



FROM:	Bose Public Affairs Group
DATE:	May 22, 2020
RE:	Weekly COVID-19 Update

BIG PICTURE

The number of confirmed coronavirus infections continued to increase worldwide with more than 5.15 million confirmed cases. The case load in the United States far surpasses that of any other country, with more than 1.58 million. Over the last week, the global death toll increased by slightly more than 30,000 bringing the total to more than 335,000. The U.S. death toll includes 8,500 additional deaths from last week's total to now 94,500.

[Here is where all 50 states stand on reopening](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Forecasts](#)

[List of federal agency resources in response to COVID-19](#)

[Institutional and Agency Guidance Specific to Federal Award Impact on COVID-19](#)

[COVID-19 School Closure Map](#)

ADMINISTRATION

[CDC Publishes New Guidelines for Reopening Schools and Businesses](#)

On Thursday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published [detailed guidelines](#) for reopening schools and businesses that have been shut down due to the coronavirus pandemic. The 60-page document is the most extensive guidance released by the CDC, and it includes specific guidance for reopening child care centers, schools, businesses, restaurants, and public transit.



President Issues New Executive Order on Regulatory Relief

On Tuesday, President Donald Trump issued [a new executive order](#) directing federal agencies to implement additional regulatory relief as a response to the pandemic. The Order comprises five specific directives to executive branch departments, executive agencies, and independent agencies. The Order mandates that agencies “use, to the fullest extent possible and consistent with applicable law” their emergency authorities “to support the economic response to the COVID-19 outbreak.” The Order also requires agencies to “identify regulatory standards that may inhibit economic recovery” and instructs agencies to provide regulated entities with technical assistance regarding relaxed enforcement on regulations. Finally, the order requires agencies to review any temporary regulatory or enforcement measures adopted in response to COVID-19 and “determine which, if any, would promote economic recover if made permanent.”

USDA Announces \$1 Billion in Rural Business Loans

On Thursday, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the availability of \$1 billion in loan guarantees to provide a backstop to rural businesses and eligible farmers who have felt significant economic impacts as a result of the pandemic. Loans will also be made available to farmers who don't qualify for standard Farm Service Agency Loans. [In a statement](#), U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, said the USDA will provide 90 percent guarantees and extend the maximum term for working capital loans to 10 years. The money must be used by businesses to “prevent, prepare for or respond to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic.”

CONGRESS

Phase 4 Package

While House Democrats last Friday passed the HEROES Act, their \$3 trillion stimulus relief proposal, Senate Republicans have stood firm on their stance not to advance another relief package quickly. The Senate was in session the last two weeks to consider a handful of nominations but no action was taken on any additional relief legislation before they departed for the Memorial Day recess on Thursday afternoon. However, deep cuts in state revenue along with the need for additional funds for the Paycheck Protection Program, which will likely be exhausted in late May or June, is already putting pressure on lawmakers to take up legislation, particularly vulnerable Republicans in battleground elections this cycle. Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO), who is locked in a close race to keep his seat, threatened to block the chamber from leaving for their Memorial Day recess until Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) agreed to look more closely at a relief package.



Remote voting formally authorized

On Wednesday, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) formally [authorized](#) a rule change implementing the remote voting rules the chamber adopted last Friday, allowing proxy voting on the floor in upcoming debates and permitting House committees to hold remote hearings and markups.

Small Business Relief Program Changes

House leaders have agreed to hold a vote next week on a bipartisan [legislation](#) intended to ease restrictions on how businesses can use aid from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and still have their loans forgiven. The bill comes amid growing concern in both parties that the program is impractical for many employers. "In this case we were hearing the exact same thing from all of the small businesses in our districts," Representative Dean Phillips (D-MN) said about working with Representative Chip Roy (R-TX) to draft the bill.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of Senators on Thursday introduced the [Paycheck Protection Program Extension Act](#), which proposes extending the application deadline to apply for a PPP loan from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2020. The bill also proposes doubling the time borrowers can use their loan funds from 8 to 16 weeks and allows borrowers to use loan funds to purchase personal protective equipment. The bill is sponsored by Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Ben Cardin (D-MD), the chair and ranking member of the Senate Small Business Committee.

CARES Act Report to Congress

On Tuesday, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs held a [hearing](#) titled: "The Quarterly CARES Act Report to Congress," featuring testimony from Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell. Secretary Mnuchin stated that that all Federal Reserve facilities funded by the CARES Act should be operational by the end of the month. However, debate surrounding the need for additional federal COVID-19 aid intensified and produced a notable split along party lines, particularly around the implementation of the CARES Act. Democrats objected to the Treasury Department's perceived favoritism towards corporations and Wall Street; delays in the establishment of lending facilities like the Main Street Lending Program and Municipal Liquidity Facility; and Republican resistance toward further federal funding for state and local governments. While recognizing the need to swiftly implement CARES Act facilities, Republicans largely celebrated Treasury's work amidst the pandemic. Republicans objected to the speed of negotiations and Democrats' proposals for increased spending. Lastly, both Republicans and Democrats attempted to contextualize Powell's recent comments during a speech at the Peterson Institute. Democrats interpreted Powell's comments as favoring increased government action, while Republicans cited the speech as evidence for further review of heightened spending.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

The U.S. economy once again faced bad news related to the number of Americans out of work. The Department of Labor reported on Thursday that nearly 40 million Americans have filed for unemployment benefits over the past 9 weeks, with nearly 2.4 million people filing for unemployment benefits last week alone. Weekly filings have slightly decreased over the past few weeks, but the overall outlook remains daunting.

Stock Market This Week

On Wall Street, the stock market finished up over the 5 day trading period with all three indexes increasing close to 3%. However, stocks began slipping on Friday when tensions between the United States and China began to worry investors with disputes over trade and potential sanctions resulting from the pandemic.

IRS Boost Capacity to Distribute Economic Impact Payments

The IRS on Wednesday began adding 3,500 phone operators to field calls on economic stimulus payments, though the agency cautioned the assistance will “remain limited.” Read more [here](#). Also this week, Treasury and the IRS announced they are starting to send nearly 4 million Economic Impact Payments (EIPs) by prepaid debit card, instead of by paper check.

HEALTH CARE

Moderna Details Progress in Trials

Moderna on Monday [announced](#) positive results stemming from a Phase 1 vaccine trial that produced immune responses indicative of a potential to prevent infection of COVID-19. “The Moderna team continues to focus on moving as fast as safely possible to start our pivotal Phase 3 study in July and, if successful, file a biologics license application,” Chief Executive Stephane Bancel said. Moderna is one of eight developers worldwide doing human clinical trials with a vaccine against the coronavirus, according to [the World Health Organization](#).

Apple and Google Release Tracing Technology to Help Track Virus

On Wednesday, Apple and Google released technology as part of their joint venture to help public health authorities detect the spread of coronavirus infections. The release includes a common code that software developers can use to create so-called contact-tracing apps for state and national governments that employ Bluetooth and other features on people's iPhones and Android smartphones. But since public health agencies must build the apps, there could be a delay before they're available for download. The technology was developed in consultation with public health experts, who underscore the importance of contact tracing to slowing the illness' spread and allowing the economy to reopen safely. However, doubts are already emerging about the effectiveness of the Google-Apple initiative, in part because the



companies are imposing privacy restrictions on the types of information that health agencies can collect.

CONCLUSION

The Bose Public Affairs Group team will continue to monitor all relevant developments over the weekend and will be providing ongoing updates as they develop.

