

NEW REPORT

# HOW TRUMP'S BOTCHED CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE CREATED AN ECONOMIC DISASTER

AND CAUSED TENS OF THOUSANDS  
TO DIE UNNECESSARILY



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Without Safeguards, Creating More Cases, And Further Hurting

JUNE 2020

**CORONAVIRUS**  
WAR ROOM

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As the coronavirus continues to plague U.S. soil, more than [117,000](#) Americans have lost their lives and 21 million people are out of work. The gravity of this crisis cannot be overstated: though the United States accounts for only 4 percent of the world's population, it has been home to 26 percent of the world's reported coronavirus deaths. The United States' unemployment rate is more than twice as high as the European Union's and nearly four times as high as South Korea's.

Because Trump spent weeks downplaying the threat of the virus and botched his response by failing to adequately test for the virus early in the crisis and refusing to implement social distancing guidance early on, the United States allowed coronavirus to spread extensively, resulting in more than 117,000 deaths and forcing the economy to fully shut down.

## **The United States Is Facing An Unparalleled Economic Crisis And Leads The World In Covid Deaths Because Of Donald Trump's Failed Coronavirus Response**

**The United States Is Officially In Recession According To The National Bureau Of Economic Research.**

- "But if there was any remaining doubt that the U.S. is in a recession, it's now been removed by the official scorekeepers at the National Bureau of Economic Research. The bureau's Business Cycle Dating Committee — the fat lady of economic opera — said the expansion peaked in February after a record 128 months, and we've been sliding into a pandemic-driven recession since. In making the announcement, the committee pointed to the 'unprecedented magnitude of the decline in employment and production, and its broad reach across the entire economy.'" [NPR, [6/8/20](#)]

**An Estimated 100,000 Small Businesses Have Shut Down Since The Beginning Of The Pandemic.**

- "But already, economists project that more than 100,000 small businesses have shut permanently since the pandemic escalated in March, according to a study by researchers at the University of Illinois, Harvard Business School, Harvard University and the University of Chicago. Their latest data suggests at least 2 percent of small businesses are gone, according to a survey conducted May 9 to 11." [Washington Post, [5/12/20](#)]

## **21 Million Americans Remained Unemployed And 30 Million Were Still Collecting Unemployment Benefits By The End Of May.**

- “The federal unemployment rate dropped in May for the first time since the coronavirus sent the economy into a tailspin, the strongest sign yet that the economic damage is bottoming out — although 21 million people remain out of work... Roughly 30 million workers are still collecting unemployment benefits, including 1.9 million people whose initial claims were processed last week, according to government claims data. And many more could lose their jobs as the cascading financial pressure from the coronavirus sinks deeper into the economy.” [Washington Post, [6/5/20](#)]
- “Another 1.5 million people applied for unemployment insurance for the first time last week, adding to the tens of millions who have applied for the benefits since the pandemic began and continuing a months-long downward trend in initial claims. The numbers seeking jobless benefits have remained at historically high levels for 12 weeks, since the coronavirus pandemic took hold in March, disrupting global supply chains and shuttering businesses for months.” [Washington Post, [6/11/20](#)]

## **Experts Suggest The Unemployment Rate Is Even Higher Than Being Reported.**

- “The unemployment rate itself is significantly going to understate the drop in economic activity,’ said Stephanie Aaronson, the director of economic studies at the Brookings Institution. ‘It also is underestimating the amount of distress that Americans are facing right now because it understates how many people have lost jobs.’” [New York Times, [6/5/20](#)]
- “Combining these groups [those ‘marginally attached’ to the workforce, those who want a job regardless of their job hunt status, and those counted as employed but absent from work (likely because of a temporary layoff)] results in a 27 percent expanded unemployment rate that more closely reflects the share of the labor force whose employment has been negatively affected by the pandemic.” [New York Times, [6/5/20](#)]

## **Three Ways Trump Let the Health Crisis Get Out Of Control, Which Led to the Economic Crisis, Nearly 2 Million U.S. Cases And More Than 111,000 Deaths**

### **1. *Trump Failed On Testing: By Failing To Adequately Test, Trump Allowed Coronavirus To Spread Undetected, Take Lives, And Ultimately Force The Economy To Shut Down***

**Harvard Global Health Institute Director Dr. Ashish Jha: “Testing Was The Fundamental Failure That Forced Our Country To Shut Down.”**

- “During the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis hearing on testing, tracing, and targeted containment Dr. Jha said: ‘Every expert on the left, right, and center agrees that we had to shut our economy down because the outbreak got too big because we didn’t have a testing infrastructure that allowed us to put our arms around the outbreak. And so testing was the fundamental failure that forced our country to shut down.’” [Twitter, Coronavirus War Room, [5/13/20](#)]

### **US Has Capacity To Test Less Than Half The 900,000 A Day Experts Say Is Necessary.**

- “Last week, Jha and other Harvard researchers estimated that the United States should be testing at least 900,000 people a day, or about 8 percent of the population per month... A White House estimate, obtained by The Post, shows the nation has sufficient lab capacity to process at least 400,000 tests per day, and potentially many more.” [Washington Post, [5/17/20](#)]



## **Trump Consistently Downplayed the Need For Testing.**

- **May 14, 2020: Trump Falsely Claimed That “If We Didn’t Do Any Testing, We Would Have Very Few Cases.”** “‘And don’t forget, we have more cases than anybody in the world,’ he added. ‘But why? Because we do more testing. When you test, you have a case. When you test, you find something is wrong with people. If we didn’t do any testing, we would have very few cases.’” [Politico, [5/14/20](#)]
- **Trump On May 6, 2020: “By Doing All Of This Testing, We Make Ourselves Look Bad.”** “Though public-health experts have consistently said the US needs to ramp up testing for the coronavirus to contain and defeat it, President Donald Trump does not see it that way. On Wednesday, Trump said that too much testing makes the US ‘look bad.’ ‘So the media likes to say we have the most cases, but we do, by far, the most testing. If we did very little testing, we wouldn’t have the most cases. So, in a way, by doing all of this testing, we make ourselves look bad,’ Trump said during a meeting with Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds.” [Business Insider, [5/7/20](#)]

## **2. Trump Failed On Social Distancing: Studies Suggest That Trump’s Delay In Adopting Social Distancing Measures Allowed The Virus To Spread, Resulting In Tens Of Thousands Of Deaths That Could Have Been Avoided**

### **Columbia University Disease Modelers Estimate That 83 Percent Of Coronavirus Deaths By May 3 Could Have Been Avoided By Locking Down Cities And Limiting Social Contact Earlier**

- “If the United States had begun imposing social distancing measures one week earlier than it did in March, about 36,000 fewer people would have died in the coronavirus outbreak, according to new estimates from Columbia University disease modelers. And if the country had begun locking down cities and limiting social contact on March 1, two weeks earlier than most people started staying home, the vast majority of the nation’s deaths — about 83 percent — would have been avoided, the researchers estimated. Under that scenario, about 54,000 fewer people would have died by early May.” [New York Times, [5/20/20](#)]

### **Epidemiologists Britta Jewell And Nicholas Jewell Estimated That 90 Percent Of Cumulative Deaths In The U.S. During The First Wave Of COVID-19 Might Have Been Prevented By Implementing Social Distancing On March 2.**

- “But an estimated 90 percent of the cumulative deaths in the United States from Covid-19, at least from the first wave of the epidemic, might have been prevented by putting social distancing policies into effect two weeks earlier, on March 2, when there were only 11 deaths in the entire country.” [New York Times, Britta Jewell & Nicholas Jewell, [4/14/20](#)]

### **Trump Resisted Shutting Down As Late As March 9th Despite the Calls From Medical Experts, Saying: “Nothing Is Shut Down.”**

- “After Italy and South Korea had started aggressively responding to the virus, President Trump resisted canceling campaign rallies or telling people to stay home or avoid crowds. The risk of the virus to most Americans was very low, he said. ‘Nothing is shut down, life & the economy go on,’ Mr. Trump tweeted on March 9, suggesting that the flu was worse than the coronavirus. ‘At this moment there are 546 confirmed cases of CoronaVirus, with 22 deaths. Think about that!’ In fact, tens of thousands of people had already been infected by that point, researchers later estimated. But a lack of widespread testing allowed those infections to go undetected, hiding the urgency of an outbreak that most Americans still identified as a foreign threat.” [New York Times, [5/20/20](#)]

### **3. Trump Refused to Listen to Experts, Ignored Warnings and Routinely Minimized The Health Crisis Posed By Coronavirus Instead Of Offering Clear Guidance On How To Best Prepare And Minimize The Virus' Spread**

#### **Trump Refused To Listen To Experts**

- **Former Director Of BARDA Rick Bright Attempted To Raise Concerns That Coronavirus Could Spread Beyond Asia In January, But Was Met With “Indifference Which Then Developed Into Hostility.”** “Bright says that he raised concerns that the coronavirus could spread beyond Asia beginning in January but was met with ‘indifference which then developed into hostility’ by leaders of the Department of Health and Human Services.” [Politico, [5/5/20](#)]
- **Fauci Warned That States Reopening Without Efficient Screening And Testing Sites Were “Making A Really Significant Risk.”** “Stressing the importance of those guidelines [for reopening] Thursday, Fauci explained they provide states ‘a continuity that is safe, that is prudent and that is careful.’ ‘So the concern that I have is that there are some states, some cities, or what have you, who are looking at that and kind of leapfrogging over the first checkpoint,’ he said. ‘And I mean obviously you could get away with that, but you are making a really significant risk.’” [CNN, [4/30/20](#)]

#### **Trump Ignored Warnings**

- **Trump Ignored Intelligence Officials’ Briefings About The Outbreak In January.** “U.S. intelligence agencies were issuing ominous, classified warnings in January and February about the global danger posed by the coronavirus while President Trump and lawmakers played down the threat and failed to take action that might have slowed the spread of the pathogen, according to U.S. officials familiar with spy agency reporting.” [Washington Post, [3/20/20](#)]
- **In January, Dr. Rick Bright Began Pushing HHS Leadership To Act Urgently To Address Scarcity Of Critical Medical Supplies, Including N95 Masks, Swabs, And Syringes.** “At the same time that Dr. Bright was pushing HHS to obtain virus samples and increase funding to BARDA, he became convinced that as COVID-19 continued its rapid spread, the Administration’s strategy of containing the virus (e.g., trying to prevent it from coming into the United States) was ill-conceived and that HHS needed to act urgently to increase supplies to be able to treat individuals who became infected when the virus began to spread in the United States. Dr. Bright was alarmed about the scarcity of critical resources and supplies, including N95 masks, swabs, and syringes, and began clashing with HHS leaders as he pressed for them to take appropriate action to address these shortages.” [OSC Complaint, [April 2020](#)]
- **February 7th: The World Health Organization Warned About A Shortage Of Medical Supplies.** “WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said demand for personal protective equipment, or PPE as it is called, is 100 times higher than normal and prices have skyrocketed to 20 times usual rates. Tedros said ‘widespread, inappropriate use of PPE outside of patient care’ is the cause, and he urged the public as well as all parties in the supply chain to adjust their practices to ensure fair and rational use of supplies.” [STAT News, [2/7/20](#)]
- **During Senate Testimony, Dr. Rick Bright Emphasized That Forwarding People About The Threat Of Coronavirus Could Have Saved Lives.** Dr. Bright said: “We did not forewarn people. We did not train people. We did not educate them on social distancing and wearing a mask as we should have in January and February. All those...could have...saved more lives.” [Twitter, Yamiche Alcindor, [5/14/20](#)]
- **Dr. Rick Bright Testified That Lives Were Lost Because Of The Delay In Acquiring N95 Masks For Medical Personnel In US Hospitals.** Q: “It took 3 months from your initial warnings...for the federal government to...require the production of millions more n95 masks...What was the consequence of this

3-month delay? Were lives endangered?" Dr. Rick Bright: "Lives were endangered, and I believe lives were lost." [Twitter, Steve Herman, [5/14/20](#)]

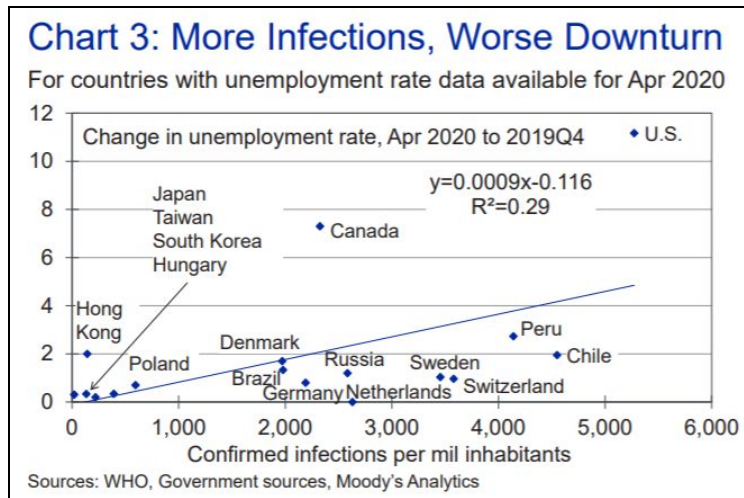
## Trump Minimized The Health Crisis

- **Trump Baselessly Claimed That If Coronavirus Reemerged After States Reopened, It Would “Not Going To Be Like It Was... It’s Also Possible It Doesn’t Come Back At All” on April 22nd** “And if it does come back, it’s not going to come back — and I’ve spoken to 10 different people — it’s not going to be like it was. Also, we have much better containment now. Before, nobody knew about it. Nobody knew anything about it. We understand it. Now, if we have pockets — a little pocket here or there — we’re going to have to put out. It goes out and it’s going to go out fast. We’re going to be watching for it. But it’s all possible. It’s also possible it doesn’t come back at all.” [White House Press Conference, [4/22/20](#)]
- **March 10, 2020: Trump Said Of Coronavirus: “And We’re Prepared, And We’re Doing A Great Job With It. And It Will Go Away. Just Stay Calm. It Will Go Away.”** [White House Press Conference, Washington, DC, [3/10/20](#)]
- **February 25, 2020: Trump Said Coronavirus Is “Very Well Under Control In Our Country.”** [Donald Trump, Press Conference, New Delhi, India, [2/25/20](#)]
- **February 25, 2020: Trump: “We’re Down To Probably About 10 [Cases]. Most Of The People Are Outside Of Danger Right Now.** “We’re down to probably about 10 [cases]. Most of the people are outside of danger right now. We’ve had a very strict line on the people we’re taking and the areas from which we’ll take, and I did it very early.” [Donald Trump, Press Conference, New Delhi, India, [2/25/20](#)]
- **February 7, 2020: Trump Said The Coronavirus Would “Hopefully Become Weaker And Then Gone” As “The Weather Starts To Warm.”** [Twitter, Donald Trump, [2/7/20](#)]

## Three Ways Trump Made The Economic Crisis Even Worse By Failing To Control The Coronavirus, Failing To Robustly Strengthen Workforce Protections, And Failing To Aid States And Localities

### 1. *Analysis Shows That Trump May Have Exacerbated the Economic Downturn By Failing To Control The Coronavirus Outbreak,*

American Enterprise Institute Director Of Economic Policy Studies Michael Strain Has Highlighted That The More Covid-19 Infections A Country Has, The Worse Its Economy Performs. [Twitter, Michael Strain, [6/4/20](#)]



## 2. **Trump Failed To Help Small Businesses: While Small Businesses Struggled To Access PPP Loans, Large Corporations And Trump Donors Were Awarded Millions From The Paycheck Protection Program**

**Trump Allowed Large Corporations To Crowd Out Small Businesses In Acquiring Limited PPP Funds.**

- “Large companies are getting these loans at the expense of small businesses. Because of how limited the funds for PPP have been, the disproportionate allocation of them to larger companies means that smaller businesses are missing out on money they desperately need. According to the Small Business Administration, the average loan that was approved under PPP was \$206,000. It’s a number that skews high, which suggests that larger companies are snagging a lot of these loans, said Awesta Sarkash, the government affairs manager at Small Business Majority, an advocacy group focused on advancing the needs of small businesses. Based on data from the Federal Reserve, the majority of small businesses — 59 percent — typically seek \$100,000 or less when they take out loans.” [Vox, [4/22/20](#)]

**Because The PPP Program Was Intentionally Designed To Benefit Large Franchise Owners Of Restaurants And Hotels, Small Businesses Lost Out To Corruption And Cronyism. For Example, Trump Donors Archie And Monty Bennett’s Luxury Hotel Companies Received \$59 Million In PPP Loans.**

- “The largest known recipient of small business rescue money has been a set of luxury hotels run by Archie Bennett and his son Monty Bennett. The pair have obtained over \$59 million in PPP funds for Ashford Hospitality Trust and Braemar Hotels & Resorts, holding companies used to own and manage a range of hotels, including the Ritz-Carlton in St. Thomas. The companies were eligible for PPP loans because the program was intentionally designed to benefit large franchise owners of restaurants and hotels operators, as long as each location employs 500 people or less. The father and son are also megadonors who have given nearly half a million dollars to Trump since 2016 and over \$1.3 million to GOP politicians and groups in recent years.” [The Intercept, [4/24/20](#)]

## 3. **Trump Failed To Prevent Layoffs Of State And Local Workers: Trump Showed Hostility To Local Aid As States And Localities Were Forced To Layoff Employees**

**1 Million Employees Had Their Payroll Cut After Given A Lack Of Federal Aid To States And Localities, Representing A 5.2 Percent Drop In The Total Nonfederal Government Employee Level.**

- “Yet a lack of aid from the federal government forced states and localities, who have much stricter budget requirements than the federal government, to cut payrolls for more than 1 million employees, representing

a 5.2 percent drop in the total nonfederal government employment level. Without strong guidelines from the White House, states were forced to fend for themselves, often bidding against one another to provide their frontline health care workers with protective gear.” [Center for American Progress, [6/3/20](#)]

### **Despite The Shortfalls Fors States And Localities, Trump Remained Hostile To The Idea Of More Support, Suggesting That Additional Funding Would Be Unfair To Republicans.**

- “Despite states’ and localities’ appeals that the \$150 billion stimulus in the CARES Act was not nearly enough to match the severity of the crisis, President Trump has been notably hostile to the idea of providing more support. He even turned the need for more state and local aid into a partisan issue, opining that allocating additional funding would be unfair to Republicans since ‘all the states that need help [are] run by Democrats.’” [Center for American Progress, [6/3/20](#)]

## **Other Countries Show That The United States Could Have Avoided Such Severe Economic Downturn By Acting To Protect Employment And Control The Spread Of The Virus**

### **South Korea’s GDP Contracted Only 1.2 Percent In 2020, Compared To The US’ Contraction Of 5.9 Percent.**

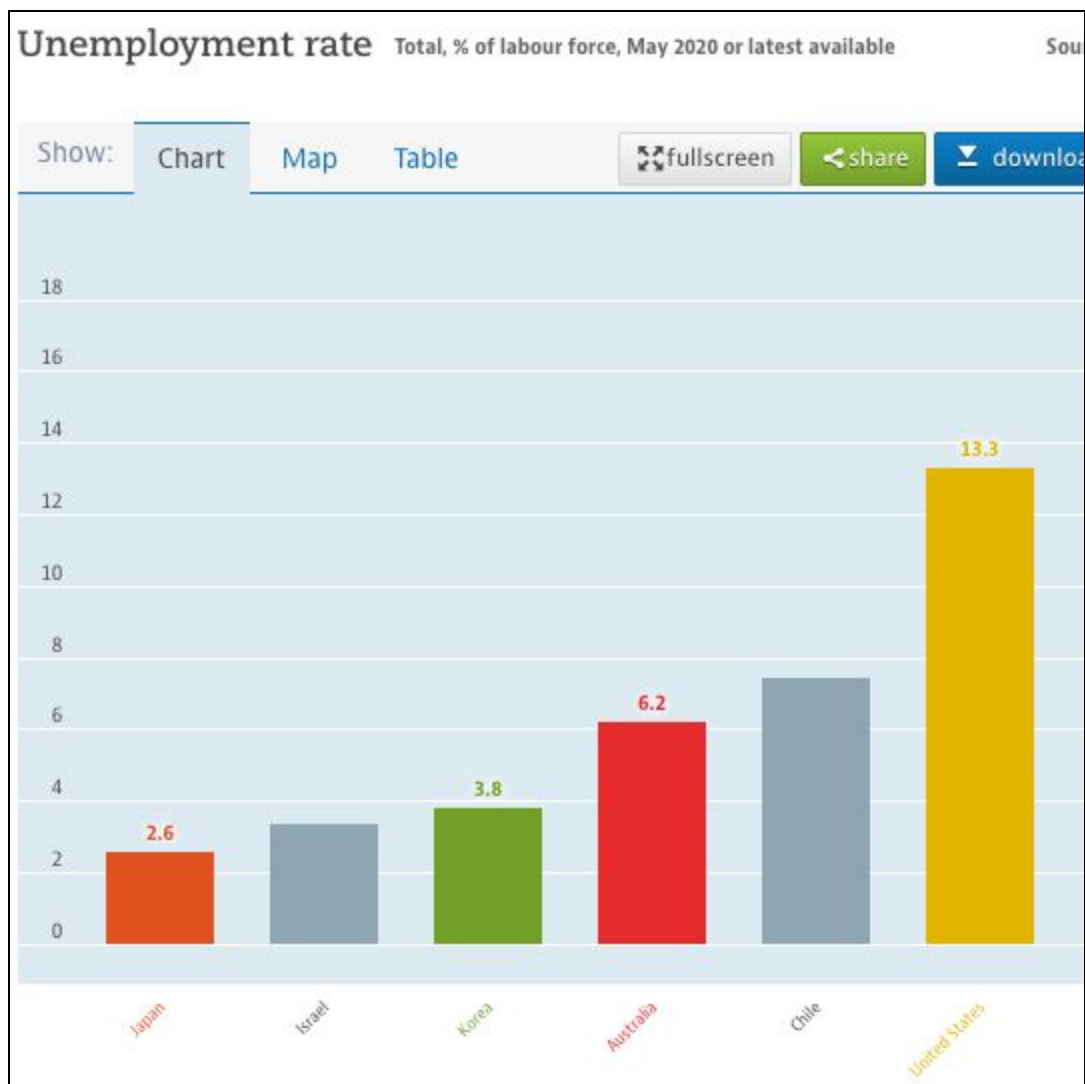
- “The most impressive international comparison, however, comes from South Korea, which has managed to keep open its economy while maintaining a total COVID-19-related death rate per capita that has yet to even reach 2 percent of what the United States is experiencing. As a result of its massive early intervention, South Korea managed to suppress transmission of the virus and, subsequently, keep most factories, shopping malls, and restaurants open. Meanwhile, in the United States, businesses surveyed by the Federal Reserve in May expressed pessimism and uncertainty, which appears likely to persist for months to come since a full strategy for suppressing the virus has yet to be put into place. The experiences of these two countries are reflected in the data: The International Monetary Fund projects that South Korea will experience a GDP contraction of 1.2 percent in 2020, while the United States will experience a GDP contraction of 5.9 percent.” [Center for American Progress, [6/3/20](#)]

### **Countries Like Japan And New Zealand Avoided Mass Layoffs At The State And Local Levels By Making Massive Transfers To Their Local Governments While U.S. States And Localities Were Forced To Layoff More Than A Million Employees Because Of Funding Shortfalls.**

- “In contrast, the governments of other countries have acted swiftly in supplying cash-strapped localities with much-needed aid. The Japanese government, for example, recently announced a 117.1 trillion yen draft supplementary budget—equivalent to 21 percent of Japan’s 2019 GDP—that includes massive transfers to local governments. Similarly, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand is providing its central government’s Local Government Funding Agency with \$60 billion over the next 12 months, equivalent to 43 percent of its 2018 GDP. The CARES Act and its \$150 billion in funding to state and local governments was a good start, but this represents only 0.7 percent of 2019 U.S.” [Center for American Progress, [6/3/20](#)]

### **The United States’ Unemployment Rate Is More Than Twice That Of Other Countries That Have Better Managed The Coronavirus Outbreak And Implemented More Robust Workforce Protections:**





[OECD, Accessed [6/9/20](#)]

**US Unemployment Rate Increased By 11.2 Percent During The Same Time South Korea's Increased By 0.5 Percent, Australia's Increased By 1.1 Percent, And Germany's Increased By 0.8 Percent..**

- “South Korea, which largely avoided shutting down its economy due to its early and aggressive actions, recorded an unemployment rate of 3.8 percent in April—only slightly above the 3.3 percent figure recorded in February. Australia, which implemented a wage subsidy program equivalent to 3.5 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), has seen its unemployment rate increase from 5.1 percent to 6.2 percent over the same time period. Germany, too, only saw a modest increase in its unemployment rate, as it ticked up from 5.0 percent to 5.8 percent. The United States, on the other hand, recorded an unemployment rate of 14.7 percent in April—up dramatically from the 3.5 percent figure in February.” [Center for American Progress, [6/3/20](#)]

**The European Unemployment Rate Of 6.6 Percent Is Less Than Half 13.3 Percent Rate In The United States.**

- “Unemployment in the European Union ticked up in April as job losses tied to the coronavirus pandemic mounted. But short-time work programs — which are far more common than in the United States — helped cushion the blow. The EU unemployment rate rose to 6.6% in April from 6.4% in March, Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, said Wednesday.” [CNN, [6/3/20](#)]

# Trump Compounded Economic Disparities: Trump's Failures Are Disproportionately Hurting Black, Latinx, And Low-Wage Communities

## From February To April, More Than One In Six Black Workers Lost Their Jobs & Less Than Half Of The Adult Black Population Had Jobs.

- “The unemployment rate for black workers was higher than whites pre-pandemic and now. From February to April, more than one in six black workers lost their jobs, and as of April, less than half of the adult black population had jobs. Black workers’ unemployment rates are higher than white workers at every level of education.” [Vox, [6/1/20](#)]

## Between February And Mid-April, As 95% Of Black-Owned Businesses Were Shut Out Of The PPP Loan Program, 440,000 Black Business Owners Closed Their Companies For Good.

- “There were more than 1 million black-owned businesses in the U.S. at the beginning of February, according to research from the University of California at Santa Cruz, which drew from Census survey estimates. By mid-April, 440,000 black business owners had shuttered their company for good — a 41% plunge. By comparison, 17% of white-owned businesses closed during the same period, the UC Santa Cruz research shows.” [CBS News, [6/12/20](#)]
- “Surveys also show that the vast majority of black business owners who applied for emergency relief after the virus struck through the Paycheck Protection Program were denied a loan. Selmon said she applied for a \$50,000 PPP loan shortly after the program was launched, but the funds were exhausted before her loan could be approved. An analysis by the Center for Responsible Lending found that 95% of black-owned business were shut out of the small business initiative.” [CBS News, [6/12/20](#)]

## In May, The Unemployment Rate Did Not Decline At All For Black Americans.

- The New York Times’ Jim Tankersley reported: “In May the unemployment rate declined by nearly 2 percentage points for white Americans. For black Americans, it did not decline at all.” [Twitter, Jim Tankersley, [6/5/20](#)]

## Kaiser Family Foundation Survey: Nearly Half Of African Americans And Latinx People Have Reported Problems Paying For Necessities During The Pandemic.

- “Almost a third (31%) of the American people say they’ve experienced problems paying the rent or mortgage, or for food, utilities, credit card bills or medical costs as a result of the coronavirus. Among African-Americans, that number climbs to 48%. Among Latinos, it’s 46%. And 47% of households with an annual income below \$40,000 say they’ve had trouble paying their bills because of the pandemic.” [Axios, [5/29/20](#)]

## 39 Percent Of Latinx Adults Said They've Either Skipped Meals or Relied On Charity Or Government Food Programs During The Pandemic.

- “45% of black adults and 39% of Latinos say they’ve either skipped meals or relied on charity or government food programs such as SNAP since February — compared with just 18% of white adults. Most of those people said their experiences were a direct result of the coronavirus’ financial impact.” [Axios, [5/29/20](#)]

## Bureau Of Labor Statistics Data Show That Black People Disproportionately Work In Jobs That Risk Exposure To The Coronavirus.

- “Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows black people work a disproportionate number of jobs as health care and personal care assistants, for example. Such jobs lead to exposure with potentially sick people, which is even more risky for people who aren’t wearing hospital-grade protective gear.” [Buzzfeed News, [4/10/20](#)]

## **The Economic Crisis Is Disproportionately Hurting Low-Wage Workers: Nearly 40 Percent Of Those With A Household Income Below \$40,000 Reported A Job Loss In March.**

- “On one hand, lower-income people are getting slammed. Nearly 40% of those with a household income below \$40,000 reported a job loss in March, according to the Economic Well-Being of US Households report. By contrast, 19% of those with family income between \$40,000 and \$100,000 reported a job loss, and only 13% earning more than \$100,000 did, according to the Federal Reserve.” [CNN, [5/15/20](#)]

## **Low-Wage Workers Are More Likely To Be Under The Age Of 25, Women, Hispanic, Or Black Than Than The Workforce As A Whole.**

- “Reflecting the fact that people who more recently entered the workforce are likely to earn less, over a third (35%) are young adults aged 19-25—representing half of all workers in this age group—and another 22% are aged 26-34. Low-wage workers are also more likely to be female (58%, versus 47% for all workers). Although most low-wage workers are White, they are disproportionately Hispanic or Black Non-Hispanic race/ethnicity (Figure 1).” [Kaiser Family Foundation, [4/29/20](#)]

## **Three Ways Trump’s Ongoing Failures Are Preventing States From Safely Reopening And Not Giving Americans Confidence To Resume Normal Economic Activities**

### **1. Trump’s Ongoing Failure To Test And His Push For States To Reopen Prematurely Have Led To Continued Spikes In Cities And States Across The Country**

#### **Trump Still Has Not Fulfilled His Promises On Testing, A Prerequisite To Safe Reopening.**

- “Five hours later, when a reporter asked Trump at the White House if the country would reach five million daily tests, as the Harvard study recommended, Trump responded: ‘We’ll increase it, and it’ll increase it by much more than that in the very near future.’ Asked to clarify if he meant the U.S. would ‘surpass 5 million tests per day,’ Trump said, ‘We’re going to be there very soon.’... On March 6, he said that ‘anybody that wants a test can get a test.’” [Time, [4/28/20](#)]

#### **More Than A Month After Letting Social Distancing Guidelines Expire On May 1, 22 States Are Seeing Upward Trends In Coronavirus Cases.**

- “While states lift more restrictions and more Americans go out to socialize or protest, almost half of US states are seeing higher rates of new coronavirus cases. But the situation would have been much worse had states not shut down, a new study says. Nationwide, 22 states are seeing upward trends in coronavirus cases. About 20 states have seen decreases in recent days, and eight states are holding steady.” [CNN, [6/8/20](#)]

### **2. Trump Allowed The Crisis At Meatpacking Plants To Get Out Of Control By Pushing Plants To Open Despite Spikes In The Virus Within Plants, Which Led To Even Larger Spikes:**

#### **Trump Overrode States And Businesses To Keep Meat Processing Plants Open Despite Reports Of Workers Dying, And An Increase In Hospitalizations And Thousands Of Confirmed Cases.**

- “On April 28, President Trump signed an executive order using the Defense Production Act to keep meat-processing plants open. By doing so, he overrode states and some of those plants themselves that know it’s not safe yet. We all want to keep the food supply chain intact, but we have to balance that against the very real risks caused by impatience and imprudence. The United Food and Commercial Workers, the largest packinghouse union in America, knows of at least 20 meatpacking workers who have died from Covid-19. Five thousand more workers have tested positive for the coronavirus, are awaiting test results, have been hospitalized or have been exposed to the virus. Thousands more may be affected.” [New York Times, Richard Trumka, [5/7/20](#)]

**FERN: “Rural Counties That Contain Meatpacking Plants With Outbreaks Of Covid-19 Have Infection Rates That Are Five-Times Higher On Average Than The Rest Of Rural America.”**

- “Rural counties that contain meatpacking plants with outbreaks of Covid-19 have infection rates that are five-times higher on average than the rest of rural America. Of the rural counties with the highest infection rates, most contain slaughterhouses where workers have contracted Covid-19. These rural counties also rank among those hardest hit by the disease nationally, a data analysis shows.” [Food & Environment Reporting Network, [5/28/20](#)]

**3. *Trump Has Not Given The Majority Of Americans Confidence To Resume Economic Activities Even If The Country Was To Immediately Reopen:***

**A Wall Street Journal Poll Found That 63 Percent Of Voters Were Concerned That They Or Someone They Know Would Become Infected With Coronavirus.**

- “On coronavirus, nearly two-thirds, 63%, said they were concerned that they or someone in their family would catch the virus, down from 73% in April.” [Wall Street Journal, [6/7/20](#)]

**A Wall Street Journal Poll That Two-Thirds Of Voters Were Uncomfortable Flying On A Plane Or Attending A Public Event While 54 Percent Were Uncomfortable Eating In A Restaurant.**

- “Two-thirds of voters in the survey said they were uncomfortable flying on a plane or attending a public event with a large group of people. Half said they were uncomfortable sending their children to school, and 54% said they weren’t ready to dine out at a restaurant.” [Wall Street Journal, [6/7/20](#)]

**Trump’s Botched Response To The Coronavirus And Ongoing Failures Mean It Will Take The U.S. Economy Even Longer To Bounce Back, Resulting In Long-Term Damage**

**Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell Emphasized That A Full Economic Recovery Is “Unlikely” Until The Coronavirus Is Contained And Warned That A Recovery That Took Too Long Could Deeply Harm The Economy In The Long-Term.**

- “‘Recently, some indicators have pointed to a stabilization, and in some areas a modest rebound, in economic activity. With an easing of restrictions on mobility and commerce and the extension of federal loans and grants, some businesses are opening up, while stimulus checks and unemployment benefits are supporting household incomes and spending,’ Powell said. ‘That said, the levels of output and employment remain far below their pre-pandemic levels, and significant uncertainty remains about the timing and strength of the recovery,’ he continued. ‘Until the public is confident that the disease is contained, a full recovery is unlikely.’” [The Hill, [6/16/20](#)]
- “Powell also warned that the collapse of small businesses with few financial resources to weather an extended downturn could deeply harm the U.S. economy and society. ‘If a small or medium-sized business becomes



insolvent because the economy recovers too slowly, we lose more than just that business. These businesses are the heart of our economy and often embody the work of generations,' he said." [The Hill, [6/16/20](#)]

### **University Of Chicago Study: "Forty-Two Percent Of The Layoffs Caused By The Pandemic Could Become Permanent Job Losses."**

- "But the harsh reality is that last month's rehiring aren't expected to continue at the same pace. Forty-two percent of the layoffs caused by the pandemic could become permanent job losses, according to a study by the University of Chicago's Becker Friedman Institute for Economics. Many businesses, from tech start-ups to small shops and big retailers, may not survive the loss of revenue despite federal rescue aid. That aid will run out soon. And despite gradual re-openings, public fear of the virus is still keeping many people away from bars, restaurants, hotels, hair salons and other retail establishments. Few have resumed traveling. Sports and entertainment venues remain closed." [Associated Press, [6/7/20](#)]

### **CBO: The Total GDP Over The Next Ten Years Could Be \$15.7 Trillion Lower Than What Was Projected In January.**

- "The CBO, which had already issued a report forecasting a severe economic impact over the next two years, expanded that forecast to show that the severity of the economic shock could depress growth for far longer. The new estimate said that over the 2020-2030 period, total GDP output could be \$15.7 trillion lower than CBO had been projecting as recently as January. That would equal 5.3% of lost GDP over the coming decade." [CBS News, [6/2/20](#)]

### **Nearly 7.5 Million Small Businesses Were At Risk Of Closing Their Doors Permanently Over The Next Several Months If The Coronavirus Pandemic Persisted, Based On April Study**

- "Nearly 7.5 million small businesses are at risk of closing their doors permanently over the next several months if the coronavirus pandemic persists, according to a survey. Around two-thirds of entrepreneurs said they may have to shut forever if business disruption continues at its current rate for up to five months, according to a survey published Tuesday by Main Street America, a network of more than 1,600 commercial districts comprising 300,000 small businesses. More than 30% are at risk if the status quo persists for two months, according to the survey, which polled in excess of 5,850 small business owners." [CNBC, [4/14/20](#)]