



## DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

December 17, 2020

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

Last evening, Congressional leaders continued to make progress on a broad outline of a \$900 billion COVID-relief package, but several items remain unresolved. House leaders delayed tentative plans for a floor vote today on an omnibus spending package, and Congress will have to pass a continuing resolution (CR) to give negotiators more time to reach a stimulus deal before funding expires tomorrow. Preliminary reports suggest it could be a five-day CR to December 23.

Specifically, there are **continued disagreements** over stimulus check eligibility, health care funding, disaster relief money, and terminating the Federal Reserve's emergency lending programs. Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) are reportedly pushing for \$30 billion for governors to spend on health-care related concerns and a \$1 billion fund for FEMA to use on COVID-related emergencies. Republicans have pushed back on both of these efforts, which have contributed to the delay in reaching an agreement.

### LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

[Drug Shortage and Medical Supply Chain Tracker](#)

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

[Lame Duck Preview Memo](#)

[President Trump EO Tracker](#)

[COVID-19 Legislative Outlook](#)

[State Responses to EO on Unemployment Insurance](#)

[Healthcare Chart on COVID Legislation](#)

[Liability Reform State of Play](#)

[CARES Act State Funding](#)

Today, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) [stated](#) a “bipartisan, bicameral agreement appears to be close at hand.” However, Leader McConnell noted the negotiators have “yet to nail down every detail” and the Senate will “stay right here until we are finished.” Additionally, Leader McConnell asserted that if Congress has to further extend the government funding deadline it will only be lengthened for a “very, very short window of time.” Minority Leader Schumer [echoed](#) McConnell’s remarks, stating the Senate “will not leave until we get the job done.”

White House spokesman Ben Williamson [commented](#) on the progress of negotiations, stating “conversations with Capitol Hill leaders are ongoing” and the White House is “optimistic” there will be an agreement within the next 24 to 48 hours.

Notably, a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [advisory committee voted](#) to recommend emergency use authorization of Moderna’s COVID-19 vaccine.

[State and Local Funding Bills](#)

[COVID Legislative Tracker](#)

[Global COVID-19 Export Controls](#)

[Memo - Federal Reserve COVID-19 Announcements](#)

[Federal Reserve Lending Facilities Deck](#)

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## ECONOMIC UPDATE

### *Congressional*

#### HOUSE

- House Financial Services Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) [gave a statement](#) on the urgent need to pass coronavirus stimulus legislation.

#### SENATE

- Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) [tweeted](#) he will go to the floor on Friday to ask for a vote on his proposal to provide a second round of \$1,200 stimulus checks.

### *Administration*

#### FEDERAL RESERVE

- Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell [praised the progress](#) lawmakers have made towards another COVID relief bill.

### Articles of Interest

- 12/17 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“U.S. Unemployment Claims Remain Elevated as Recovery Slows.”](#)
- 12/17 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“Fed Reinforces Plans to Provide Open-Ended Stimulus to Spur Recovery.”](#)

- 12/16 Politico published an article titled, [“It is madness’: Governors rage over stimulus snub.”](#)

## **PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE**

### ***Congressional***

#### **HOUSE**

- Rep. Clyburn (D-SC), Chairman of the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis, sent a [memo](#) to Members citing new documents obtained in the investigation of political interference by senior appointees in the work of career officials at the CDC.
- Democratic Members of the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis sent a [letter](#) to HHS Secretary Azar and Acting Defense Secretary Miller seeking information on vaccine acquisition and distribution efforts.

#### **SENATE**

- Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) released a [statement](#) applauding FDA’s approval of a new over-the-counter, at-home diagnostic COVID-19 test.

### ***Administration***

#### **CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

- CDC issued a [press release](#) titled, “Understanding mRNA COVID Vaccines.”

#### **FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**

- FDA issued a new Emergency Use Authorization ([EUA](#)) for the BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Home Test for at-home use with a prescription.

#### **NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

- NIH announced the [launch](#) of an observational study to evaluate the short- and long-term health outcomes of SARS-CoV-2 infection in children, including multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C), and to characterize the immunologic pathways associated with different disease presentations and outcomes.

### **Articles of Interest**

- 12/15 NPR published an article titled, [“Biden, Pence Make Preparations To Get COVID-19 Vaccine.”](#)
- 12/16 The New York Times published an article titled, [“How Effective Is the Mask You’re Wearing? You May Know Soon.”](#)
- 12/16 Washington Post published an article titled, [“Record numbers of covid-19 patients push hospitals and staffs to the limit.”](#)
- 12/16 Politico published an article titled, [“FDA says Pfizer vaccine vials hold extra doses, expanding supply.”](#)
- 12/17 AP News published an article titled, [“Health officials track safety as COVID-19 vaccines roll out.”](#)