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Image

The Senate's Coronavirus Bill and Responding to COVID-19 Resources

March 20, 2020

*Congress and the Administration continue to take action to fight the coronavirus as American society grinds to a stand still. The Federal Government must work to **keep employees tied to their employers** and providing temporary and targeted relief.*

Congress Should:

1. Congress's response to the economic consequences of the coronavirus should be targeted, temporary, and directed at public health efforts while limiting political abuse
2. While the CARES Act includes positive reforms, providing \$200 billion in bailouts to select industries fails to meet these targeted and temporary objectives.
3. The Senate must significantly reform these special benefits to limit abuse, reduce the need for bailouts, and get aid directly to affected workers.

The Senate's Coronavirus Bill: Bailouts, Missed Opportunities, and Positive Reforms *New Report!*

By Lindsey Burke, PhD, David R. Burton, Marie Fishpaw, Rachel Greszler, Adam Michel, Norbert J. Michel, PhD, Parker Sheppard, PhD, and Paul Winfree

Any action that Congress takes should be targeted, temporary, and linked directly to the coronavirus epidemic in order to address the source of the economic shock while limiting any political abuse that can develop in a moment of crisis. Unfortunately, the Senate's coronavirus bill, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act misses this mark by including special benefits to specific industries that will exceed \$200 billion. We have specified a number of proposals in other papers that would do more to help workers continue to receive paychecks while mitigating the economic effects associated with the coronavirus pandemic. Congress must resist the urge to provide special benefits to select industries and give the robust fiscal and monetary policy response that has already been enacted time to work.

New State Department Warning Shows Travel Restrictions Key to Curbing Coronavirus

By: Lora Reis, Senior Research Fellow and Peter Brookes, Senior Research Fellow

As the State Department warns Americans not to travel internationally and advises all Americans abroad to return home or prepare to shelter in place, the U.S. continues to expand travel restrictions as a key component in the fight against the coronavirus. That advisory Thursday afternoon from the State Department comes a day after the joint announcement by the United States and Canada that our common border is closed temporarily. Flattening the coronavirus infection curve, or reducing the numbers, through social distancing, good public hygiene, and well-considered travel restrictions provides real potential benefits.

In Combating Coronavirus, Trump and Governors Act Constitutionally

By: John Malcom, Vice President, Institute for Constitutional Government

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Fox News contributor Andrew Napolitano, a former judge, recently penned an article with the provocative title “Coronavirus fear lets government assault our freedom in violation of Constitution.” Although Napolitano is right to be concerned, President Donald Trump and other federal, state, and local officials appear to be acting within the bounds of the Constitution in responding to the severe threat posed by spread of the new coronavirus disease, which health officials call COVID-19. Napolitano first quotes from the Supreme Court’s 1866 opinion in *Ex parte Milligan* (“The Constitution of the United States is a law for rulers and people, equally in war and in peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times and under all circumstances.”).

Curricula Resource Initiative *New Resource!*

By: The Center for Education Policy

These resources include school models, curricula, essays, research, and products that emphasize moral education, civics, character development, and classical content, reflecting the importance of these foundational areas to student development.

China’s Anti-U.S. Coronavirus Propaganda Ridiculous—So What’s Behind Beijing’s Lies?

By: James Carafano, Vice President, Davis Institute

For quite some time, China has been trying to undercut the foundation of American global power. Unlike Moscow’s often coarse, brutish efforts, Beijing has been stealthier than an F-35, using public diplomacy initiatives to subtly buy its way into schools, civil society and the private sector. Now, however, the mask and the gloves are coming off. In the last few days, the Chinese Communist Party has changed its propaganda tactics. Party officials, government representatives and state media are now overtly attacking the U.S., spreading deliberate lies about the COVID-19 outbreak.

Calculating the Coronavirus Mortality Rate? It’s Complicated

By: Thomas Spoehr, Director Center for National Defense

We all like our facts simple. One of the data points that many want to know is the mortality rate for the COVID-19 illness so they can make informed risk decisions. Unfortunately, like so many other things in life, it’s complicated. Even though it seems like the novel coronavirus that causes the disease health officials call COVID-19 has now been around for a while, it has only just arrived on the scene. Thus, scientists are only now starting to gain some early insights.

Costly New Sick Leave Mandate Would Hurt Businesses

By: Rachel Greszler, Research Fellow in Economics, Budget and Entitlements

Government mandates often have unintended consequences. Take mandating paid sick leave in response to the coronavirus. Even if it’s temporary, it could further damage businesses harmed by the virus—and hurt the very workers it’s meant to help. The vast majority—86% of full-time workers—already have access to paid sick leave. The rest primarily work for small employers or are part-time or hourly workers. Unfortunately, it’s small employers and workers who don’t yet have sick leave who could be most hurt by a federal mandate, and who wouldn’t be helped by federally funded sick leave.

What the Defense Production Act Is and How Can It Can Help the Government Fight COVID-19

By: Charles "Cully" Stimson, Senior Legal Fellow

We have been critical of such overuse of the Defense Production Act. But under the current circumstances, we think the administration and Congress need to use all lawful tools, including federal statutes as properly understood, to defeat the coronavirus and help America get back on her feet.

"Panic in the Streets": Life Imitates Art With Coronavirus

By: Hans Von Spokovsky, Election Law Reform Initiative and Senior Legal Fellow

In 1950, the great Hollywood director Elia Kazan produced a movie, “Panic in the Streets,” about a desperate attempt to stop a pandemic (pneumonic plague, the pulmonary version of the bubonic plague, or “Black Death”) from spreading out of New Orleans and across the United States. What’s

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most interesting about that film is contrasting how the government deals with the problem in the movie versus how the government is dealing with the reality we face today.

Trump's Coronavirus National Emergency Declaration Helps Mobilize Nation

By: Kay Coles James, President of The Heritage Foundation

In many parts of our country, schools are shutting down for weeks. Businesses are sending their employees home to telework when possible. Churches and synagogues are closing their doors. Professional sports events have been canceled. More than 30 governors have declared states of emergency.

There are some who view this response to the coronavirus as an overreaction. After all, millions of Americans get the seasonal flu every year and we don't take these measures. But this isn't an overreaction. On the contrary, this is a commonsense, measured response to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus.

The Golden Age of Telehealth Is Here (Thanks to the Coronavirus)

By: Marie Fishpaw, Director, Domestic Policy Studies

The coronavirus pandemic has renewed interest in telehealth—the practice of letting patients consult with doctors directly, via phone or video-conferencing. This method of health care delivery offers obvious advantages, allowing patients to get personal medical advice quickly, without having to come to the doctor's office first. President Trump reiterated his commitment to clearing away barriers inhibiting the use of telehealth. And lawmakers have already moved to clear some away. But they can and should do more.

"Flattening the Curve" Critical to Fighting Coronavirus

By: Peter Brookes, Senior Research Fellow

Come commentators have ominously suggested that the United States is just a few days—maybe a week to 10 days—behind the crippling coronavirus crisis that is hammering Europe, especially Italy. If true, that's troubling. That said, however, taking personal responsibility for doing the right thing with public hygiene and the new (to most of us) concept of social distancing to flatten the possible infection curve could mean the difference between success and failure in fighting the virus here in this country.

Coronavirus Testing Delays Show Why Federal Health Care Rules Need Thorough Review

By: Robert Moffit, Senior Research Fellow at The Heritage Foundation

The coronavirus pandemic demonstrates with crystal clarity how the federal government's vast regulatory apparatus governing health care can be an obstacle to rapid response in a national emergency. We've seen this movie before.

The law of unintended consequences is an ironclad rule of public policy, and in health policy, that law can go berserk. The normal concerns that preoccupy economists and political scientists, wrestling with the day-to-day concerns about health care costs and access in government programs and insurance markets, pale in comparison with urgent matters of public health and safety.



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