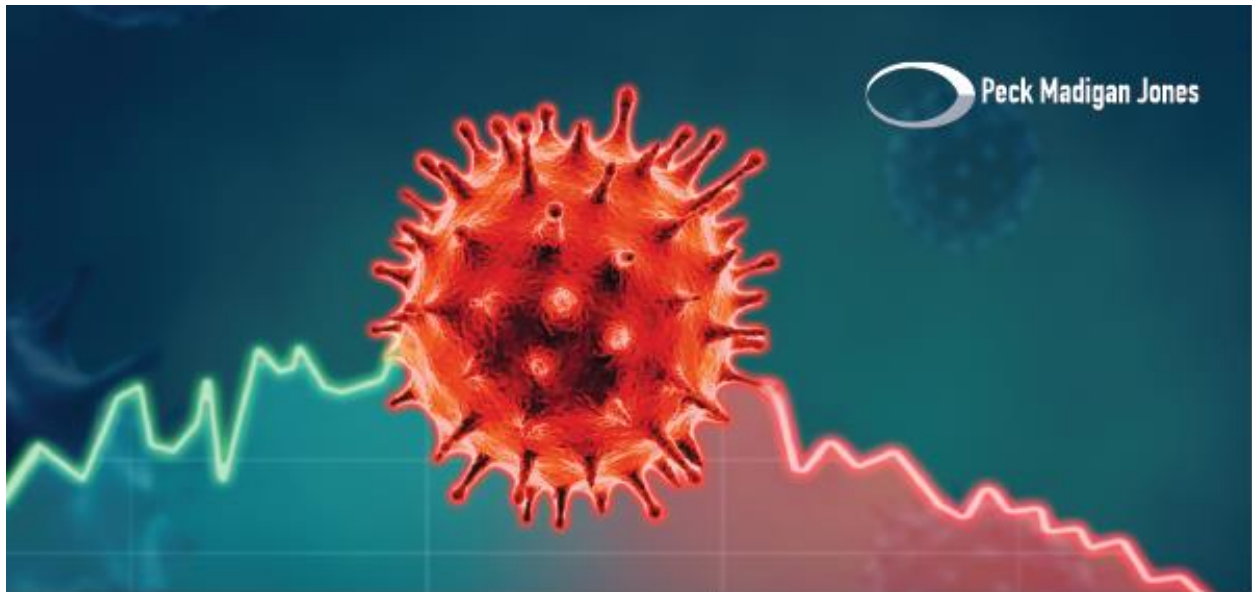




DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

March 2, 2021

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

Today, in opening floor remarks, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) indicated the Senate could begin working on the American Rescue Plan "as early as tomorrow." He added he expects a "hardy debate and some late nights," but hopes to bring the bill to the floor for a vote this week.

Some moderate Senate Democrats have raised issues regarding the bill's \$400 boosted unemployment benefits and stimulus checks. Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) [argued](#) previous coronavirus relief legislation included an extra \$300 in unemployment insurance so "it's kind of hard to explain" an increase when most businesses should be able to reopen by summer. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) added that while he does not agree with moderate Democrats on decreasing enhanced unemployment benefits, he noted that more narrow targeting of the bill's stimulus checks "is being discussed."

Yesterday, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) [urged](#) his Democratic colleagues to "ignore" the parliamentarian's ruling that inclusion of a provision to

LATEST STATISTICS

[102,353,940](#) COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed in the U.S and [51,755,447](#) Americans have received the first dose.

There are a total of [114,697,519](#) confirmed cases worldwide, 2,544,655 deaths and 64,775,128 people have recovered.

There are [28,704,758](#) confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. and 515,985 deaths.

LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

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

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2025 violates budget reconciliation rules. He joined 23 House progressives in calling on President Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris to force a vote to overrule the parliamentarian or end the filibuster. However, there does not appear to be enough support among Democrats for that change as of now. Additionally, Senate Majority Whip Durbin and the White House have pushed back against the idea of a vote to overrule the parliamentarian.

Notably, Merck announced that it will assist competitor Johnson & Johnson in the production of its COVID-19 vaccine. This [partnership](#) will help address production issues faced by Johnson & Johnson and expand the supply of the single-dose vaccine.

Additionally, as more states are easing COVID-19 restrictions, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky warned that "now is not the time" to be "rolling back public health measures." She indicated that variants are spreading, and cases and deaths are holding steady at 70,000 and 2,000 per day, respectively.

[President Biden EO Tracker](#)

[Lame Duck Preview Memo](#)

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- House Financial Services Committee Chairwoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) [lauded Treasury's effort](#) to help vulnerable countries fight the COVID-19 pandemic through a new allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- House Ways and Means Republicans issued a press released titled, ["Dems' \\$1.9 Trillion Bill Could Raise Borrowing Costs for Government and Consumers."](#)

SENATE

- Senate Finance Committee Chair Ron Wyden (D-OR), Senate Budget Committee Chair Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Senate Banking Committee Chair Sherrod Brown (D-OH), along with other Democratic Senators, [sent a letter](#) to President Biden urging him to include recurring direct payments and automatic unemployment insurance extensions to economic conditions in the Build Back Better economic plan.
- Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) [sent a letter](#) to the Federal Reserve, Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC), and Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) urging leadership to reject an extension of lessened capital requirements.

Administration

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS)

- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) [issued guidance](#) for employers claiming the employee retention credit under the CARES Act.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU (CFPB)

- Rohit Chopra, President Biden's pick to head the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), [said he would seek to protect](#) Americans struggling with debt amid the COVID-19 pandemic from potential abuses by lenders.

Articles of Interest

- 3/2 Politico published an article titled, ["Tracking the money: Bid to make business rescue more inclusive undercut by lack of data."](#)
- 3/2 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, ["Senate Democrats iron out details on Covid-19 aid package."](#)
- 3/2 Politico published an article titled, ["Senate Dems wrestle with unemployment benefits in Biden's Covid aid plan."](#)
- 3/1 The Washington Post published an article titled, ["Biden works to unify Senate Democrats on \\$1.9 trillion relief bill."](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- Reps. Patrick McHenry (R-NC) and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) introduced the [American PPE Supply Chain Integrity Act](#) to help end U.S. reliance on Chinese-made personal protective equipment (PPE) and ensure that hospitals and frontline healthcare workers have access to a plentiful supply of high-quality American made PPE.

SENATE

- Sens. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) sent a [letter](#) to White House Coronavirus Task Force Response Coordinator Jeff Zeints regarding the Administration's vaccine strategy that prioritizes first doses.
- Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Reps. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Robin Kelly (D-IL), and Karen Bass (D-CA) reintroduced the Equitable Data Collection and Disclosure on COVID-19 Act. The [legislation](#) would require HHS to collect and report racial and other demographic data on COVID-19 testing, treatment, vaccination, and fatality rates and use all available surveillance systems to post daily updates on the CDC website showing data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex, age, socioeconomic status, disability status, county, and other demographic information.
- Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT) led seven of his Democratic colleagues in a [letter](#) to Leaders Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Mitch McConnell (R-KY) to include targeted funding for the behavioral health needs of our nation's children

through the expansion of the Pediatric Mental Health Care Access (PMHCA) program in the next COVID-19 relief package.

Administration

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

- NIH has launched a new [research effort](#) called the Collaboration to Assess Risk and Identify Long-term Outcomes for Children with COVID (CARING for Children with COVID). This research program seeks to understand how COVID-19, affects children, who account for about 13% of the total U.S. cases. This research program is developing and funding studies to investigate why some children are at greater risk for COVID-19 infection than others, why symptoms vary among children who are infected, and how to identify children at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 infection.
- NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins [penned](#) a blog post titled, "Antibody Response Affects COVID-19 Outcomes in Kids and Adults."

Articles of Interest

- 3/1 The Washington Post published an article titled, ["Fauci: U.S. must stick with two-shot strategy for Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna vaccines."](#)
- 3/1 AP News published an article titled, ["WHO: 'Premature,' 'unrealistic' COVID-19 will end soon."](#)
- 3/1 ABC News published an article titled, ["Please hear me clearly': CDC director urges states not to reopen too soon as cases plateau."](#)
- 3/2 The New York Times published an article titled, ["Virus Variant in Brazil Infected Many Who Had Already Recovered From Covid-19."](#)
- 3/2 The Hill published an article titled, ["Merck to help make Johnson & Johnson vaccine."](#)