draft the bill. Talk of voting on "phase three" comes before the Senate has even passed the second coronavirus package, which is expected to clear the chamber later Wednesday. "I do think the vote will be next week on phase three," Sen. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) told reporters.

Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), an adviser to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), said he expected senators would work through the weekend so they could be ready to vote “early next week.” The quick timeline comes as the task forces set up by McConnell to craft the bill are expected to turn over their work by Thursday, a first step to an eventual vote.

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HUD, Fannie, Freddie suspends foreclosures, evictions during outbreak

Source: Politico

Publication: 3/18/20, 4:03 PM

President Donald Trump said Wednesday the Department of Housing and Urban Development will suspend foreclosures and evictions for mortgages insured by the Federal Housing Administration until the end of April, a move that will affect about 8.1 million mortgages.

The Federal Housing Finance Agency also ordered Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the companies behind about half of the nation’s \$11 trillion mortgage market, to suspend foreclosures and evictions for any single-family mortgages they back for “at least 60 days,” the agency said.

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General Resources

[The President’s Coronavirus Guidelines for America - 15 Days to Slow the Spread](#)

[Updates on Federal Agencies’ Responses to COVID-19](#)

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