



DAILY COVID-19 UPDATE

March 24, 2021

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY

Today, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell appeared before the Senate Banking Committee to give the quarterly CARES Act report to Congress. Chairman Powell lauded the COVID-related fiscal support Congress has appropriated to date, stating the funds "deserve much of the credit for the strength of the recovery."

Additionally, Secretary Yellen faced questions regarding the American Rescue Plan's restrictions on states from using funds from the bill to offset any tax cuts. Secretary Yellen acknowledged that the "fungibility of money" makes it difficult to define which state funding policies will be considered directly or indirectly offsetting a tax cut. She added Treasury will "do our best to offer guidance" on this controversial provision.

In an [interview](#) with the Washington Post, HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra indicated that the federal campaign to vaccinate Americans against COVID-19 will "reach people where they are" as a way to increase health equity. Specifically, the campaign will send vaccinators into underserved communities and

LATEST STATISTICS

169,223,125 COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed in the U.S and **85,472,166** Americans have received the first dose.

There are a total of **124,544,117** confirmed cases worldwide, **2,739,249** deaths and **70,689,935** people have recovered.

There are **29,991,975** confirmed cases of the coronavirus in the U.S. and **544,922** deaths.

LATEST PMJ RESOURCES

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

[Coronavirus State Reopening Tracker](#)

vaccinate individuals at construction sites, farm fields, etc. through the use of mobile clinics and other means.

We have updated our Biden Administration Transition Tracker. It is linked under Latest PMJ Resources.

[Biden Administration Transition Tracker](#)

[President Biden EO Tracker](#)

[Policy Outlook for the Biden Administration and 117th Congress](#)

ECONOMIC UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- House Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-MA), along with other members, [sent a letter](#) to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Charles Rettig urging them to issue stimulus payments as quickly as possible.

SENATE

- Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR), along with 30 other members of Congress, [sent a letter](#) to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh urging the department to use the Unemployment Insurance Technology Modernization Act as a guide for unemployment insurance administration and technology.
- Senate Banking Committee Chairman Sherrod Brown's (D-OH) [opening statement](#) and Ranking Member Pat Toomey's (R-PA) [opening statement](#) at the committee hearing on the quarterly CARES Act report to Congress.

Administration

WHITE HOUSE

- The White House published a blog titled, [“COVID-19 has exacerbated the economic inequality and caregiving crisis facing women of color. Here’s how the American Rescue Plan helps.”](#)

TREASURY

- Secretary Yellen’s [response](#) to state attorneys general inquiries on implementation of Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan.

FEDERAL RESERVE

- Governor Lael Brainard [gave a speech](#) titled, “Remaining Patient as the Outlook Brightens.”

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU (CFPB)

- The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) provided Congress the [Consumer Response Annual Report for 2020](#), which reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the consumer financial marketplace.

Articles of Interest

- 3/24 The Wall Street Journal published an article titled, [“Powell says rise in long-term bond yields reflects economic optimism.”](#)
- 3/24 CNBC published an article titled, [“Yellen supports banks’ share buybacks. Sen. Warren wants BlackRock designated too big to fail.”](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

Congressional

HOUSE

- Reps. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced the Quit Because of COVID-19 Act, [legislation](#) that would expand tobacco cessation coverage to all Medicaid beneficiaries during the COVID-19 public health emergency and beyond.

Administration

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

- Yesterday, President Biden [announced](#) that CMS is extending access to the Special Enrollment Period (SEP) until August 15 – giving consumers an additional three months to enroll or re-evaluate their coverage needs with increased tax credits available in the American Rescue Plan to reduce premiums.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

- The CDC published a [webpage](#) titled, "Ventilation in Buildings," which outlines strategies to control the spread of COVID-19 indoors.

Articles of Interest

- 3/24 CNBC published an article titled, ["CDC warns a ‘growing proportion’ of cases can be attributed to highly contagious variants."](#)
- 3/23 The Hill published an article titled, ["Pfizer is now testing a COVID-19 pill."](#)
- 3/23 NBC News published an article titled, ["‘Brain fog’ and other neurologic symptoms can last for months after Covid."](#)
- 3/22 The Atlantic published an article titled, ["America is Now in the Hands of the Vaccine-Hesitant."](#)
- 3/22 BBC News published an article titled, ["Covid: The countries that nailed it, and what we can learn from them."](#)