



DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

March 1, 2021

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

On Saturday, the House voted 219-212 to pass H.R. 1319, the American Rescue Act of 2021. Two Democrats, Kurt Schrader (D-OR) and Jared Golden (D-ME) joined Republicans in voting 'no.' The legislation includes \$400 in boosted unemployment benefits, \$1,400 in direct stimulus payments for Americans earning less than \$75,000/year, funding for schools, funding for state and local governments, and funding for vaccine distribution. It also includes a provision to gradually phase in a minimum wage increase to \$15/hour by 2025, despite the Senate parliamentary ruling last week that it violates budget reconciliation rules and is therefore prohibited from being included in the bill.

The \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package will now be taken up by the Senate, where it is expected to undergo changes. In opening floor remarks today, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) stated the chamber will take up the stimulus bill this week. President Joe Biden has urged the Senate to act quickly, stating "we have no time to waste."

LATEST STATISTICS

96,402,490 COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed in the U.S and **50,732,997** Americans have received the first dose.

There are a total of **114,348,882** confirmed cases worldwide, 2,536,053 deaths and 64,530,081 people have recovered.

There are **28,647,136** confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. and 514,192 deaths.

LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

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

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

Also, over the weekend, the FDA issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for [Johnson & Johnson's single-dose coronavirus vaccine](#) and the CDC voted to endorse use of the vaccine in adults 18 years of age and older. Last night, Johnson & Johnson shipped 3.9 million doses, which will be available to states by Tuesday in quantities proportional to their populations. An additional 16 million doses are expected to become available by the end of March, with 100 million total by the end of June.

On NBC's 'Meet the Press,' NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci [urged](#) Americans to "get vaccinated as quickly and expeditiously as possible" and take whatever shot is available when they become eligible rather than waiting to get their preferred vaccine of the three that are now approved.

Since our last update, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Department of Labor have released guidance related to the coronavirus pandemic. Please see below for more details.

We have updated our Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker. It is linked under Latest PMJ Resources.

[President Biden EO Tracker](#)

[Lame Duck Preview Memo](#)

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- House Financial Services Chairwoman Maxine Waters' (D-CA) [floor statement](#) in support of the American Rescue Plan.
- Rep. Jim Hagedorn (R-MN) [introduced](#) the bipartisan *PPP Flexibility for Farmers and Ranchers Act*.

SENATE

- Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden's (D-OR) [statement](#) on minimum wage "plan B."

Administration

TREASURY

- Secretary Janet Yellen [tweeted support](#) after the passage of the American Rescue Plan.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU (CFPB)

- The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) [issued a report](#) that warns of widespread evictions and foreclosures once federal, state, and local pandemic protections terminate and absent additional public and private action.

Articles of Interest

- 3/1 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“Senate moves ahead with Covid-19 aid package without minimum-wage boost.”](#)
- 2/28 The Washington Post published an article titled, [“Senior Democrats abandon backup plan on \\$15 minimum wage.”](#)
- 2/27 Politico published an article titled, [“The GOP’s anti-stimulus rallying cry: What happened to the unspent \\$1 trillion?”](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- On Saturday, Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) penned a [Dear Colleague letter](#) on the passage of the American Rescue Plan.
- On Saturday, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) released a [statement](#) in support of the American Rescue Plan.
- On Friday, Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) delivered [remarks](#) on the House floor in support of the American Rescue Plan.

SENATE

- On Saturday, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) released a [statement](#) regarding House passage of the American Rescue Plan.

Administration

THE WHITE HOUSE

- The White House issued a transcript of today's [press briefing](#) by the COVID-19 response team and public health officials.
- The White House issued a transcript of President Joe Biden's [statement](#) on the emergency use authorization (EUA) of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine.
- The White House issued a transcript of President Joe Biden's [remarks](#) following the passage of the American Rescue Plan by the House.

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

- CMS, the Department of Labor and the Treasury Department issued new [guidance](#) on Friday that removes barriers to COVID-19 diagnostic testing and strengthening requirements for group health plans and issuers to cover COVID-19 tests without cost sharing.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

- A research team funded by NIH launched a study to assess performance and usability of a smartphone app paired with the Quidel QuickVue [At-Home](#)

COVID-19 Test. The COVID-19 diagnostic kit recently received from the FDA for use without a prescription.

- NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins, NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci, and BARDA Director Dr. Gary Disbrow released **statements** following FDA's emergency use authorization of Johnson & Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

- CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky released a **statement** after signing the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) endorsement to utilize Johnson's COVID-19 vaccine in adults ages 18 and older.

Articles of Interest

- 2/26 CNBC published an article titled, **"CDC scientist says the U.S. is 'nowhere close' to herd immunity."**
 - 2/26 Bloomberg Law published an article titled, **"CDC Panel to Weigh Single Vaccine Doses for People Who Had COVID."**
 - 2/27 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, **"The U.S. Has a National Help Line for Pandemics but Isn't Using It for COVID-19."**
 - 3/1 NPR published an article titled, **"Coronavirus World Map: We've Now Passed The 100 Million Mark For Infections."**
 - 3/1 ABC News published an article titled, **"US begins rollout of Johnson & Johnson coronavirus vaccine."**
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LABOR UPDATE

Administration

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

- DOL issued **guidance** to state unemployment insurance agencies, expanding the number of instances in which workers may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.