

Governor Phil Murphy

TRANSCRIPT: May 22nd, 2020 Coronavirus Briefing Media

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Holding a COVID-19 briefing. WATCH:



Governor Phil Murphy: Good morning, everyone. I'm joined today and honored to be with the woman to my right, who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of Department of Health, Judy Persichilli. To her right, another familiar face, the State's Epidemiologist, Dr. Christina Tan. Thank you both for being here. To my far left, another guy who needs no introduction, the Superintendent of the State Police, Colonel Pat Callahan, and today, to my immediate left, we have the honor to be joined by our State's Treasurer, Liz Muoio. We'll get to Liz in a minute, but it's an honor to have you here. I want to thank Jared Maples for being here, Director of the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, and other teammates.

Before we get to Liz, we have an announcement. Throughout the past week, we've taken the first few steps on our road back, opening up avenues for our residents to begin to once again enjoy all our state has to offer and to begin the restart and recovery of our economy. And today, we're taking another step. I am signing yet another Executive Order, lifting the limit on outdoor gatherings from 10 persons to 25 individuals; indoor gatherings remain limited to 10 people. Additionally, this order allows for recreational campgrounds, both public and private, to reopen effective immediately.

In both outdoor gatherings and campgrounds, however, social distancing must be adhered to. Organized gatherings, for example, must include clear demarcations for attendees and we strongly recommend that everyone continue wearing face coverings. So if you were looking forward to gathering with your neighbors for a Memorial Day cookout you may do so, so long as social distancing and personal responsibility remain the order of the day.

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With this, the capacity for charter and fishing boats, outdoor batting cages and driving ranges, among other outdoor recreational businesses, will similarly be increased to 25. We are able to confidently make this decision today because of the hard work that each and every one of you have put in, through social distancing, to relieve the stresses on our healthcare system. Because you have taken to heart all that we have asked you to do and the faith you have put in us to make the right decisions to safeguard public health, we can take this step together.

The metrics from our hospitals that we need to click into place continue to do so, as you can see. Hospitalizations and the numbers of patients in our ICUs and on ventilators, the key indicators we need to see fall, have all fallen dramatically. The progression across the past two weeks, again green balls are good, red balls are not, has been constant. Each green light means a day that the numbers we need to see decrease actually decreased, and even when we did have a red light day, it was often followed by an even bigger green light day. And we're seeing this reality across each region of our state. Make no mistake, you all did this. New hospitalizations is something that Judy and Tina and I look, continue to scrutinize quite closely.

Each day brings with it more signs that we are moving closer to being able to enter phase two of our restart. But make no mistake, we will continue down this road responsibly and deliberately, because we still lead in some indicators, as you can see, in which we would rather not. However, I am proud that we're able to take this step today and to add a little bit more hope and optimism to the unofficial start of summer.

Before you ask me, two quick caveats. This does not include outdoor dining, we hope to get to outdoor dining sooner than later; and it does not yet include guidance on graduations. I'm hopeful that early week, we can offer guidance on outdoor graduations.

Now moving on, as I mentioned, we are joined today and have the honor to have to my left State Treasurer Liz Muoio. Liz and her team recently released their first look into the tremendous impact this emergency is having on our state revenues, and today they are following that with a more comprehensive report, which they are providing to the Legislature. We just came from back to back, very constructive meetings first with the Senate President and Speaker, Steve Sweeney and Craig Coughlin, and their senior folks, and then immediately thereafter with the Minority Leader, Senator Tom Kean and Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, and their leaders. And again, those were very good, constructive, frank meetings.

It is a stark report and it lays out the fiscal crisis that looms right around the corner from our public health crisis. I won't steal any of Liz's thunder and I know she has a short overview to share with us here, and she will conduct a virtual follow-up session with the media this afternoon to dive into the numbers in greater detail. Am I right in saying it's 1:30? 1:30 this afternoon, so you'll forgive us for not getting too deep on the details at this particular gathering, but Liz will do that within the next couple of hours.

I have been clear since March that we are facing an unprecedented public health crisis that would soon be followed by a similarly unprecedented fiscal crisis. When Liz makes her announcement later today, the full scope of COVID-19's fiscal impact will come into view. Suffice it to say the hard choices I predicted are now at our doorstep. Since March, I've also made clear that to bridge this fiscal gap, we desperately need more federal financial assistance. We have not yet received that. We've had some, but not nearly what we're going to need. I had similarly asked the Legislature to authorize state borrowing to ensure that we can fund crucial government operations and I'm grateful, especially for Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin's support for this proposal and for posting it for a vote on June 4th, but we still do not have this authority, and therefore we cannot rely on these funds. So the numbers you hear today do not include any aspiration, which we hope is sooner than later for borrowing proceeds or for any federal cash assistance beyond the CARES Act.

As I had forecast, today we're forced to begin making some hard decisions. We are doing our best to preserve our most critical investments where we can. For example, we are proposing a \$10 million investment in the Department of Health, especially and specifically for our long-term care facilities. As we work toward our new September 30 deadline for enacting a fiscal year 2021 budget, the challenge we face in balancing our wants and needs is going to be enormous. The revenue losses we can already project stemming from our current emergency are drastic. A projected \$10 billion over the next slightly more than calendar year, through June 30 of 2021. And without a series of deliberate and responsible measures in place, much of what we're going to depend upon to lift us up off the mat simply won't be there for us. We won't be able to support our small

businesses, we won't be able to help families get back to par, and all the work that we have done to put our fiscal house back in order with back-to-back record surpluses, the savings we've gleaned in healthcare, the deposits into our rainy day fund, all of that will be swamped.

Certainly there are things that can help us mitigate some of this crisis. First, we need Washington to step up with significant direct fiscal assistance for states. Every day it seems this becomes a more and more bipartisan endeavor, and that's because more and more people, in both parties by the way, are seeing what this support means. But there are also just as many minds that remain closed and intractable, and one of those closed minds controls the Senate agenda. But let's be clear about what we're asking for. Some of the closed-mind folks call this a bailout. I'm not sure what they mean, other than they're trying to use charged words for partisan gain.

Here's what this aid actually really does mean. It means being able to pay our police, fire, EMS, first responders. It means being able to keep our healthcare workers on the job for our recovery. It means being able to ensure that our kids have the educators they will need come fall. It means the trash being picked up. It means having the army of workers at the Department of Labor culling the backlog of claims. I remain ever hopeful that this package will get to the President's desk and be signed, and I will continue to push this case with the President and his team, and Speaker Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader Schumer and with our entire delegation. But success is far from guaranteed, so we must prepare in other ways. And I should say that I'm going to spend about two hours this afternoon dialing into Washington and other Governors, both sides of the aisle, to make the case and to go through exactly the sort of budget impact that we're announcing today.

Now, as I said, we have to prepare in other ways. And in that, I thank again Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin for his leadership in posting for a vote legislation that would allow us, as a state, to take advantage of record low interest rates to get the funding we will need to preserve and protect our vital economic growth and social programs, and a whole lot of frontline jobs. As I've said many times before, we've been approaching a fiscal cliff. But today we get our first glimpses over its edge, and it isn't pretty. We have two choices. We can toss our state into that abyss, or we can take measures that will allow us to slowly back away from that edge and keep our feet on solid ground. I certainly know the outcome I prefer and I suspect overwhelmingly you prefer, and I hope that the Legislature and our leaders in Washington will join us. We had a good conversation on this this morning with the Senate President and Speaker, and time is of the essence.

That said, let me shift gears and turn to the overnight numbers. Yesterday, we received an additional 1,394 positive test results. You can see the current statewide total of 152,719. Here is a trend line of those cases. And then also happy to say the daily positivity or spot positivity rate for test samples from May 18, which was from Monday, was 14%. I think Judy and I, I'm going to go out on a limb, I hope Christina will join us here, that there's no weekend distortion with that number. Judy will go through what that looks like on a regional basis. We can see from the map that we look at daily, remains largely unchanged and going in the right direction.

Looking at our long-term care facilities, the trend rate of new cases continues downward and with the additional help from the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs we announced yesterday, we have faith they'll continue to decline. You can see 29,262 positive cases across our many hundreds of long-term care facilities. We can see as well the numbers of lab-confirmed fatalities associated with our long-term care facilities is decreasing, but look at that, 4,666 blessed souls and lives lost. And again, as I've said many times, in the here and now, 24/7, we have thrown everything, including the kitchen sink, at saving as many of the several hundred thousands of lives still associated with long-term care facilities, including both residents and members of staff.

In our hospitals, the number of patients currently being treated for COVID-19 is 3,049. Our field medical stations report 43 patients. This is a breakdown of hospitalizations across regions. The number of patients reported in either critical or intensive care is now 846, ventilator use sits at 674. That's, by the way, nearly half of what it was just two weeks ago. There were 151 new COVID-19 hospitalizations yesterday, while another 259 live patients left our hospitals. And here are those numbers charted across our regions, which we look at every day. As I said, at the top, every trend we need to see to move along our road back, we are seeing. Every key indicator is down from the peak and the bad days are just as often followed by an equal, if not better, good day.

And so we as we enter this weekend, yes, please enjoy it but don't get complacent. Keep up with your social distancing and wear a face covering, please, if you're going out, especially if you're somewhere where social distances are hard to keep. Let's have a great weekend. Let's prove that we can keep these trend lines moving in the right directions.

However, as we enter Memorial Day weekend, we must remember those who we have lost throughout this crisis, and we need to add to their numbers another 146 blessed lives lost of our New Jersey family. Our statewide total stands at an almost unfathomable 10,985. It's extraordinary. Let's, as we do every day, let's think about a few of those we have lost.

First up, we remember Anthony and Elizabeth Giorgianni. They were, by the way, better known as Rocky and Betsy. What a great couple, look at them. And they were married for over 61 years. They were both born and raised in New Brunswick, and they met at St. Mary's Church in New Brunswick after Rocky returned from serving in the United States Army in the Korean War. Theirs was a story of love at first sight. They soon married and after the birth of their first child, Tony, they moved to North Brunswick. There, they would raise their other two children as well, Gina and Andrea, and stay for 37 years. Rocky was a proud member of Carpenters Local 1006 out of Milltown for 45 years, and Betsy worked at First Fidelity Bank.

They always love the Jersey Shore. And after their respective retirements, they moved full time to their quote-unquote happy place, Lavallette in Ocean County. Their family was always welcomed down the shore, their children and their spouses, and especially their four granddaughters Alinea, Avery, Annabella and Arden. After Hurricane Sandy however, Betsy and Rocky moved to Lakewood where they resided for the past six years. Betsy passed on May 9th, her funeral was on the 15th and four days later, Rocky passed and his funeral was yesterday. I spoke to their son-in-law TK and we had a conversation about both of them and their family and talked about their family bonds that were forged through the strong values that Rocky and Betsy instilled in their children and grandchildren, especially their love for the Jersey Shore and their overall appreciation for the preciousness of life. May God bless them both, and it's only fitting that we acknowledge them and pay homage to them as we open up for the summer on the shore. God bless them both.

Today we also remember one of our tremendous first responders, Dave Pinto from Wallington in Bergen County. I heard about Dave from many, including my dear friend Bernadette MacPherson, but Dave I heard about from all different directions. He was born in Jersey City. Dave started his career as a letter carrier, but he found a new avenue of service and since 1994 had been a member of the EMT squad, with the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority. While there, he was proud to say that he worked at World Cup soccer matches and countless concerts. I know The Boss watches us from time to time, 15 of those concerts were Bruce Springsteen shows, not that anyone counted, by the way, he loved every second of it. He was present for a bunch of Jets and Giants games. I hope they won a few of them, and also work the morning workouts at the Meadowlands Racetrack. Wherever and whenever Dave was needed, he was there.

Dave also had served a variety of roles along with the Chief of Wellington Fire Department, and was a past member of the Wallington Board of Education, and had even been elected by his peers to be its president. He was also an active member of the Wallington Emergency Squad for over 30 years until his passing. Dave leaves behind his high school sweetheart and wife Barbara, as well as daughter Nicole and son David and one grandson, and he also leaves countless friends and colleagues. I spoke with Barbara and Nicole and David yesterday, and it was a moving conversation about an incredible guy. Dave was just 70 years old. We thank Dave for his career of service and we keep him and his family in our thoughts. God bless you, pal and God rest your soul.

Three more among the thousands of lives cut short by COVID-19 across our state. This is our family. We all mourn with those left behind. In this weekend, let's take a moment to say a prayer for them, as we remember our fallen military heroes, especially.

Switching gears, we just got word that my request for an extension of the FEMA testing sites in both Bergen Community College and the PNC Arts Bank Center has been accepted and extended until the end of June, which is a big deal. This otherwise was only going to be to the end of May. That's huge. And also, there is an acknowledgement that the capacity of testing in each of those sites will also be raised. So that's really, really good news on the testing front.

We've got a quick announcement for the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education Dr. Zakia Smith Ellis. Our public colleges and universities will be dividing up a total of \$68.8 million in federal CARES Act funds to help them cover more of the expenses they have incurred in their efforts to continue providing educational services to their students. Specifically, this funding is coming from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund, which provided us with a flexible emergency block grant. Working with Dr. Smith Ellis and her team, we are developing a formula to ensure this funding is equitably allocated among our public institutions of higher education. And it must be noted that this funding comes on top of the nearly \$310 million in federal support we are delivering to our elementary and secondary schools to help them weather this emergency. I am proud that we can now better support our colleges and universities as well.

Before I turn things over to Liz, I want to close with a note about the weekend before us. It's at this point that I usually give a shout out to an individual or community-based group making a real difference in our communities. But today, I want to give a much broader, collective shout out to all of the women and men who have served our nation in our armed forces, in times of war and in times of peace, and through them, to all the New Jerseyans who died while in service to our nation. There will be more muted commemorations at cemeteries across our state, and the graves of our honored dead will be, as they have right should be, decorated with flags. On Monday morning, I will join with Adjutant General Brigadier General Jamal Beal and others for a small commemoration at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Memorial Cemetery in Wrightstown, as I do every year, and another special commemoration will be aboard the Battleship New Jersey, where a virtual celebration via Facebook, by the way, will honor the 77th anniversary of its commissioning.

There should be absolutely zero irony in the fact that the most decorated naval vessel in our nation's history, a battleship dedicated, and I quote, "to the preservation of peace in our hemisphere", bears the name of our home state. Like our people, the New Jersey is strong and tough, battle tested and always answered the call of service to defend our nation's values and to promote the cause of peace. So to every honored veteran across our state, we thank you for your service to our nation, and for living the highest values of patriotism. Through you, we remember your brothers and sisters in arms who are no longer with us. Let us never forget all who gave their full measure on the battlefields, on the seas, and in the air, so that the ideals of our nation could be a beacon of hope for all the world. And so as I close today, may God bless you all. May God bless all who served, and may God continue to bless the Great State of New Jersey and the United States of America. With that, please help me welcome the Treasurer of this great state, a great leader in her own right, Treasurer Liz Muoio.

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: Thanks, Governor. Thank you for having me here today. Just like everyone at home, all of us at Treasury have appreciated these daily briefings and we're very grateful for your steady leadership and the hard work of everybody here at the table every day, so thank you all.

As we're all aware, COVID-19 has created a public health crisis not seen since the Spanish Flu over a century ago. But it's also created a global economic crisis that the world has not seen since the Great Depression. That's what we at Treasury have been dealing with behind the scenes for several months now. New Jersey is not alone. States across the country are facing similar fiscal challenges that seemed inconceivable just a few short months ago. And as we know all too well now, times of serious trial only increase the need for effective governmental services.

For Treasury, our primary goal from day one has been to ensure, first and foremost, that the people of New Jersey have the resources and support they need to address this brutal public health crisis. At the same time, however, we have been working nonstop to address the related fiscal crisis that has grown to unprecedented proportions. I know I don't have to tell New Jerseyans this, but it has not been easy. Our challenges, like yours, are real and quite frankly, they're like nothing most of us have ever witnessed before.

There isn't going to be one easy solution. We will need a multifaceted approach and it's going to require some tough decisions. Like many taxpayers, we as a state had been living paycheck to paycheck for far too long. Under the Governor's leadership, we had really started to make great strides over the last two years to improve our fiscal condition, doing it the way most families do: shoring up our savings, paying our bills and investing wisely. We made record payments into the pension system to decrease our liability. We boosted our

savings by increasing our surplus significantly, and making our first rainy day fund deposit in a decade. And we were making serious investments in areas that had been starved for resources: public education and New Jersey Transit chief among them.

And then COVID came along. The global pandemic it has sparked has halted this progress in its tracks. Our economic analysts, like analysts around the country, have been working around the clock ever since to try and gauge the short and long-term impact of this crisis. Based on a wide variety of economic assumptions, we are now potentially in New Jersey facing a shortfall of nearly \$10 billion through the end of fiscal year 2021 next June, \$10 billion. That is a jaw-dropping figure. And while there are many moving parts, what is clear is that a decline of this magnitude would be worse than the Great Recession.

When it comes to the sales tax, for example, which has obviously been impacted by business closures, we are forecasting a 33% decline in collections from May through July over the same period last year. For context, the worst sales tax month during the Great Recession in '08-'09 saw a decline of 18.4%. What this means is that the sizable surplus and rainy day fund we worked so hard to build together will easily be depleted.

I point this out not to be a doomsayer, but to underscore that some extremely difficult decisions will have to be made in the weeks and months ahead, decisions no one wants to make, but they will be unavoidable. Just like it will be for many New Jerseyans, our road ahead is going to require a combination of serious budget tightening, critically needed borrowing and federal assistance, much more robust federal assistance. The Governor has been out there since day one lobbying for the federal support we unequivocally need. He has been a tremendous ambassador for New Jersey and our needs. One would even think you might have done this for a living before at some point.

The budget report we will be releasing a little later today is designed to serve as a roadmap to help New Jersey begin to navigate what is essentially uncharted territory. It's marked by hard choices. Some we've already made, and some we are proposing to make. As soon as this crisis began to unfold, we placed roughly \$1 billion of appropriations into reserve. We issued a statewide hiring freeze, except for crucial COVID-related needs, and we put more than \$500 million in other planned spending for this fiscal year on hold. We are also proposing to de-appropriate approximately \$1.32 billion, which was not an easy choice, because it included many priorities shared by everyone. And additional balances will be retained in reserve until we see how the current fiscal year pans out.

As the Governor said, I'll go into greater detail during our virtual press conference later this afternoon, but essentially it will outline the administration's proposed path through the extended fiscal year, which will now end three months later than normal on September 30th. Our hope is that by then, we'll have a better handle on what federal assistance we can anticipate receiving, and we'll also have a better handle on how our state revenue situation is looking, since we extended the tax filing deadline from April 15 to July 15, to help provide some relief for taxpayers.

The report we're releasing today also recognizes the significant challenges that lie ahead in the development and passage of the next budget for fiscal year '21. But I have no doubt we'll get through this, like we have many times before. Like the Governor says, we're certainly not going to be spiking any footballs anytime soon but as he's also fond of saying, we'll get through this together. At the end of the day, I have no doubt we'll position New Jersey firmly on the road to recovery. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Liz, thank you for your extraordinary leadership in both peace and at war. This is a lot harder than in peacetime, I can say. We inherited, you know, part of the reason we got here to begin with, a big part of the reason, was to restore, not just get the economy growing and make it fair again, but restore fiscal sanity. We had made such progress led by you over the past two, now almost two-and-a-half years and I'll repeat the immortal philosopher again, Mike Tyson. Everyone's got a plan until they get punched in the face, and God knows we've been punched in the face from both a health perspective and now, clearly as an economic perspective.

Look at the job losses, look at the crushing impact on small businesses, hospital systems, transit and then add to that states. The key challenge for us, again, that's why we need to be able to borrow. That's why we need the direct fiscal cash assistance from Washington is not to help us with what we got elected to fix, we've got to plan for that. That we're okay with. We have to keep firefighters, police, EMS, healthcare workers,

educators in their jobs at our greatest hour of need, serving our residents who need them more than ever before. And at the same time, keeping employment as robust as humanly possible. That's what we need the help for. So thank you for your leadership and your whole team.

With that, please help me welcome the woman who needs no introduction to my right, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Thank you, Governor. Good morning, everyone.

Governor Phil Murphy: Good morning.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Good morning. As we prepare for the Memorial Day holiday weekend, we expect more residents to be out in our parks, visiting beaches and having backyard barbecues. Being outdoors and physically active is so important for your mental and physical health, but we want you to enjoy these activities safely. So today, I want to re-emphasize the importance of taking precautions to protect yourselves and others. We want individuals to wear face coverings and to wear them correctly. Your nose and your mouth should be covered. When possible, clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately before putting on your mask, adjusting it and after removing your mask. Wash your face covering after every use. And remember, face coverings do not replace social distancing. They are protecting you from me.

Practice social distancing as you enjoy outdoor activities. Stay at least six feet apart. Bring and frequently use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Avoid gathering with others outside of your household. Don't visit crowded outdoor spaces where you cannot appropriately distance from others. Don't use the playground or participate in organized sports or congregate with others. And of course, if you feel sick, please stay home.

Even if you are outside, do not attend large mass gatherings. Just this week, the CDC released a report that examine the cascading impact of two ill individuals who attended gatherings at their church in March. 35 of 92 attendees at the church acquired COVID-19, and three deaths occurred. Subsequently, through contact tracing, contact with church cases led to 26 additional cases being confirmed, including one death in the community. So from just two individuals spreading the virus, 61 cases of confirmed COVID-19 were found and four deaths resulted. This report emphasizes that large gatherings pose a significant risk for the transmission of the virus.

For my daily report, last evening, as the Governor shared, our hospitals reported 3,017 hospitalizations, with 846 individuals in critical care and 80% of them are on ventilators. Today I am reporting a total, like yesterday, of 19 cases of multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children. There are no new deaths reported – I should not say new deaths, there are no deaths reported, and the ages of the children affected are 1 to 18; 14 of the 19 have tested positive for COVID 19.

The Governor reviewed the new cases and deaths reported today. In terms of deaths, the breakdown of deaths by race and ethnicity is as follows: White 53.3%, Black 18.5%, Hispanic 19.4%, Asian 5.5%, and other 3.4%. The state's veteran homes report similar to yesterday, 381 residents testing positive, a total of 143 deaths, no new deaths today. And at our state psychiatric hospitals, again, similar to yesterday with a census of 1,240; 210 patients have tested positive and there have been a total of 13 patient deaths. No new deaths today.

As of May 18th, New Jersey overall percent positivity is 14%, 12% in the North, 13% in the Central part of the state, and 24% in the South. That concludes my daily statistical report. Enjoy your holiday weekend safely.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, thank you for that and for everything. I mentioned this in passing, the positivity rate, I'll just make two quick comments. Number one, I don't know that this is going to ever be proven, but the weekend gives us some distortions would be my theory of the case. And secondly, note that the number is higher in the south, and that is consistent with what we've been saying for weeks in terms of the migration and if you look at the hospitalizations today by region, you get another read on that. So thank you for all of the above.

Please help me welcome the Superintendent of the State Police, with updates on compliance and other matters, another great leader, Pat Callahan.

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Thank you, Governor. Good morning, everybody. With regards to the compliance issues overnight, in Teaneck, a carwash owner was cited for having open and operating a carwash. In Hillsboro, a gym owner was cited for EO violation for being open. In Hoboken, a pizzeria owner was cited for having both indoor and outdoor dining underway, refused to close when warned. In Clifton, a hair salon and nail spa owner was charged with an EEO violation. In Rahway, a large crowd had gathered and failed to disperse. One subject at that gathering was cited for an EO violation. And in Gloucester Township, police responded to a dispute between a father and son. The father was subsequently placed under arrest, charged with resisting and during the arrest, kicked officers and coughed on them, claiming he had COVID-19.

And just real quickly, Governor, if I may, one because she's here, the State Treasurer, your team at OMB at Purchase and Property at Division of Property Management and Construction, we could not have built out those hospitals in those sites, we could not have gotten PPE and ventilators without that collective effort from all entities in Treasury. I certainly just wanted to, since you're sitting to my right, thank you for that, in addition to our County OEM Coordinators, who just continue to go above and beyond with things that we were asking them to do, that none of us had ever thought we'd need to plan for, from PPE to test sites to assessing what mitigation efforts we're going to put in place for, God forbid, this comes back in the fall. I just wanted to thank both Liz and the County OEM Coordinators.

Governor Phil Murphy: Amen to that. Liz, Pat, thank you for your leadership. I'll come back to compliance in a second. But when Liz and I first met, Liz was a senior executive in Mercer County, in her home county, which it continues to be, was the head of the political party here, one of the parties and then became a Member of the Assembly. And now Treasurer and it's just an extraordinary professional and personal life story. I want to echo Pat's thanks, Liz, to you and your team, at this hour of great need.

Compliance again, overwhelmingly, people are doing the right things. Again, to repeat what I said earlier, we're not opening up dining, either outdoors or indoors. So please don't mistake what I've said about increasing the allowed gatherings to 25 persons. I hope to get to outdoor dining sooner than later, but we're not there yet.

And secondly, we continue to say that the hope for those who want to have some sort of an outdoor, properly socially distant graduation ceremony, your hope is well placed and I hope that we can have some guidance for you early midweek. We want to get this right, obviously, because this would be a big gathering and it has to be done right. And I echo what Judy said, the super spreader notion and Christina may comment on this at some point as well. A big piece yesterday in one of the national newspapers, that not only are the big gatherings indoors in particular and in close proximity challenging, but that the impact that the virus has on individuals from those gatherings is much more consequential, much more difficult than just getting it in a sort of passing way. Please, folks, we're not doing this for any reason other than to keep as many people healthy and alive as possible. So again, Pat, thank you for that report.

Let's start over here if we could, and we're going to go quickly, just because we've got a lot of folks who want to get away here. Please.

Q&A Session

Reporter: Good afternoon, everybody. Governor, two quick questions. Could you explain what a furlough decision would mean for the state workers? What does that involve them to do? The other question is, and I know you're tired of hearing about this, but the gym owners in Bellmawr, obviously they were closed yesterday, Judy, because you signed the order to close them down, but they reopened again this morning. Where do you go from here, with those people that continue to defy the order?

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, on the gym owners, I would just, I'm not going to comment about the specifics of it and you'll forgive me for that, because I'm sure there's going to be all sorts of noise around that, including legal, at least that's what they've said.

Let me say two things, though, unequivocally. Overwhelmingly, gym operators are doing the right thing. In fact, they've been even the ones who want to open, a lot of them have been coming to us with what we think are very responsible plans. They say listen, how do you guys feel about this? And so I want to say that overwhelmingly, there's compliance.

And secondly, we're not there yet. I mean, what good does it do us to say that we're not opening gyms unless we've got a good reason? And we just heard from Judy, if you're indoors, you don't have ventilation. You're in close proximity. You're sedentary and/or you're sweating and spitting and breathing heavily. It's a petri dish. There's no reason otherwise that we wouldn't want to do this. I want people to go out. Judy wants them to go out, and get the mental health that they deserve, the physical health they deserve.

On furloughs. Matt, would you mind commenting on furloughs? And then if Liz wants to add anything, although I think was more in your lane, Matt. Please.

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: Sure. So yesterday, the Civil Service Commission relaxed some rules or regulations that would allow for a voluntary furlough in lieu of lay off, up to 90 days as well as to continue the employer contribution on health benefits. The state has not furloughed any workers to date. Obviously, given the revenue numbers that the Treasurer has spoken about, I would say we're actively in conversations and all options are on the table. There are a number of local units that have collectively bargained furlough agreements, are working with labor, and they needed the flexibility in the rules that the Civil Service Commission has granted, as of yesterday.

Governor Phil Murphy: Liz, we'll go through the budget later on, as I mentioned today, and it's pretty dire stuff, so you may want to look at that and come back to us after that. Thank you very much. Good to see you. Elise, nice to see you.

Elise Young, Bloomberg: Nice to see you. For the State Treasurer, you mentioned \$1.32 billion. Could you give some detail on that figure, where it applies and how that breaks down exactly?

Governor Phil Murphy: The only thing I would say Elise, Liz, you may want to give a couple of broad strokes, but this is an example of something we're going to get into, in chapter and verse, at 1:30. Is that fair to say?

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: Yes, and the report will specify by line item where the de-appropriations will occur. I'll just say for purposes of this discussion, that the majority of them will be on the reserve list are currently on the billion-dollars in reserve list that Office of Management and Budget has updated regularly on their website.

Governor Phil Murphy: So this would be the list that you've seen from probably two months ago at this point, Liz, and then it's now a little bit on steroids. That was about just under \$1 billion. This is just over \$1.3 billion, is that right?

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: Correct.

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay, thank you. Good morning.

Reporter: I have a couple questions for my colleagues at the Record and the Asbury Park Press. For the Treasurer, when you announced your latest revenue projections on May 13th, the predictions were, "Based on the assumption that there will not be a resurgence of COVID-19 cases later." Since health officials and models are projecting there will be a second surge, why do you not include those assumptions when predicting the revenue losses? Wouldn't that kind of make the predictions a little bit more rosier than reality?

For the Governor, in the light of the financial crisis that the state faces, can you say how likely it will be for New Jersey to provide some sort of financial assistance for undocumented immigrants who file state income taxes, which is something immigration advocates and Democratic lawmakers are pushing for?

Turning to the Shore towns, many of the Shore towns are concerned they're not going to have enough special officers for the summer season. For example, that was why Point Pleasant Beach said they cannot open Jenkinson's Boardwalk, because they don't have enough officers to patrol. Is there any update you have on reopening the police academies?

And for a lot of the Shore businesses, summer is an essential season for them. What kind of timing are you looking at for reopening arcades, rides, and the boardwalk shops?

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay.

Reporter: And then one last one –

Governor Phil Murphy: One last one quickly.

Reporter: Are you planning to visit the boardwalk or the beaches this weekend?

Governor Phil Murphy: That's a good one. You ended on a nice note. I'll say a few things and then maybe Liz and Pat may want to weigh in. Liz will say this, it does not envision a resurgence, and I think Liz would say, I don't want to put words in your mouth, if we do get a resurgence, you and your team are plus or minus, it's another billion dollars. And I would not use the word rosy, in any event, to describe what you'll hear about later on today.

Open minded to providing financial assistance to undocumented, but again, we're in a very resource-constrained world. We had a meeting, as I promised yesterday, Director Maples, Colonel Callahan, the Attorney General, Matt, George Helmy, myself, Jen Davenport, number two in the Justice Department, talking about preparedness for Memorial Day weekend. This topic not just came up yesterday, but it's come up whether or not the Shore towns have enough folks to be able to put at the point of attack. I know Point Pleasant is one example of a town that has said they're not sure they've got the resources they need. I'll let Pat and/or Jared weigh in.

Nothing new to report on arcades or shops. You know, this will depend on if we continue to have another couple of good weeks here, my hope is that we get to that, particularly if they're outdoors.

And lastly, yes, I will be somewhere, weather dependent, on the boardwalk probably doing a run and strolling a little bit with my wife somewhere in the Seaside Heights, Seaside Park neighborhood, sometime this weekend. I'm not sure, I don't have an exact moment as to when.

Liz, anything else you want to add on resurgence?

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: No, other than our Office of Revenue and Economic Analysis has taken a look at sort of modeling out what we would expect if there was a fall resurgence. And as the Governor mentioned, it's roughly another additional \$1 billion hit to our revenues. That will appear in the report that will be issued this afternoon. It's very difficult though to budget based on sort of supposing that there's a resurgence. You know, modeling for this revenue forecast is difficult in the best of circumstances, because we just really have no precedent for this. But we are letting the Legislature know that in the event that happens, we could expect a worse outcome, to the tune of about \$1 billion. We have not modeled yet what some epidemiologists are predicting sort of a flow, you know, an ebb and flow of the virus. That is something we have not modeled out yet, but that is something else to take into consideration.

Governor Phil Murphy: And on the other side of the coin, we haven't modelled in either a valid therapeutic or a vaccine either, which would swing us to a different, more positive place. Pat, any quick comment on Shore, particularly summer surge staffing and any advice you've got for folks out there in terms of trying to figure out when it's safe to get back and get on the beach?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Sure, Gov. The Attorney General and I were actually on a call this morning with 800 law enforcement officers, a lot of chiefs from around the state. The shore was a topic of discussion. We're working with the Police Training Commission on making sure we have enough special officers, that's starting to shake loose right now, in addition to our own State Police class, so we think we'll be well positioned with staff throughout the summer to support the Shore towns.

Governor Phil Murphy: Again, Mother Nature is not, as I said yesterday, I'm normally, overwhelmingly and I hope it's 85, sunny and low humidity. It's going to be none of that this weekend. And so I'm not happy to say that, by any means. I'd prefer it to be otherwise but in this extraordinary moment, it probably gives us, almost certainly gives us, an opportunity to creep into the summer a little bit more gradually than it otherwise would have. Do you have anything, sir? You're good? Okay. Matt, how are you? Don't pull a hamstring coming across the room there.

Matt Arco, Star-Ledger: I have a few from my colleagues at NJ Spotlight and NJTV. Have you gotten updated outbreak plans at this point from all the long-term care facilities? And can you update us on how many staff and residents have been tested so far? And we're told that Bergen County mayors have been asking for state oversight as early as March. Was the state slow to respond here?

Separate topic, what are the percentages of testing for COVID in various group settings, long-term care, psychiatric, developmental centers and prisons, and how does that compare to the general population? How many corrections staff have died from COVID? Why is the state not reporting this number, while you're reporting deaths among staff at developmental centers, psychiatric hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

And then very simply on the budget, should residents prepare for tax increases?

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay, on the last one, there's nothing that Liz will talk about today that includes tax increases in the stub budget, period, unless there was something I missed. That's obviously not, we're commenting about between today and September 30. Beyond that is not.

I'll let Judy come back with us. We've given you, in chapter and verse, the approach to long-term care facilities, so with all due respect to the question about folks were asking, everyone was asking. This was World War III. We've gone through, I think, a very comprehensive, particularly yesterday, set of steps that we took right from the get-go. I think Judy's first directive was on March 6th. And again, they're operated, remember a big part of this reality are operators who operate some number of these over many hundreds of different locations. So update, Judy, we've got an update on the outbreak. That was in long-term care. I missed the first question?

Matt Arco, Star-Ledger: It was a long-term care, psychiatric hospitals, development centers and prisons and just how that compares to the general population.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, I don't have comparisons to the general population. You want outbreaks in psychiatric and – I mean...

Governor Phil Murphy: I mean, we show the positives every day and we show the fatalities every day from long-term care facilities.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: What more did you want?

Governor Phil Murphy: I would just say this, Judy, tell me if you disagree with this. First of all, we show the number of positives every day.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Right.

Governor Phil Murphy: I don't know that we have the positivity rate for long-term care. We have it for the state. We show the number of fatalities. We also showed again the other day, the hierarchy of where the testing, the order of the testing in the vulnerable communities, including long-term care are in the most important category, first category. So if you looked at total testing per capita, it's going to be higher in a long-term care facility than it is in the general public, because you go from long-term, vulnerable populations, frontline workers, especially healthcare, first responders, and then the general population. So per capita, you're going to have more testing up top. Secondly, here thirdly, here. I don't have the numbers though, unless you do.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, I have the positivity rate in long-term care with 35,215 tests, is 8%. And the retest of 4,179 individuals who originally tested negative were retested within three to seven days and that percent positivity was 10%, so lower than what we're reporting in the general population at this point.

Governor Phil Murphy: Please God it stays that way. And then can we get back, you asked about corrections staff fatalities? Unless you have that?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: No, I don't have that.

Governor Phil Murphy: We'll come back to you on that. Is that right? Okay, thank you. Charlie, good morning, still.

Charlie Kratovil, New Brunswick Today: Yes, good morning, Governor. Some recall committees were formed here in Trenton. Would you sign an Executive Order allowing for the electronic collection of signatures for their recall petitions? Or will they have to collect those signatures in person?

I want to thank the Health Commissioner for her help in getting Robert Wood Johnson to release their EO 111 data. Respectfully, why are you allowing these healthcare facilities to decide whether or not to release that data? Shouldn't the public have access to that information regardless?

And finally, there's a situation in New Brunswick. Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas is planning to purchase, close and demolish the Lincoln Annex Public School in New Brunswick to expand the Rutgers Cancer Institute. It's a school that was a private school for many years. I believe it's the alma mater of the Health commissioner. But local taxpayers paid \$22 million to upgrade and reopen it as a public school just four years ago. Commissioner, how do you feel about Robert Wood Johnson's plan to destroy that school building? Will you intervene to save the school, or at least ensure a replacement school gets built before any closure?

And Governor, how do you feel about the school district in New Brunswick attempting to move forward with the plans to sell the school during the pandemic? Is this the right time for districts to be taking such drastic actions?

Governor Phil Murphy: As a graduate of the school, Judy has a conflict of interest here. I'll let Judy speak for herself. I've got nothing, first time I've been asked about the electronic petitions on the recall in Trenton. I've got no good answer for you. We'll come back to you on that.

The second point was an homage to Judy on RWJ Barnabas releasing information under Executive Order 111. I'll let Matt Platkin handle your question about why should healthcare facilities themselves make the decision on complying. And I've got no opinion other than we have the number one public education system in America and I want it to stay that way. That Cancer Research Center is going to be a game changer for a lot of things, including jobs as well as for education. Beyond that, I've got no comment on that. Anything on the EO data or disclosures, rather?

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: We present data every day pursuant to EO 111. Beyond that, we'd have to take a look at a particular request.

Governor Phil Murphy: We'll come back to the specifics of a request. Anything on your alma mater?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I have fond memories, but the bricks and mortar or not them.

Governor Phil Murphy: God bless you. Thank you.

Reporter: For municipalities in the Pinelands, will their pilot funding for their preserved open land remain restored as a result of this fiscal crisis? Why are you holding off on opening outdoor dining? What didn't you see? For, you know, towns that have a surplus, are you recommending that they expend that surplus in its entirety before furloughing or laying off personnel? My fourth question is in regards to the significant sales tax loss, how much of the overall revenue pie is that? You said, I think, 33% was the decline, but how much is the overall loss in revenue?

Governor Phil Murphy: Okay, so on municipalities in the Pinelands and whether or not the pilot money is impacted by the budget, I'm going to defer to Liz's briefing later on, if that's okay with you. We're holding off on outdoor dining because of the fact that while it's outdoors, you're in close proximity and you're sedentary by definition, right? You're sitting, having dinner. We want to make sure we get that right. I hope we're sooner than later on that, but we're not there yet. Surplus in towns, should they spend them before they furlough? That's a decision that is going to be subject to the very specifics of a given town. I mean, surpluses we hold dear at the state level, and I think any municipality that has one likely also holds it dear. But at the same time, you know, if they're faced with some really tough decisions here in terms of doing that, versus laying people off, furlough or otherwise, it's yet another reason why we need to borrow, we need federal cash assistance, and that goes right to addressing that particular point.

Liz, \$2.7 billion hit on revenues between now and June 30. By the way, none of this is about expenses, right? We're still talking about revenues. Expenses battling COVID are going up by the day and as a result, but let's stay on revenues. \$2.7 billion between now and September 30 and then another \$7.2 billion between October 1 and next June 30. How much of that, in each of those cases dollar-wise is sales tax? Do you have that?

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: Is that the total? That's when you ask for the overall figure, you were talking about just sales tax overall decline? Yep. The sales tax for FY20 is predicted to decline by \$1.131 billion less than the GBM forecast in February.

Governor Phil Murphy: That's the Governor's Budget Message, that was as of late February.

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: Right, February 25. So that's a 10.9% decline for fiscal year 2020. And then for fiscal year 2021, revenues for sales tax are expected to be \$1.5 billion to \$8 billion, or 14.2% lower than the Governor's Budget Message in February.

Governor Phil Murphy: So can I tack on to that, if I may? So you'd add 1.13 To 1.5, you get 2.6 and change and that's out of a total of about \$9.9 billion. Thank you. Brent.

Brent Johnson, Star-Ledger: Does yesterday's announcement on furloughs come in lieu of Steve Sweeney's furlough plan? Do you plan to veto that now? People who buy cars from private individuals can't register online and need to drive to get to work. What alternatives are you thinking of? Can the state have licensed driving instructors give road tests to new drivers, report the results to the state, and remotely issue a temporary license to reduce the backlog?

The CDC said there's evidence the virus may not spread as much as once thought on surfaces. Does that mean things like playgrounds might reopen soon? And with beaches opening, what is the guidance for people from separate families who want to share a house? Are they not allowed to?

Governor Phil Murphy: I'm gonna ask Matt to address a number of these. But Judy and Tina, before I do, I read the same guidance Brent is asking about, that they're reassessing how long this virus lives on a surface. I would think that to Brent's question, that again, if it's an outdoor surface, that's something we're likely going to get to sooner than then we would to an indoor surface. But any reaction to that guidance?

State Epidemiologist Dr. Christina Tan: Yeah, right now the evidence suggests that surfaces, contaminated surfaces, aren't really the main mode of transmission. However, it doesn't mean that you still shouldn't be cleaning the surfaces, shouldn't be disinfecting the surfaces as well. So all those other infection control measures still need to be implemented, even if the mechanism of transmission might not be as viable.

Governor Phil Murphy: I got a lot of grief for using the phrase bubbles a few days ago, but that's a commonly now, increasingly commonly used phrase where you're cohabitating with family overwhelmingly, most likely, and/or some folks you've just been in a similar ecosystem with over a period of time, and there's a challenge. I'm not a health expert, as you likely know by now, but when you start crossing these bubbles with each other, you obviously, it's a step where you take more risk. And so I would just say, go into that with your eyes open. This is your last question. And even if you're under the same roof, if you've not been with that other person or you've got different groups, adhere to the limits of congregation that we're raising as of today, but I would keep your distance. That's a personal opinion. I would not be sitting side by side tightly indoors with someone you have not been hanging around with yet. Do you disagree, or? You good with that? Okay.

There's no strict other than the total numbers. Matt, you've got furloughs and the Senate President's bill, private car sales, and I didn't, I'm not sure I understand your drivers road test.

Brent Johnson, Star-Ledger: It's because people can't go to the DMV to get their driver's license, I guess this goes back to teenagers driving. This is from a colleague so I'm not too sure. Can the state have licensed driving instructors give road tests to new drivers, report the results back to the state, and remotely issue a temporary –

Governor Phil Murphy: I understand the question now. The answer is no. The other two, private car sales and furloughs.

Chief Counsel Matt Platkin: Yeah, on private car sales we'll have to have MVC get back to you, Brent. On furloughs, I think I said earlier what yesterday's actions meant. You know, I'll defer comment on the Senate President's bill until the Governor's ready to take action. Just on the shared houses, as long as it's not their

primary residences and people aren't all living together on a permanent basis, there's the 10-person limit indoors still applies. Obviously, towns themselves still have the authority to make determinations as to whether they want to allow short-term rentals, and some have and some have not.

Governor Phil Murphy: I made yet another mistake. By the way, it is now officially afternoon. But secondly, the indoor restriction remains at 10, and I should have said that. What we lifted today is outdoors.

Brent Johnson, Star-Ledger: But if it's actually like two people from different families is okay?

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, but I think that you've got to be smart. You've got to use common sense. I think this is going to be a challenge for everybody as we further open, how do you responsibly and by the way, let's remember, we've said this from the get-go. Most importantly, the most vulnerable among us, seniors, comorbidities, intensely congregated persons, communities that are most vulnerable, communities of color, quite clearly. I mean, there's going to be certain, density is something we've got to be careful. We've got to be careful cross-generational. It's one of the biggest challenge you all have asked about education and what's our game plan look like? It's one of the toughest nuts to crack between Judy and the Department of Education and their teams as to what does that look like? Daniel, you get to close us out.

Daniel Munoz, NJBIZ: Hi, Governor. These are all budget questions. When you say that there might not be any tax increases through September 30 but that beyond that could be different, are you saying there might be increases in FY21? The \$10 billion is certainly of a sizable chunk but it seems quite different from the \$30 billion that you had mentioned in the past. Why the discrepancy? Do you expect the drop in the gas tax can mean the rate will have to increase this summer?

Governor Phil Murphy: What was that about the gas tax, sorry?

Daniel Munoz, NJBIZ: Do you expect that the drop in the gas tax, gas consumption would mean the rate would go up this summer? Do you expect the state's credit rating could go down because of the borrowing from the Federal Reserve?

Governor Phil Murphy: So I'll give you some quick thoughts and then Liz can come in behind me. We're not here today and Liz's briefing through September 30, other than projecting revenue loss for the period between October 1 and June 30, I'm not opining one way or the other on what our solutions are going to be, other than we need federal cash and we need to be able to borrow. Today we're here to talk about between now, in terms of a full budget I mean, between now and September 30. And then at some point down the road, we'll talk about October 1 to June 30. \$10 billion in revenue, I said this a minute ago in passing, but I'll lay on this, \$10 billion in revenue changes. That does not include a dramatic amount of expenditure, PPE, medications, ventilators, beds. Dealing with this crisis is a whole lot more beyond the \$10 billion shift and revenues. And by the way, that's only through June 30 of next year.

Liz makes the decision on gas tax in August. Last I checked, it's May, we'll come back to you in August on that one. We've been in touch with the rating agencies. Liz and her team have outstanding relationships with them and it's too early to tell, but we want to make sure, for instance, before we go live today with what we're going live with in terms of a proposed stub period budget, that again, Liz will give you more detail at 1:30. We absolutely, as a courtesy, give them a heads up, at least in the general parameters of what that will look like and we will have follow-up discussions with them. I can't speak for them. But I will say this, decades from now if we borrow money, and please God, we need to and we look back on whether or not this was a good time to borrow money in terms of interest rates and were the use of proceeds prudent? The answer will be a resounding yes to both. Liz, do you want to add anything to that?

State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio: No, just to reiterate what the Governor said. I mean, we're in regular contact with the rating agencies. The Governor, actually, since coming to office has met with them every year, at least a couple times, to go over proposed and finalized budget decisions. And so we will see how the budget plays out. We'll learn through the year what their reactions are. I mean, we were pleased to note that in the opinions that have come out, the issuances from the credit rating agencies since the crisis has begun, have noted the fiscally responsible actions taken by the administration since coming in in January. So, you know, that is good news for us. But clearly, we are facing, as I said, an unprecedented fiscal crisis right now. We're going to work through it and we'll continue our relationship with the credit rating agencies.

On motor fuels, we are seeing declines and we'll get more into detail on that this afternoon. But as the Governor said, we'll work with the Office of Legislative Services in August to look at the numbers. It's formulaic. So, you know, that will determine whether we have to raise or decrease the gas tax effective October.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, it's important to remind everybody that this isn't Liz having, on her back porch, trying to put her finger in the air to decide what the gas tax should be. This is a formula that was put in place before we got to office. And so the only stipulation is that every August, the Treasurer has to make, with the input of the Office of Legislative Services, has to make a conclusion.

With that, I'm going to start to mask up and I'm honored to wear on my mask today, and not by coincidence, our flag. A couple of housekeeping matters. Number one, again, in the near term, the here and now, Liz is on at 1:30 today for a detailed press briefing. We are going to give you all in the media a couple of days off here. We will be communicating electronically over the entire weekend, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. We reserve the right, Dan Bryant is with us today. We'll reserve the right to get on the phone with you or, God forbid, get in person with you if there's a meaningful development and reason to do so. Otherwise, we will be back physically with you all Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. And it's 11:00 a.m. because we've got a White House call, I think at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, so we will be back live with you on Tuesday. And again, if we think there's a reason to do so beforehand, we'll get a hold of you ASAP. And the exception to this, of course, is Liz's more detailed discussion of the budget today at 1:30.

I just said to Judy, it will be – by the way, we're not taking the weekend off. We will be fighting this morning, noon and night, I promise you. And we'll be paying close attention clearly to the Shore and our lakes. And by the way, let's give a shout out to our lake communities. This is overwhelmingly about the Shore and our beaches, but it's also importantly about our lakes. I want to thank Judy, for her extraordinary leadership. Christina, thank you as well for your leadership, and to each of you. Liz, thank you, again. Incorporate my prior comments by reference, Pat, Jared, Matt, Dan, the whole team. Again, most importantly to everybody out there, two very simple comments. Thank you for everything you've done and please keep doing it. I think a word that keeps coming up is let's all behave responsibly to each other and as it relates to our own public health. As we begin to open up, as we begin to wrestle with the questions about crossing in with other people we haven't seen in a while, which will inevitably happen, that we do that responsibly.

And secondly, let's remember what Memorial Day is about. It's about our veterans. It's about the members of our armed services. It's especially about those who have lost their lives defending our nation and standing up for our values. And there's no values anywhere in the history of man that comes close to the American values, and no state has stood taller in defending those values at every step of the way, from the revolution right up until today, than New Jersey. God bless you all. Take care.

Governor Phil Murphy

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