

Governor Phil Murphy

TRANSCRIPT: April 6th, 2020 Coronavirus Briefing Media

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Governor Phil Murphy holds a coronavirus briefing in Trento...



Governor Phil Murphy: Good afternoon. I'm sorry we're a little bit behind today. It was largely due to I think a very productive call with the White House and Senator and Judy and Pat can weigh in here. Honored today to be with the woman on my right who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department of Health, Judy Persichilli. To my far left, State Police Superintendent Colonel Pat Callahan. And to my far right, the Director of the Office of Innovation, Beth Noveck. And again, I'd like to extend a special, particular welcome to Senator and dear friend Cory Booker. Senator, great to have you with us. We'll hopefully get a minute or two to discuss the federal response.

I was honored on Friday, I believe, to tour – the days are running one to the next – the field medical station in Secaucus at the Meadowlands Exposition Center. I think the Senator and I are trying to line up our schedules to do the same, Senator Booker and I, on Wednesday for the field medical station in Edison, New Jersey. Honored to have you, Senator, God bless you. Again, we were just on the VTC with each other together.

A couple of folks in the audience, the Director of the Department of Homeland Security, Mr. Jared Maples; Cory Booker's Chief of Staff Matt Klapper, dear friend is with us; and the Medical Director of the Communicable Disease Service who normally sits up here with us, I apologize, Ed, nothing personal; we've got the Department of Health, Dr. Ed Lifshitz. Ed, in particular, will be here to answer any questions you may have on the epidemiological front.

Senator Cory Booker: Did I bump Ed out?

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Governor Phil Murphy: You did, but Ed was very gracious about it. As we had been doing of late and we'll continue to do, let's get to the numbers upfront, and they as usual, of late, have been sobering. Since yesterday, we have received another 3,663 positive test results. That brings the statewide total to 41,090. Again 3,663, as you can see, new positive test results bringing the statewide total to 41,090. Sadly, we must also report another 86 deaths due to COVID-19 complications. With these, our statewide total has now eclipsed 1,000. It sits now at 1,003.

Again, each one of these blessed souls, blessed lives. We pray and mourn with their families and friends. God rest them all. As you know, since the end of the week, our flags around the state have been at half-mast in whatever symbolic, but I have to say as well, substantive and heartfelt tribute to these lives lost.

I also want to celebrate for a minute four of the lives that we've lost. Literally I just learned not many moments ago of the passing of a good friend, Jersey City Councilman Michael Yun. I had literally exchanged notes with Michael probably about not more than a week ago. Look at that guy with that bow tie. He was a respected leader, not just in Jersey City, but in Hudson County. A good man, a great professional, a terrific husband, father, grandfather. We stand with Jersey City and with Hudson County in mourning his loss. We send our deepest prayers and thoughts to his family. An outstanding public servant and a really, really good guy.

Colette Lamothe-Galette. She was most recently a Senior Program Officer at the Nicholson Foundation, but she is remembered fondly by so many for so many of her many years at the New Jersey Department of Health, Judy, as you know. Collette was raised in Newark, educated at Yale and dedicated her life to eliminating health disparities and improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable populations across New Jersey. She was a prominent voice in both population health and environmental justice policy. In fact, she was working with my wife, First Lady Tammy Murphy, in the search for solutions to our infant and maternal mortality crisis among African Americans. She will be sorely, sorely missed and she was loved by so many. God bless you, Colette.

Daisy Doronila, look at Daisy, bless her. She served as a nurse at the Hudson County Correctional Center for more than 20 years. We lost Daisy yesterday morning. She was a single mom. She lived in Nutley for many, many years. She was a proud member of District 1199. Jay asked me and I was back and forth with Sue Cleary, its leader yesterday, mourning Daisy's loss. I spoke yesterday with Daisy's daughter Denise and came away with a deep appreciation for how much she gave to her family and her community. Again, a heroic healthcare worker, single mom, a blessed soul, and a life lost.

How about Susan Cicala? She was a registered nurse – there's Susan – for 37 years, working at both Clara Maass Medical Center and Northern State Prison. She was also a wife, her husband Steven works for the State Medical Examiner's Office, a mother, a grandmother, an aunt and a sister. In fact, here she is holding her first grandchild, Justin. Her loss will be felt by so many, and our hearts and deepest sympathies and prayers again are with her family.

They join the souls we have already memorialized, including yesterday on social media. Weehawken Finance Director and longtime Board of Education Member Rich Barsa and Javiera Rodriguez. Javi was a member of the Child Study Team at Becton Regional High School. Every single one of them, named and unnamed, was a cherished member of our New Jersey family and every one will be remembered and never forgotten.

I know these numbers can be scary. Seeing the faces we have lost makes this all the more real, I think, for each of us, but we cannot give in to fear or sadness. We must resolve to continue our fight together to crack the back of this crisis and flatten the curve so we have fewer and fewer lives lost and friends to mourn. And we can do this. We are now two weeks into our most aggressive push for social distancing. I know it feels much longer, by the way, for all of us. Trust me, we all up here feel that too. But we have to do this. We have no choice. We have to take it seriously and we have to bat 1,000. Before we turn to questions and answers, Pat will give us a quick overnight compliance update.

When we began our first discussions for responding to this emergency as far back as January, well more, by the way, than a month before our first case of COVID-19 was ever confirmed, we knew that our best chance of getting out in front and staying in front would require a data-driven approach. As I've said many times before,

and Beth embodies this, Judy and her team embody this, we are a Moneyball operation. We think if you get the highest quality data, and you make your decisions based on the data, you make the right decisions, ultimately.

We would not leave anything to chance, or rely on anecdotal evidence, to the very best of our abilities. We knew that only an objective, fact-based and as I said, Moneyball approach, would get us through this. And it is through this approach that our aggressive stance on social distancing has taken shape. That's an important point to note here. We didn't just pick social distancing because it seemed like it might be a good idea to try. We did it based on the facts, based on historical and current facts.

With great help from Beth and her team through the Office of Innovation, and I want to give a particular shout out to Lakshmi Subramanian in partnership, as well as in partnership with Judy and her team at the Department of Health, we have built a strong modeling program that we can use with great and increasing confidence. Today, as I predicted over the past few days when we've been together, we'd like to share some of that data with you. What we can see together is that while we are not anywhere close to being out of the woods as of yet, we are clearly on the right path to get there. So, here it goes.

The first slide, for example, shows the progressive rise in the total number of positive test results. As I have said many times before, we fully expect these numbers to rise to the levels they are rising to, and we expect them to go higher. However, what we are seeing in real time and over the past week is a decline in the growth rate of new cases, from 24% day over day on March 30, to roughly 12% today. This means that our efforts to flatten the curve are starting – and I say starting – to pay off, even with the lag time in getting testing results back from the labs. There may still be anomalous days with spikes and troughs, and we've seen them already. But the overall curve that we fit into the data is beginning – and I say beginning, and I used that word again, cautiously – beginning to flatten. Our job now is to keep flattening it to the point where our day-over-day increase is not just 12%, but is zero.

That brings us to our second slide. The shadowed line shows us where we would be had we done nothing, had we allowed for business as usual. The second line below shows us our trajectory if everyone relaxed their social distancing and stop staying at home. You can see the big uptick there, that's projected infections. And for those of you who may not be able to see that, that is approximately, Beth, 3 million infections, am I right? I believe that's 3 million. And you could see the opportunity to be meaningfully under that if we keep doing the social distancing.

The range remains wide, and it remains uncomfortably high at the high end. But it is assuming we continue this social distancing and that's the key, by the way. It remains meaningfully, even at the high end, below the numbers for which we had done nothing. Again, if we continue to practice our social distancing, if we continue to practice smart hygiene, if we continue staying home unless we absolutely need to go out, or are needed to get to an essential job, we could stick ourselves much more toward the curves on the bottom. And if we do, we get to the peak of that flatter curve much more quickly, which means we could drop down the other side of that curve much more quickly as well.

Again, at a minimum, the peak between the lower curve and the upper curve is 420,000 between those two bottom curves, rather, plus positive cases that we can prevent. This should be all the incentive we need to keep doing exactly what we're doing, because this is not a game. It is, in every sense, and we've seen it already too starkly, a matter of life and death. So this is projected infections.

Let's go to the next slide. We don't have a lot of them. This is projected hospitalizations. And as Judy said, this is the one that she lives with. This is again projected hospitalizations under a couple of different scenarios. If we keep our current practices, we could get through the peak with the hospital beds that we are preparing; the new wings, the reinstated buildings, the field medical stations. It will be tough and it will be stressful, but our health system can get through this intact.

However, if we relax our social distancing, and we put ourselves on the higher curve, we will overwhelm the system to the point that all of our contingency plans, and then some, will need to go into effect. Our healthcare system will be overrun with a surge four times what it could be. That is a nightmare scenario on a good day. But in a sustained pandemic such as this, it would be literally disastrous. We already are doing all

that we can and turning over every stone to uncover every N-95 mask, every set of gloves, every face shield, every piece of PPE, along with every ventilator we could possibly mobilize. We have a tough enough job as it is on the lower curve, by the way, but we believe fully that we can make it given our rate of PPE acquisition.

However, if you all stop, if we stop with our social distancing and we go to that higher curve, then it is not only your life that is in much more danger because of lack of supplies but it will also mean that our medical personnel and our first responders will be in that much more danger as well. Our goal is to not just have the PPE and ventilators we need, although that is a huge goal, but to get them to where they will be most needed in the coming days and coming weeks.

One more slide for you. This slide shows us, that's the PPE needs I just went through and I want to keep, if you could. This slide shows us, the next one shows us currently where those of you, which zip codes where currently those of you are visiting www.covid19.nj.gov (<http://www.covid19.nj.gov>) and taking our self-assessment are reporting from. As of this morning, this self-assessment has been used nearly 209,000 times. This is not the easiest to read but zip codes are in counties Passaic, Middlesex, two in Middlesex, two in Hudson, a third in Passaic and one in Somerset. Those are the most often self-reports right now.

From these self-reports we can get an early snapshot of where COVID-19 symptoms are beginning to be exhibited, and with greatest frequency. These are the potential hotspots that we are currently tracking so we can begin to assess our future equipment and PPE distribution needs. Our goals from day one have been twofold. One is to flatten that curve, and to give our healthcare system the ability to withstand the onslaught. And two, ensure that the equipment and PPE our frontline responders need gets to where it's needed most efficiently and before there's a crisis.

These modeling scenarios which Beth and her team and Judy and hers are constantly updating are how we meet these twin challenges. I say constantly updating. Literally, these models tomorrow will look differently than they look today, and they look differently today than they did yesterday. It's how we save lives and it's how we ensure that we will come out of this sooner and that we come out of it, as we know we will, stronger together. We can all take some pride in the work that we've done so far. The curve is flattening, but this is no time to spike any footballs or to take our foot off the gas. Even if the curve is flatter, we still have a week-and-a-half to go, at least, until we hit the peak. This is not over, and not by a longshot.

Our charge to you remains the same. Keep social distancing. Keep washing your hands. Keep staying indoors. Keep being smart. Stay at home.

Now, if I may switch gears before we hear from Senator Booker and make a couple of announcements. First, today, I'm signing an executive order to allow retired public employees to return to work, in whichever capacity they can, to help us throughout this emergency without impacting their pension status. Right now, we need all the experienced help we can get, whether it be retired law enforcement officers returning to duty or nurses who can return to University Hospital or folks who can help staff the Labor Department's Unemployment Insurance phone lines, and we need to remove any roadblocks that can keep them from service.

On testing, a reminder that both the Bergen Community College and PNC Bank Arts Center drive-through sites, which we are running in partnership with FEMA, are operating still on a staggered basis. Tomorrow, April 7th, only the Bergen Community College site will be open and the PNC Bank Art Center site will be open then on Wednesday, April 8th. Each site opens at 8:00 a.m. and it operates until it reaches its capacity of 500 tests. You must be both a New Jersey resident and you must be exhibiting symptoms of respiratory illness to be tested.

Across the state there are 15 other publicly run and accessible testing sites. These can be found by going on www.covid19.nj.gov/testing (<http://www.covid19.nj.gov/testing>). However, there are many more sites being run by hospitals or other private sector partners that are not listed. If you believe you are showing coronavirus symptoms, please call your primary care practitioner right away and they can assess you. And if you meet the standard for testing, they can direct you where to go to get a test.

Last count, according to Brady O'Connor, we had 47 testing sites around the state. And again, we have a symptom self-assessment at www.covid19.nj.gov (<http://www.covid19.nj.gov>), along with a wealth of other information and resources. I want to thank the men and women of the IBEW, Ian Leonard. Give, Ian a shout

out, as their State Political Director who made a donation of much needed PPE, N-95 masks, and Tyvec gloves, jackets, and booties. So to IBEW, we say thank you.

A couple of other updates. I spent a fair amount of time both last night and this morning with colleagues fishing, with our fishing lines out for PPE in places as far flung as the PRC, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Israel. I had a very productive session this morning with Bob Garrett and his senior medical team at Hackensack Meridian, both to thank them for their efforts, and for them to update me what they're seeing on the front lines, including things like converting cafeterias into hospital wards, and a lot of other really good work.

As I mentioned, Senator Booker and I, along with Judy, and Pat, were just off of a very productive VTC with the Vice President. He and I were on the phone both Saturday and Sunday. We've already said this publicly. We got another 500 ventilators yesterday, 250, Pat, are with us and another 250 are arriving later today, I believe. We also heard, which is terrific news today, that FEMA will extend its partnership with the state for the two testing sites at Bergen Community College and PNC Bank Arts Center until the end of May, May 31. That was a huge lift of a burden off of us. We thought that for a moment or two, that may have ended earlier. I want to thank Senator Booker and our Congressional delegation for helping us make that case as clearly as it was made.

We are going to have Department of Defense medical personnel with us beginning tomorrow, and Pat may want to give you a little bit of detail on that. Again, I want to thank the Senator, and our Congressional delegation.

And I just got off the phone literally with the President, so the details of this are early, but we had asked if New Jersey could have access to a piece of the beds that are on the USNS Comfort. And the President came back, called me a few minutes before I walked in here, to say indeed, they would grant that to New Jersey. That's a big step for us, in addition to all the other capacity. That news is literally hot off the press. I thank the President and Vice President, who were on the call together.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to salute some of the folks around our state who are digging deep to help us get through this emergency. Yesterday on Twitter, I gave thanks to Pennsauken's Sean and Jeffrey Jones, the operators of Tailored Tutoring, who are providing free help to kids who were learning from their homes, as well as the craft distillers across our state – and there are many – who have turned to producing hand sanitizer, that they are distributing to local residents and public health and safety workers.

Today I want to put a spotlight on Earth Angels for Dementia, a nonprofit based in Mays Landing, Atlantic County, that provides services and support to caregivers who are helping residents and families living with dementia. Now they're turning their focus to helping those fighting COVID-19 on the front lines by providing free meals to our public health workers and first responders. Right now these folks are working harder than ever, and we need to make sure they have the energy to keep up with this ever-shifting landscape. If you'd like to sponsor a meal for some of South Jersey's heroes, please visit earthangelsfordementia.org, and I can't thank you enough.

By the way, if you have a hero out there and you want us to know about it, check out #NJThanksYou. Let us know if somebody is making a difference in your life right now, and we would love nothing more than speaking about them. Not just the individuals and the organizations, nor can I thank you all enough for all the things everybody out there is doing that we need you to do in your communities, everywhere. Your families, your friends, your neighborhoods, we're working as one family should. We're looking out for each other and we're supporting each other. The best way we are doing that is by practicing social distancing. How crazy is that? We are here for each other by being not near each other, but we've talked about this before. There's a bond. There's something bigger than each of us in all of us that we are establishing here in New Jersey like never before, and I'll bet like nowhere else in our country.

Don't be lulled, again, into thinking that we can hit our peak early. If we can indeed achieve those best-case scenarios curves I talked about, that things go back right away to the way they used to be. It will be several weeks beyond that, at least, as we ride that downward curve, so we all have to stay disciplined. Remember,

it's a marathon, not a sprint. And your frustration, your lack of patience, your anxiety, we understand it completely. We get it, but the only way we whip this is to stay doing what we're doing, staying home, staying smart, doing all the things we've talked about in terms of how we win wars.

We can do this. We're New Jersey. We're used to doing the impossible. God bless you all and thank you. With that, please help me welcome an extraordinary fighter for our interests as a Councilman, as a Mayor, as a US Senator, as a guy with a life story unlike any that I know. Please help me welcome Senator Cory Booker.

Senator Cory Booker: Thank you very much, Governor. I really appreciate you and I appreciate your whole team. This has been a remarkably challenging time, but I've got to witness up close the incredible, really greatness, of the Governor and his extended team. Martin Luther King was assassinated, the anniversary of his assassination was just this past weekend. He taught us the effect that it's not where you stand in times of comfort and convenience. It's times of challenge and trial and difficulty you really do get to see the true character of individuals. It's been a privilege for me as a child of New Jersey to see at this time of our greatest, most unprecedented challenge that we are fortunate enough to have a Governor and the team that he's surrounded with. We know now where he stands. I've got to see him at all hours of the day and night in the midst of this crisis. I want to thank him and his team. It's been an honor of mine and my team to work so closely with them.

Before I start with some of my prepared points that I want to go through, I do want to reiterate some of the things that the Governor said about my past. I have been in elected leadership during 9/11. I was in elected leadership during Hurricane Sandy and as a Councilman, as a Mayor respectively. Those were difficult and tragic times, but it might seem odd for me to say they were times in my life where I saw the best of America, and frankly the best of New Jersey. In times of tragedy, of loss of life, of destroyed homes and businesses, we are a state that constantly defines ourselves as being a state that comes together. We show that we are Jersey Strong during those times of challenges.

As a Mayor of our state's largest city, even when it wasn't a tragedy, a national emergency, I saw the capacity of this state's compassion and empathy and action, whether it was the fallen officer or firefighter or whether it was a shooting victim or a house fire. I've seen the ability of our state to respond to darkness with overwhelming light and brilliance.

This now is one of those times of unprecedented challenge where we are in the depths of a crisis that will endure for weeks on, and it is a time that calls for all of us to demonstrate the best of who we are as we face this difficult time. I want to thank all of those heroes in our state, on the front lines, in the trenches every day from people who are putting themselves and their families, in fact, at risk because they are willing to sacrifice for others.

That vulnerability, as the writer Brené Brown teaches us, is the necessary ingredient for true courage. We see that kind of courage and heroic nature in our state yet again.

I do want to say something, as the Governor so rightfully acknowledged, the loss of life that we in this period of crisis, and that our state leaders and folks meeting this challenge are dealing with a frenetic pace of activity, I do want to remind for the mental health of our state that we cannot trample upon this time of grief for so many New Jerseyans. This is a time of pain and hurt as there are people who are losing their parents and their grandparents and their siblings and their family members. There are also people who have put their entire lives, decades or years, into building up their dream, a business or some kind of nonprofit that now see the clouds darkening and the potential of the unimaginable loss.

This is a time that we should be present with our pain and our grief and be present for each other. That is not a sign of weakness. In fact, that only will add to our grit and greatness. This is going to be a very challenging time and these coming weeks will be a true test of who we are. I want to encourage us as we are isolated from each other, let's still be present with one another. As we talk about social distancing, let's still reach out to one another. That more than ever is going to be critically necessary.

I am proud that in this time of challenge we have seen a lot of bipartisan work, and watching the Governor and the Vice President engage today only demonstrates our commitment to people and not to politics. As a result of that, some good things have come from a bill, the CARES Act, which I am proud of. It's an imperfect

bill. It doesn't have everything in it that I would want, but I want to highlight some things that have come through, and frankly highlight some things that are still in development.

The first and perhaps one of the greatest concerns that we hear about is just the unemployment benefits for New Jerseyans. We are seeing unprecedented, record numbers of unemployment claims. I want to make a few critical points.

Number one, we have expanded the length and duration of unemployment benefits and those who are eligible. Right now, the amounts themselves have increased and there'll be an additional \$600 in emergency unemployment relief for the next four months. This means that New Jerseyans also who might not have been eligible are now eligible for unemployment insurance, so do not just assume that the old rules apply. There are now qualifications if you are self-employed, a gig economy worker, an independent contractor like rideshare drivers, all of those are now eligible for unemployment insurance and more federal officials are being called up to work in the Department of Labor to deal with this surge. There's obviously long waits, but your resources that you get, yesterday the Department of Labor released updated guidance to states for implementation of the Pandemic Unemployment Insurance. One of the things we should know is that the guidelines, the new guidelines being written, will provide up to 39 weeks of benefits to those who qualify. Again, an expanded qualification pool and something that I hope can reassure some people is that those payments are retroactive for weeks of unemployment starting on or after January 27, 2020. So while it may take you a little time to get through and get those benefits, they are retroactive back to January, should you qualify, and that's very important.

A lot of folks are asking about those direct payments, and this bill includes direct cash payments. I was fighting for larger cash payments and for more frequent cash payments, something that we can go back to in the next bill. But for now, 80% of New Jersey families -- 80% of New Jersey families -- qualify for these direct cash payments. As we heard directly from the Secretary of Treasury and the Vice President today, is they are intending that those first direct cash payments will go out the week of April 13th. That's next week those direct cash payments should start going out for people who have direct deposit information already on file with the government. So that, again, is the vast majority of New Jerseyans will get up to \$1,200 for individuals, \$2,400 for couples, plus an additional \$500 per child. That's up to people earning about \$75,000 as individuals and \$150,000 as couples. Those payments will phase out for people up to \$99,000 for individuals and double that.

If you filed a tax return in 2018 or 2019, you do not need to do anything to receive that benefit. For Social Security recipients, you do not need to take any additional action, but you can go again to my website, booker.senate.gov/coronavirus to find out information about anything that I'm talking about, but also critical information about those cash payments if you're concerned about whether you will receive them or not.

And then finally, the biggest area that people are reaching out to me about is that the bill includes an additional \$10 million available per small business in New Jersey and nonprofit, this includes churches and religious organizations that have less than 500 people can get what's called the New Paycheck Protection Program, and up to \$10,000 in Small Business Administration, SBA emergency grants for small businesses. This is a considerable opportunity for a lot of businesses. We are still rating some rules and guidance on this, but the program is already starting to get up and going. I encourage folks, again, to visit my website for more information or the SBA's website.

The Governor and I are already talking about trying to make sure we find ways through our offices to streamline that, because these are resources to our small businesses, helping people keep folks employed or bring people back onto work, as well as, frankly, help make sure that when our economy needs to pick back up after the Governor sees fit to begin relaxing rules many weeks from now, that we have businesses that can get going, full stop.

I want to say that there's many other aspects to this bill that bring critical aid to our state. Billions and billions of dollars, including flexible dollars for our state government as a whole to operate, money going to the localities, community development block grant money going out. But every single county, every single county in New Jersey will have streams of revenue that will be helping them, their localities or individuals. This was a very generous bill on many fronts and something that I believe could help a lot of New Jerseyans right away.

I want to say finally that we are going to be looking towards a "COVID Four". Me, Senator Menendez, and the entire New Jersey delegation are already in talks that we anticipate more will have to be done. Comments to that effect have been made from the Speaker of the House all the way to the White House themselves, and I want folks to know that my priorities in working with the Governor are going to be to make sure that we get more resources for our municipalities, our county governments and our state governments. We want to make sure that direct payments to New Jerseyans, that we see more direct payments going and we're going to be fighting for future payments.

We also want to make sure that a lot of New Jerseyans who are worried about health coverage overall, there were 25-plus million Americans that do not have health coverage, including hundreds of thousands here, New Jerseyans. We want to make sure that we are getting more resources to them, and I have called upon the President to specifically make sure that we expand the enrollment period here in New Jersey and nationally for people that do not have health insurance, that we do the common sense thing to expand enrollment in the Affordable Care Act.

Governor Murphy has come on board on my request, along with Senator Menendez, to make sure that we open a special enrollment period. The Trump administration right now has decided against reopening it, but really my question for the President is, if you are not going to open up health insurance enrollment during a healthcare crisis that has killed close to 10,000 Americans, including over 1,000 New Jerseyans, then what are you waiting for?

There are many New Jerseyans that have underlying health conditions from diabetes to respiratory concerns, that this puts them at even higher risk. Folks who worry that they might not have the resources to cover their medical expenses, we need to take that fear and insecurity off the table. I ask the President of the United States to make a decision, what he can do, to ensure that all Americans who want health insurance can get it through the Affordable Care Act.

It is these issues and others that my office will continue to fight for. And again, if you need to reach out to me or my team, our office, we have people all over the state ready to answer questions or concerns. Please visit my website. But I will finally just say, to what the Governor said, our strength ultimately lies with each other, our ability to come together, to stand together, to work together in the State of New Jersey. There is no crisis, as we've seen throughout American history, there is no crisis greater than who we are as a people. And now more than ever, we need to demonstrate that strength, that unity now.

We are seeing that already and I am grateful to the people of New Jersey for your continued grit, your continued courage, and continued strength. May God be with us as we continue to work through this very difficult time. Thank you, Governor.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Senator. Thank you for your fierce advocacy on our behalf. The CARES Act makes a big difference for our state. It's not the final step, as you rightfully pointed out. We need a lot more help, but boy, it's a step in the right direction. On that same video call, I stressed, and I know you support this, the most, the maximum flexibility in terms of payments to states. We need as much latitude as possible so we can continue to be there for folks who are sick or lost their jobs, or small businesses.

But thank you for everything, for what you've done and what you will do. Bless you. With that, may I introduce the woman to my right who needs no introduction, the Commissioner of the Department Of Health, Judy Persichilli.

Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli: Thank you Governor, and thank you, Senator Booker. As I've mentioned previously, the department has been modeling impacts on our hospitals by this epidemic, on a daily basis. The tool that we have presented to you is called Chime. It's developed by Penn Medicine and it's focused on the impact of the surge on hospital and resources.

Today we looked at a model that indicates, similar to Chime, that the next two weeks we will see significant activity in our hospitals. As the Governor shared, predictive modeling relies on several inputs. The impact of social distancing, and that was implemented in New Jersey over a series of steps, just about 14 days ago. The number of positive cases reported daily. The number of cases in our hospitals and their length of stay, by critical care and also by medical surgical beds. Along with the number of positive cases and cases under investigation, all of those inputs help us to predict the need for resources and hospital beds.

You may also be aware of one developed by the University of Washington. They developed a model, it's published online and many people have seen it. It's published by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. It's designed, again, specifically to address planning needs of our hospital administrators and local governments. That is the model that you may see the Corona Taskforce of the White House using.

These types of models are projections. They're based on available data and assumptions, and they are helpful in planning both for bed capacity and the distribution of resources. Well, I'm sure by now you're asking, are we prepared? After reviewing three or four different models, are we prepared? Well, you know that our hospitals have been working to double their critical care capacity. We are aggressively working to open alternate care sites, which include the field medical stations, closed hospitals, empty long-term care facilities, closed rehab building sites, closed wings of existing hospitals, and also hotels.

Today we have identified and we're standing up over 26,000 care spaces. That's in addition to the additional spaces that I know the hospitals are standing up, and in addition to the available beds that the Governor just reported from the US Comfort. Additionally, not included in that number are the number of hotel rooms that we will be able to house recovering individuals. We know these resources will be greatly in need as the cases continue to increase in our state.

As the governor mentioned, we're reporting 3,663 new cases for a total of 41,090 cases in the state. On the screen you'll see the dashboard which is available on the Department of Health website. Sadly, we're reporting 86 new deaths. Fourteen deaths were from Essex County, 11 each from Bergen and Passaic counties, nine from Ocean, seven each from Middlesex and Union, five each from Hudson, Mars and Somerset Counties, four from Monmouth County, three from Mercer County, two from Sussex, and one each from Cape May and Warren counties, and we are still determining the county of residence for one additional death. Fifteen of these new deaths were residents of a long-term care facility, so we now sorrowfully report 1,003 fatalities in our state, and we offer our sympathies to the families who have lost loved ones.

The breakdown of the 1,003 cases are as follows: 60% are male, 40% are female. The age range, 1% under 30 years, 6% 30 to 49 years, 16% 50 to 64 years, 32% 65 to 79 years, and 45%, or 452 of the cases over 80 years of age. We are now collecting information by race. 33% of the reported cases are white, 12% Black or African American, 2% Asian, 7% other, and we are still searching our records for 449, or 45% of the cases.

We are reporting on our dashboard, the underlying conditions; 399 of our cases do have underlying conditions. Those conditions are reported as 12% Diabetes Mellitus, 20% cardiovascular disease, 4% cancer, 7% chronic renal disease, 8% asthma, emphysema or COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and 10% other chronic conditions.

The county breakdown of the new cases is as follows: Atlantic 10, Bergen 570, Burlington 99, Camden 90, Cape May eight, Cumberland 10, Essex 369, Gloucester 30, Hudson 340, 121, Mercer 71, Middlesex 299, Monmouth 178, Mars 122, Ocean 187, Passaic 419, Salem 3, Somerset 51, Sussex 24, Union 419, and Warren 19, and we are still gathering more details on 324 of the new cases.

Today there have been nearly 84,768 tests performed with 36,826 positives, which equates to a percent positivity rate of 43.44%. 159 of our long-term care facilities in the state have at least one documented COVID-19 positive case. We are calling today, as we sit here, there is a team of people calling every long-term care facility or assisted living or dementia home to determine their adherence to our directive to notify their residents, staff and relatives of the residents of an outbreak in their facility.

We're also reporting today that three of our state's five developmental centers have at least one resident who have tested positive for COVID-19. Sadly, there has also been one death associated with a developmental center resident. The individual was in his 80s, at high risk, and passed away in a hospital.

As you know, CDC recommended the use of cloth face coverings in community settings to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. I want to remind everyone that individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose and mouth when removing your face covering. Individuals should do the following when using a face covering. Put the cloth face cover on using clean hands. Put the cloth face cover on with ear bands or straps, and avoid touching the front of the cloth face cover, especially if it has been used already for the day. Clean your hands first with hand sanitizer if you need to adjust your cloth face cover while shopping or going out for essential items. Clean your hands before you remove the cloth face cover. Fold the outer part onto itself, this

is the potentially contaminated side, and store it in a paper bag. Wash your hands again after removing. As a reminder, cloth face coverings aren't recommended for kids under the age of two, people who are incapacitated, have difficulty breathing, or cannot easily take off their masks.

Additionally, the COVID-19 outbreak is impacting the operations of programs across the state, which includes our New Jersey Medicinal Marijuana Program. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in New Jersey, the Department of Health has been working closely with patients, caregivers and dispensaries to ensure access is maintained for the over 74,000 patients enrolled in the Department's Medicinal Marijuana Program. We've allowed dispensaries to provide curbside, drive-up dispensing services. We've allowed them to help patients who are medically fragile and/or sick and reduced all caregiver fees to \$20 so they can more easily get assistance accessing the dispensaries.

We also are addressing the workforce issues at the ATCs. We've implemented a new employee onboarding process that reduces the wait time, to get new employees working from weeks to days. Even with these actions over the last few weeks, the Division of Medicinal Marijuana has been tracking some excessive wait times and increased utilization at some of our dispensaries. Like grocery stores and pharmacies, individuals seem to be making purchases at an increased rate due to the pandemic. It's important to note, however, that supply remains strong and these problems are not industry wide. We continue to explore additional regulatory solutions but for everything we do via waiver or emergency rule, the industry needs to be able to accommodate it. So like all essential businesses, the dispensaries are doing their best to respond to this public health crisis.

It's vital that patients and caregivers understand that these businesses are essential and will not be shut down during the pandemic. We strongly advise patients and caregivers to limit your trips to the ATCs to once per month. Plan your future purchases. If the ATC of your choice is crowded, go to one that isn't. And for everyone during this time, be calm, be patient, and be understanding. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Judy. As always, extraordinary leadership and thank you for your words. A couple of quick things. I want to note that again 159 out of the 375 long-term care facilities, that number was 10 days ago in the teens. We predicted at the time that it would go up at a relatively steep curve and it has. The top five counties infected had been the same for the past few days. These are total infections. Bergen still far and away, number one, Essex number two, Hudson three, Passaic four, Union five. And you mentioned race, and that's something that you and I have spoken, Beth and I spoke about it overnight. That's something that we have wanted to get to. That's the first cut of this. That's a number that, God willing, we'll be able to regularly, maybe even daily, give you an update on. The data is right now imperfect, but we've had a lot of incoming requests to try to clarify as best we can the racial profile, particularly of our lost loved ones. So for all the above, thank you.

Beth, as you take us through a couple of your analyses, again, sometimes these slides are hard to read. I know at least one, if not several of the ones I had up there were hard to read. It's important for folks to realize that we're not doing this without reason, and that had we let – I'd love to make sure if you could hit this one more time. Had we decided in January to sort of sit back and let this thing run its course, whether it's Chime, or the Lakshmi or the State of Washington, whatever it might be, the numbers of infections, the numbers of hospitalizations, relative to even now our worst case projections. So I'm not even comparing what it would have been to our nirvana outlook. I'm talking about what it would have been, multiples of what is right now our worst-case projections.

Folks need to hear that for two reasons. Number one, what you're doing is making the difference. It's making a big difference, and we have enough data now to say that comfortably. And with equal passion, if we don't keep doing what we're doing, we're still going to be in a world of hurt, where our healthcare system, no matter how good a job we do to prepare, will be overwhelmed like a tsunami. And both of those statements, while they may seem at odds with each other, both are verifiably true. With that, please help me welcome our Chief Innovation Officer back to the table again, Beth Novak.

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Great, Governor, thank you very much. Let me apologize that the wonderful and heroic staff member, [Anwar Gunesh ? 0:54:54], who makes the slides, who's under 40, doesn't realize that everyone reading them is over 40. We will put some dark text on some light backgrounds next time to account for that.

Governor Phil Murphy: Amen to that. Thank you.

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: But thank you to him for all of his help with that. So last week I was here to talk about technology more generally, and this week I wanted to expand on that discussion to focus more on, as Judy has discussed and the Governor has talked about, the important role that data is playing in this crisis. Allowing us to govern on the basis of fact, to measure when our efforts are working and to support those on the frontlines with the information that they so desperately need to make what are life-and-death decisions.

Data is really helping all of us though, here at the table and on the public to understand the seriousness of this crisis, and how every one of us, to emphasize your point, has a really important part to play in fighting this scourge by staying at home. We showed you that one curve about what could have happened or would have happened had we not stayed at home, but don't forget, that's not even the worst case. There are places in which people not only didn't stay at home, they went out and had parades, they went out and had parties, they got together, and those numbers are looking worse for those jurisdictions.

We really, really can't emphasize enough how important it is for us to all comprehend the data that we're looking at, in order to understand the ways in which, when we do things right, we can save lives and we can reduce the rate at which the virus is spreading.

We're very lucky in the state, I might add, to have people in our Office of Innovation and the Department of Health, a strong complement in the State Police, also in the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, and, of course, the tech professionals in our Office of Information Technology, who understand and can work with data and technology to allow us to deliver these products so that we can work in this data-informed way. And, so that we don't miss anything, we're working with outside partners, as we mentioned, like Professor Lakshmi Subramanian of the Courant Institute of Mathematics, who is in turn in touch with professors at MIT and Berkeley and Caltech and all around the world, and governments around the world, to make sure that we're using data, and again, predictive data, to allow us to do as much as we can here.

We do run multiple models, in order that we can constantly understand the best and the worst-case scenarios. To be clear, those models are informed by and they're tested against what we're actually seeing on the ground in terms of reality. So what did we see yesterday? What did we see the day before? We're constantly tweaking the model to make sure that it's actually fitting the progression of what we're seeing here in New Jersey, even as we look at what's happened in Italy, in Iran, in other places to understand what could happen.

We're running this predictive modeling daily. That is both counting the current state and looking ahead to what could be, to allow us to make sure, again, that we have a good sense of what could come. That allows us, again, to be able to understand what we need to do more of. So knowing, for example, that as you've already pointed out, our numbers went from cases that were multiple previously by 45% day on day, to 20%, and now to 12%, and a little bit over 12.18%. That tells us that we're going in the right direction, but there is still a lot more that needs to be done to get that number down to zero.

A couple of just additional pointers on data, just to understand where some of this comes from. As the Governor already pointed out, some of that data comes from you. 207,000 anonymous users of the symptom tracker that we looked at, that's giving us some advance notice of which counties actually have sick people who may be likely to need medical care. That allows us to get sort of a hotspot and get some sense of how to plan ahead. That's so important in this world in which asymptomatic spread is contributing to growth of COVID-19. The more notice we can get, the better of where we might have hotspots, where the disease might be progressing.

Our hospitals, of course, and a whole range of facilities as Judy already talked about are reporting in to the Department of Health and New Jersey Hospital Association about the equipment that they have, the masks, the gloves, the ventilators, how much they're using, how much they have on hand. Many different actors are reporting in so that we get a comprehensive picture of the data.

We're also getting daily reports, of course, about donations and availability of PPE, that allows us to route the supplies where most needed. I know you've talked about, Governor, some of these big donations and big-ticket items, but I think it's also really heartening and I want people to know that when an auto body shop in

Medford donates 20 N-95 masks, that matters. When a family-owned boarding kennel in Moorestown offers 100 exam gloves, it matters. We have a landscaping company in Cranford that's offering 65 protective goggles. Every little bit counts and we want to encourage you to go to the donations page you see in front of you, covid19.nj.gov/donations to please donate your PPE.

People are also donating of their time, and that's giving us more data. We have 17,219 -- at least before this press conference, that number has probably grown -- medical professionals who volunteered in the last 10 days. Those people are coming not only from New Jersey, but from thousands of zip codes, literally every single state, DC and Puerto Rico. So we encourage you to go to covid19.nj.gov/volunteer. We're looking for a whole range of different professionals to help us. And again, that gives us more data about people, so that we can move people to the places that they're needed. We're getting data about your specialties and your expertise thanks to what you're telling us, but also where you want to go so we know where we can deploy you, whether it's in person or online, getting people to the places they can most help. So that gives us lots of information that we're able to work with and that can allow us to know where we need to route supplies and hopefully to predict not just where we need supplies today, but where we need them tomorrow.

Let me just wrap up by saying, of course, using data is not always easy. As you can tell, just by my short remarks, there is a lot of information to keep on top of. And we solve that problem by talking to one another a lot. There is a huge amount of work going on behind the scenes, across departments, and collaboration across agencies and actors, to allow us to make sure that we're collecting as much information as possible and importantly, that we're sharing that information so that we can operationalize it to inform our work and know where we need to get supplies, people, all the things that you've heard about.

Finally, we also get data from the website, covid19.nj.gov, 2.4 million users have used that website in the last two weeks. You can search for information there, but you can also type in a question and receive a direct response, thanks to our collaboration with the Federation of American Scientists and a network of 600 volunteer scientists who are helping to answer the questions you have about the virus. That not only gives you answers to the questions, but tells us what additional information we need to put on the website for all people. Since if you have a question, someone else probably has it and we can share it with other people.

Similarly, we've had 400,000 users of the Business Information Hub, including 13,000 live chat sessions, thanks to our partners at the Business Action Center and the EDA, who are again, thanks to the questions you're asking, allows us to know what additional information we need to publish on the website, make available through the 211 Hotline, and again, push out to people so that you have the answers you need, not just about the virus, but of course about how it affects your business, how it affects your lives, how it affects your communities.

We asked people for input to the EDA. Ask people for what kinds of support you need. And again, that data, what you told us, allowed us to develop a series of grant and loan programs. Tim Solomon was up here a couple of days ago and telling us that we got, as you'll recall, 10,000 applications in the first 76 minutes of putting those services online, again, because they were responsive to what you told us to the data and information we got from you.

So in short, as we have seen in the news stories, data is helping us to see the difference between those states like ours that have responded aggressively to the virus, and those places that have not done so. In New Jersey, we're using data to measure how we respond and to hold ourselves accountable. And by that, I mean every single one of us accountable for flattening that curve. We've all known for years that the use and reuse of aggregated and anonymous data can help with tracking disease propagation and responding to a pandemic. And while data and technology cannot stop the pandemic, they can help us respond effectively and efficient. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Beth. thank you. A couple of quick things. Someone called me the COBOL King, I'm not sure that was a compliment, but we've gotten a lot of folks who have raised their hand to say they know how to program in COBOL. Is it fair to say we're going to put a volunteer page for the COBOL-facile among us?

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Thanks to our collaborators, yes, we're going to have -- I want to, first of all, thank the outpouring of volunteers, medical professionals that we've seen donations of PPE, but also technologists who have stepped up thanks to your remarks the other day, people coming out of the

woodwork offering their assistance to help us, and we are using a lot of volunteer help already. We're going to be standing up a site this week to allow us to take on volunteers of a wide variety, since there's so much. You always talk about the talent in this state. That's what we need to tap into. It's all hands on deck and we're going to have some more to talk about that this week.

Governor Phil Murphy: Now, just before we get a quick compliance report from Pat, and I know you've got to go here shortly, so I want to just repeat something I said earlier. Regardless of the model that's being used, and while you don't have one single answer to the question on the test, that shouldn't be something that we're concerned about. We actually should welcome the fact that there are different models and that we're looking at this through a number of different prisms. But regardless of which model you look at, there is a runaway freight train amount of infections and hospitalizations and fatalities. That, as Beth has rightfully said, is probably even worse than the 3 million number that I referred to earlier, particularly if we had allowed that runaway freight train to begin its momentum in January, early February.

The very good news, on the one hand, is thanks to your efforts, everybody, we don't have that. But here's the challenging news. Is that the range that we're operating in, from best to worst, still envisions potential swamping of our healthcare system. Too many people sick, too many lost lives if we don't keep on it, if we don't keep our foot on the gas. So thanks to you all, and you deserve the credit, all 9 million of you out there. Thanks to you all, we have brought the runaway freight train numbers down meaningfully, and that's really good news.

The problem is that even in that range that we're now operating, we could still, if we're not careful, if we take our foot off the gas, if we give up on social distancing even somewhat, we're going to be in a situation where no matter how good and prepared we are, we won't be able to handle it, and too many lives will be lost. I'm begging everybody. Please stay the course. I know the Senator joins me, the Colonel, Commissioner, Beth is Chief of our Innovation Team, each and every one of us, Jared, please stay the course.

And the temptation, I came in here, it was a beautiful day outside. The temptations will grow and not lessen. I'm fearful that too many people will hear, hey, this is working, and sit back and maybe put their feet up. We cannot let that happen under any circumstances, we've got to kill this. And then once we've killed it, we can responsibly begin to put one foot in front of the other. So Judy, thank you for everything, Beth, thank you likewise. And by the way, if you were to come back and if we were to talk about these curves tomorrow, they would look differently, and God willing, they'll continue to look better. But they'll only look better if you all out there and we do our share and do our part. Pat, do you mind giving us a quick overnight compliance report and anything else that's on your mind?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: Sure. To your point about the Department of Defense medical staff, Governor, and welcome Senator, thanks for stopping by the EOC today. I talked to Major General John King. He is on his way up from Georgia now. He's been tapped by the Department of Defense to be the Command and Control Overseer of the medical staff that's coming. 170 staff members will support the Edison site, as well as 85 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. I will be meeting with him and Adjutant General Beale tomorrow morning to certainly welcome him to New Jersey, and to offer our appreciation for his service to New Jersey.

As far as the overnight, really over the weekend since we didn't have it, there was a large party in Rumson. That subject decided to play a concert from his porch and they did not disperse too easily, but there were several charges filed there. To that point, to stress the amount of data that the Governor and Beth have talked about, if nothing else, think that your actions at a gathering like that may lead potentially to somebody not getting a ventilator. That's the reality of this virus. So if people think it's, you know, a joke and there's levity around it, it's not. Because if you sat in the meetings that we sat in and discussed the reality of what's coming down in the next couple weeks, to the Governor's point, we're doing everything that we can, but these parties may lead to somebody not being on a ventilator, and that's the truth of it. I just wanted to stress that.

Newark issued 66 summonses and closed 12 businesses. In Hamilton, a subject under arrest for driving under the influence while being process spat and coughed on the police officer. In Hillside, a woman was charged for having 20-plus people at her residence. In Woolwich, a gentleman was under arrest for violating a temporary restraining order. He too spat and coughed on officers claiming he had COVID-19. In Kearny, a subject under arrest for burglary also coughed on officers, indicating that he had corona.

And just beyond COVID, Governor, there were four shootings over the weekend in Trenton. Unfortunately, eight people were struck, five of those people survived and three homicides occurred. We, as always, have had a long standing phenomenal relationship with Trenton Police Department and will continue those efforts and all that we can do to if not decrease, but to hopefully totally stop the violent crime that's occurring in our capital. Thanks, Gov.

Governor Phil Murphy: Colonel, thank you and God rest the lost lives. I've to, this is a surprise for the Colonel. He sent me a photograph over the weekend, I want to pull that up if I could. This is a real photo. This is GIs, from the Colonel, walking through an area suspected of having mines planted underground, a minefield. This was apparently common practice, that the GI would pick up, the jackass, because the jackass would unwittingly just meander through the field, kind of behaving on his or her own and inadvertently stepping on a mine and blowing everybody up. So to all the jackasses out there, who we now have to carry to make sure they don't make life worse for the rest of us, we know who you are and we will not relent.

The party in Rumson, by the way, I was told was by a Pink Floyd cover band. I myself am a Pink Floyd fan. I'm from the Syd Barrett era, but the fact of the matter is, and the language they used against the police officers who showed up, purportedly, was so vile and so unacceptable. And the things they said, I just cannot fathom somebody coughing on somebody and claiming that they've got coronavirus. Man, we're at war. The great news is overwhelmingly millions of New Jerseyans are doing the thing and it's pain, it's hell, it's hard. Folks have stood up and stood tall in such a big way, but as usual, there's a vast minority who are ruining it for the rest of us. So to all the jackasses out there and all the knuckleheads out there, get with the program. We will not relent until we have 100% compliance. Pat, thank you for that.

I heard, before we go to questions, I heard the Queen speak yesterday, which is pretty incredible. I don't know how long she's been on the throne, but it's only the fourth time she's spoke other than her annual Christmas greeting. And as I mentioned on television yesterday, the Prime Minister among so many others who are sick, are in our prayers. And she too went to the same period in history that you and I have talked about, Cory, and it's that period of in World War II when the citizens, there and here eventually, but in her case, it was there. Did not know, didn't yet understand how overwhelming the opposition was. Or they sensed it, but they didn't yet understand where it was headed.

She spoke to that. And she spoke to the fact that she herself had given a speech with her sister when she was Princess Elizabeth, at the time. And I thought I'd mentioned Churchill. Again, if we could all learn a tip of a fingernail of his leadership and the grit and the courage of the folks, citizens at that moment in time, particularly early on before the US had joined in, and obviously all the American heroes who helped win the war. But I thought of his famous line, which was August of 1940. "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." And I thought to myself, yes and no. He meant in that speech the amount of, the millions of citizens who owed their safety and security at that moment to the brave RAF pilots who had fought the mighty German Luftwaffe toe to toe. But I thought to myself, both then and even more now, the analogy is, as we've said to you, we're fighting a war with two fronts: social distancing and healthcare capacity and healthcare heroism.

The so few in our life today are those healthcare workers, those first responders, the folks who are at the frontlines dealing with this on behalf of the millions of us. But it works both ways too. And I have to say this gets back to the compliance and so many millions of you out there doing the right things. The so many are also doing your part for the so few over here. This does work both ways. The heroes at the frontlines, sadly in some case, giving up their lives in our healthcare system, first responders. But over here, the work on behalf of millions to flatten the heck out of that curve, to bring it down as aggressively as we have and we must continue to do. You are also giving them a lifeline. You're giving them a way forward. It works both ways. Then in 1940 in England, and now, 2020 in the great State of New Jersey. You've got to go or you're going to –

Senator Cory Booker: I'll stay for about seven more minutes, if there's any questions for me when you do Q&A.

Governor Phil Murphy: I would love that. We're going to start over here. Matt, you're first up to bat.

Q&A Session

Reporter: So a few things here, Governor. First, I'm curious if you have any updates on the Abbott Labs, five-minute testing, you mentioned that. Just curious if we're using those, where they're being used? Any updates from the Commissioner on the total amount of people that have been treated and released? Any updates on the website about total statistics beyond what's usually given?

Senator, maybe this is something you can take, and it's for the Governor. But, Governor, I'm curious if you have any plans to make sure some of the \$15.7 million in federal funds given to urban areas from the federal government will also be available to more rural counties and less populated areas who don't qualify on their own.

Lastly, we've spoken directly to nurses who've said they've been told to report to work even after they were infected and before they thought that they were ready to return to work. I know that DOH issued guidelines last week, but I'm just curious how you respond to the folks that are being told to report back to work when they're not 100%.

Governor Phil Murphy: Let me just say a couple of quick general comments, then maybe Cory, to you, and then Judy, do you mind weighing in? Abbott Labs actually came up on our VTC with the Vice President today. I don't have any statistics for you, Mahen, we can get back. I actually don't know how many tests. Judy and I were having a sidebar. It's a game changer, if in fact it does what it says it does. And importantly, it's scalable. Its scalability here is the key. I saw Sue's article on healthcare workers being forced to go back to work and I assume there's a record that we can correct there, which I'll defer to Judy. But Cory, any anything on the federal money?

Senator Cory Booker: With this, I saw sort of explode and you and I both heard from Congressman Josh Gottheimer, who was right on it, about certain counties perhaps being left out of the CARES Act, which is just not true. I heard some people trying to use, exploit it for political advantage in those areas to attack a lot of our Congressional delegation, which was really disappointing to see that kind of partisanship at a time our state needs to not only stay together, but stay together and adhere to the truth.

So understand this: there is, for CDBG money, community development block grant money, there is a formula based upon past recipients but the Governor has a lot of flexibility in some of those dollars as well. But for every county, all 21, they should understand they're eligible for Byrne and JAG grants to help with local police departments and fire departments. That's something we want to see getting into every single county. They're eligible for resources for our public schools all over the state of New Jersey, our resources there.

The businesses in our state, in every single county, those small businesses, whether it's your favorite pizza joint or your yoga studio, all of those are eligible for resources in this grant. I talked about the unemployment insurance that's available, the cash payments to 80% of New Jerseyans, all over. Our hospitals that are spread out all throughout the states, and not only hospitals, but medical providers are available for a tremendous amount of this money.

These political posts that I started seeing pop up on Facebook that certain counties were cut out of the CARES Act was just painful to see, because it was so misleading to people that live in those counties. Senator Menendez and I on the Senate side are fighting tremendously every day with county leaders in all 21 of our counties to try to get them the resources that they need. I've held calls now with, I guess about 350 to 400 mayors signed up, to each of our calls with every single mayor letting them know the resources that are there.

And we're not done yet. I have to give a lot of credit to this Governor, because when we do things on the federal level, he often doubles down on them. So aid to New Jersey businesses, for example, there are federal programs, and there are state programs as well. These are businesses in communities all over the place. This is a time that we must stand together. There is no Republican or Democratic COVID virus, COVID-19, it is affecting all of us. This virus doesn't know race. It doesn't know county lines. It doesn't know state lines. It's coming after all of us and our best strength is when we stand together to fight it.

So again, the misinformation, and by the way, the scams going on out there, Governor, are incredible right now. The scams and the lies and people trying to take advantage of fear is extraordinary. So don't politicians exploit it right now to try to make you hate another politician, left or right. Again, Governor, I was proud with

Secretary Treasurer, with Jared Kushner, with the Vice President, to watch our command teams work together like they are. Do not fall into the traps of these scams.

And I want to say this because it's something I've had to repeat over and over again. If anybody calls you up saying that they're calling on behalf of some official-sounding group, asking for your personal details in order to get you your check, or anything like that, do not do that. It is a scam going on in New Jersey and all over this country. People are rising up to try to take advantage of us. Just be careful. Our greatest strength right now is the truth and our unity right now in standing together and working together through this crisis.

Governor Phil Murphy: Amen. Thank you for that. Well said. Judy, either on total treated and released or any other data, and what about this story that we all read about healthcare workers being forced to go back?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Sure. A couple things. I do not have data right now on treated and released. We can probably get that as we cycle through the length of stay, post-acute care. I'm pretty sure we'll be able to get that information. I'll check with New Jersey Hospital Association and their data collection to see if we can get that.

As far as individuals, no individual that's symptomatic, our guidance is pretty specific on that, should be returning to work. And we do have guidance. Ed, I don't know whether you have comment on, I think it's 72 hours, no fever within 72 hours and there's some other guidance. I don't know if Ed would like to share?

DOH Medical Director, Communicable Disease Service Dr. Ed Lifshitz: Yes, our guidance is pretty clear. It basically has to be at least seven days since the onset of symptoms and at least three days after feverish result and a significant improvement in other symptoms. And we say a significant improvement in other symptoms because some people actually have a lagging, a little bit of cough that can last weeks or even months after infection, and we're not considering them to be infectious at that point. But again, it has to be at least a week since symptoms began and at least three days after things began getting much better.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Thanks.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you, Ed. Matt, you're good? We're going to go back. Nikita, is that you back there?

Senator Cory Booker: Governor?

Governor Phil Murphy: Yes, sir?

Senator Cory Booker: I'm going to excuse myself, but I just want to say one thing, because you got me all fired up. Because when I talk to the Governor in our personal conversations, it's always inspiring. What you talked about, British history and the endurance to that. I just want to say I'm thankful for you for always reminding me and others about New Jersey history, from the endurance of Washington's armies here through a horrible winter, all the way to the countless fire departments that rushed over on 9/11 to be there, from Alice Paul to Paul Robeson, it's in the DNA of this state to take on trial and challenge and lead the nation.

You have helped to lead this nation in your early actions, in your being the Wayne Gretzky, in many ways. Not skating to where the challenges is, but helping to skate where the puck is going to be. But that's not just you, it's all of us. And so this is the time for that historic spirit to be manifested so that our great-grandchildren talk about how we endured one of the greatest global pandemics in American history.

That gives me inspiration from looking back in the past of what we've done here in New Jersey to lead this nation in crises, but also what I'm seeing around right now from your team to people in our communities, it's just giving me so much inspiration. Let's continue that grit and I'm available for you, as you know, Governor. But again, to all that are watching, please reach out to my office if need be, or booker.senate.gov/coronavirus for critical information. Thank you.

Governor Phil Murphy: Bless you and thank you for all your leadership. I cannot imagine where we'd be without you and the team, and looking forward to seeing you, God willing, on Wednesday in Edison at the Field Medical Hospital. And Matt, thank you. Nikita? Ed, would you mind joining us? Ladies and gentlemen, Ed Lifshitz.

DOH Medical Director, Communicable Disease Service Dr. Ed Lifshitz: Thanks for having me.

Governor Phil Murphy: Please.

Nikita Biryukov, New Jersey Globe: Right, so I just have two questions today.

Governor Phil Murphy: Can you go a little closer there without letting us see dental work? Thank you.

Nikita Biryukov, New Jersey Globe: Yeah, so I just have two questions today. The first is, I know that that Center for American Progress Report that you mentioned the last time I saw you has come out and it says that nationally, we're seeing, I think between 40% and 55% compliance with social distancing measures. Have any of the new models incorporated that to give us a new curve for the disease, or are we not seeing that level of compliance in New Jersey?

For you and Judy, I know that you guys are out here pretty much every day giving out, you know, death numbers, infection numbers. Just personally, how have you two been dealing with that strain?

Governor Phil Murphy: So on the first, actually Neera Tanden has asked me to speak with her this afternoon, who runs the Center for American Progress, so it may well be about that. Beth, how would you answer that in terms of – I mean, or Judy – in terms of, we use the number, this is compliance and we had use the number 31% in the modeling, the generic historical modeling last week. I guess what you're asking is, where are we batting right now? Any idea, folks, how you'd characterize where we're batting?

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: So you're right about the 31% number as the standard number that we model, but we model alternative scenarios. That's where you get some of these alternative curves from, which look at things like what would happen if we closed schools but didn't close businesses? What would happen if we do close, you know, we do businesses and schools but don't do a full lockdown? That's part of what gives us these alternative scenarios so we can use the models, and as Judy pointed out, there are models available, and publicly available, so people can plug and play these numbers for themselves and understand really, what's the consequence of relaxing those numbers?

Governor Phil Murphy: Do you have any sense of where we in fact are batting right now, either of you?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: I'm going to make the assumption that we're a little bit higher than 31%, just based, it's very anecdotal, just based on the fact that we're hitting our 15th day of total lockdown, so to speak.

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Yeah, and I'll just add what we do is we look at the data, so we're actually looking at how the growth rate changes rather than assuming. So there is this Chime model which assumes 31%, but what we're actually doing is not making an assumption. What we're doing is trying to measure what's happening by looking at the data, if that makes some sense.

Governor Phil Murphy: On your second question, it's hard. I mean, I don't know that we're going to pat ourselves on the back because we're alive and we're sitting here and as far as I know, we're both healthy and we're hanging in there, but it sucks. You don't want to see one more person die, hear one more story. Michael Yun is a guy, I mean, some of these people you literally know. He happens to be one. And even in cases where you don't know, the principle, was it James Brown? I don't want to desecrate his memory by getting his name wrong, but I spoke to his wife after we had spoken about him and it was a hard conversation. Even now that I'm talking about it, it's hard to get through that and I didn't even know the guy.

I spoke to the daughter, the single child of the woman I mentioned earlier who was a single mom who passed yesterday. I mean, it's hard. And we're doing, at one level it is data, it has to be and it is numbers, and we have to rely on that because this is no time for gut checks or anecdotal, "I think let's try this because it feels right." We have to be cold-blooded in our policies but at the same time, it's hard to say this because they're at opposite ends of the spectrum, it's incredibly emotional.

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Maybe it helps just to also add the fact to this, that we're doubling every six days. So that's a slower rate now, but we are doubling the number of cases every six days at the current rate. That is a lot of lives impacted.

Governor Phil Murphy: Amen. Judy, any? Your former colleague, right, from the Nicholson Foundation who I mentioned earlier was so good with my wife on infant mortality and maternal mortality. Just hard, just really hard. So to each and every one of them, that was Colette Lamothe-Galette, bless her heart, who was a former

DOH senior person who's at Nicholson and again, my wife, literally worked side by side with her on Black maternal infant mortality. So it's just, thank you for asking though. Do you have a question, sir?

Reporter: Yes. Judith, you might have said you don't have this a couple of minutes ago, so I apologize, but this is a question for another reporter of News 12. You showed projected hospitalizations a little bit earlier. Do you have hard numbers on hospitalizations to date? Do you know how many patients have recovered?

Governor Phil Murphy: Hospitalizations to date and how many have recovered is the question.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, I don't have the recovered. I think that's similar to Nikita's question. I can tell you how many patients that are COVID positive or PUI, persons under investigation, in the hospital any one day. Today, as of this morning, it was 6,390, of which 1,505 of them are in intensive care units.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you. Charlie?.

Charlie Kratovil, New Brunswick Today: Yes, Governor, I hope you got to spend some time with your family yesterday and thank you for coming out and doing this again. Madam Commissioner, you mentioned there was a death in one of the developmental centers. I just wanted to know which one and which three have cases. Additionally, for the state-run psychiatric hospitals, can you tell us if any of them have cases and have there been any deaths on ICE detainees?

Governor, you said that you don't have jurisdiction over those. But don't you have jurisdiction over the counties that are housing detainees pursuant to intergovernmental agreements? And are you at all concerned about the situations in those county facilities? I believe Essex Bergen and Hudson. And as far as state prisons, is it true that there have been hunger strikes at Southern State? It was said over the weekend that there were just four or five employees of Corrections confirmed positive, but we've heard that the number was actually much higher, on the order of 34. Can anybody clarify how many Corrections employees have tested positive?

And finally, just for students in the public school system, what should they expect? In particular, graduating seniors? Should they expect to have a graduation ceremony? Will school be extended into the summer? And what, you know, what's your message to them?

Governor Phil Murphy: Let me start with a couple of thoughts, and Judy, can you come in behind me?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Sure.

Governor Phil Murphy: Because I'm not going to know all of this. A couple of things. Number one, I get asked this all the time, are we considering other measures? I've got nothing to report today other than the Executive Order I signed which allows retirees to much more easily come back into the system without messing up their pension reality, but we're constantly looking at steps we should take. If there's any news on that, my guess is we'll have something in the next couple of days. This is not news for today.

We owe you an answer, I recognize on the primary election in June, which is something that you haven't asked about yet today, at least, but that's something I know we owe an answer. We said that we would have guidance on schools by April 17. That would be a week from Friday at latest, and I'll leave it there. Although with each passing day, ceremonies and gatherings feel to me to be less likely, but nothing specific to report on that. Judy, do you mind addressing some of the developmental centers, psychiatric and – sorry, the ICE detainees, they are not under my jurisdiction. The county jails are. The ICE detainees aren't. But as a healthcare matter, as I've mentioned many times, we've got to make sure we bring everybody along with us otherwise we're just playing with fire, and this will reignite. That includes people who, as a health matter, this is versus the status of whether or not they're incarcerated for good reasons or not, whatever it might be, we've got to make sure we're taking care of everybody on a health basis and we're doing our best to do that. Do you want to address the broader questions on the corrections community, developmental centers, and psychiatric hospitals?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Sure. I do not have the specifics with me today, but I can guarantee I can give them to you tomorrow, for sure. Just to talk a little bit about, particularly the state correctional. I had not heard that there was a hunger strike. But you know, we are changing the communal

meals system. I'm just going to share with you I email that I did receive from Commissioner Hicks. "We've been conducting temperature checks and COVID-19 screening on all employees and vendors. For meals, we are feeding on the units for most institutions. But in the cases where logistically it's not feasible, we are limiting the amount of inmates that will eat at any one time. We're rotating inmates in and out of the mess."

They're using mandatory mass for employees. So they are doing everything that we're recommending them to do and I'm sure any change in a process, whether it's in a state correctional facility or a developmentally, a home for the developmentally disabled, any group home, when you change a process, when you change what they're used to, it can cause some concern and some issues. As we are finding, being home without all the interaction that we're used to, it changes your life. I can recall a number of press conferences ago, I started with the comment our life as we know it has changed, and it changes in all, everyone's life. I'm sure there's some discontent over it.

Governor Phil Murphy: I'm also not aware of the hunger strike, but two things. One is, can we get back with some, make sure that whatever Judy comes up with we get back with specifics on those questions? And secondly, it seems to me we've got – do we have Dr. Repollet with us tomorrow? We do. So we have the Commissioner of the Department of Education, which I've previewed for about a week or so, to come in and give us an update on how it's going. This is an experiment that we've never done before, so I think we owe it to folks. I'd like to get Commissioner Marcus Hicks to join us at some point soon as well, if we could. It won't be tomorrow, but sometime soon, because we've got legitimate questions that keep coming up as it relates to our criminal justice system, so thank you. Please.

Reporter: Governor and Commissioner --

Reporter: I've got a couple questions for some of the reporters at NJTV News and NJ Spotlight. Governor, some groups have called for the release of some inmates to prevent the spread of COVID in prisons, in particular, releasing people who may be up for parole soon, within a few months. Department of Corrections' most recent report Saturday was that 41 staff at the state prisons had tested positive for COVID. Are you considering such an early release or other measures to prevent the spread of COVID in NJ state prisons?

And Commissioner, with the influx of cases rising rapidly in the state, will there be a state mandate on hospital visitations or will this be left up to each hospital's discretion?

And on Friday, one of our correspondents, Michael Hill, interviewed Holy Name CEO Michael Maron, who said that he took the hydroxychloroquine regimen with zinc during his COVID-19 recovery and he believes it helped. Is that part of a recommended protocol? And if so, how widely is it being followed? Should that be something that healthcare workers focus on recovering with.

Governor Phil Murphy: Is that it?

Reporter: Yes.

Governor Phil Murphy: Thank you for those. On the first one, we have heard those calls as well. That's something we had a discussion about earlier. I've got nothing to report on that, but that's something that we're looking at and we take obviously very seriously. This is the question of the call for folks to be released if they're within X months of eligibility, and obviously the health of everybody again, to repeat the prior answer, if we're going to break the back of this, put aside who's where for what reasons. As a health matter, we've got to bring everybody along, not just most of us. Judy, to you and Ed as it relates to state mandate on hospital visits, and also any comments on potential drug use or not?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Well I'll start on the state mandate. I'm on weekly calls with the CEOs of the hospitals, and all of them have instituted, along with their disaster plans, visitation restrictions. Every hospital has a disaster preparedness plan. Within the disaster preparedness plan are the recommendations for mandating, in their own hospital, control of visitors, so all of them have done that at this point. I have not heard of any that haven't.

Governor Phil Murphy: Ed has your answer on this question of therapeutics that are made or in place for something else to be applied here.

DOH Medical Director, Communicable Disease Service Dr. Ed Lifshitz: Hydroxychloroquine certainly continues to be a drug that people are very interested in and they're looking at very closely. Clinical trials are ongoing. At this point, we do still do not have enough data to know if this will be effective or not. I certainly understand and appreciate that individuals who have nothing else to give will attempt to give this, and whether it has any effect, the answer is again, we just don't know. We are aware that certain hospitals do include this as part of their routine protocol and that is one of the reasons why we took action, or the Board of Pharmacy took action, to try to limit the use of this in other places so that if a hospital or somebody else that was dealing with these severely ill people will have nothing else to give and wanted to give it as a try, they would have that ability to go ahead and try it. So again, I certainly am hopeful that this will turn out to be something that it's useful. At this point, we don't know but we're aware that people are going to try it.

Governor Phil Murphy: I have an almost daily exchange with Mike, by the way and I'm not a medical expert, but I will say he's doing a heck of a job running Holy Name and he's physically better, bless his heart. We're happy to hear that. David Levinsky, Burlington County Times.

David Levinsky, Burlington County Times: Governor, on the collection of data about race, could you talk a little bit about what the purpose of that is, perhaps with the woman who needs no introduction as well? Why that would be a benefit? What it would hopefully do? How it can help to stop and slow down and so forth.

A question from our Statehouse Correspondent Mike Simons regarding the eventual reopening of the state. You mentioned that, speaking with Neera Tanden of the Center for American Progress that they were going to issue a report on this topic. That report came out on Friday. And among other things, it calls for the states to implement a stay-at-home policy for at least 45 days starting April 5. Is that your current thinking for how long that order would last, until at least May 20? And if so, or if not, what criteria? Do we have an even a loose idea of how we're going to begin to reopen things when that becomes appropriate?

Finally, Commissioner, the number of volunteers. I know that it's larger, the total number of volunteers, but in terms of the medical healthcare volunteers that we need to help at hospitals. Last report, I believe it was around 5,000-something. Do we have a sense of what it's up to? And then how many people do we actually need? How are these volunteers being assessed? Do they have any say in where they'll wind up going?

Governor Phil Murphy: I'll jump on the front part of this and you want to come in behind me, Judy? David Levinsky, Burlington County Times, on the question of race, I've said this as a general matter, I'm not sure that I've said it specific to race but on a good day in our country, in our state, it's a tale of two states or two countries. And invariably, there are folks who are left behind, even in peacetime. I think I've referred to folks who are homeless, or have some economic challenges. Invariably, more often than not, that population that's getting left behind is over-represented by communities of color. And so there's been a lot of outreach to me personally and I think to our teams, to please give us some sense of the racial impact of this awful virus, and for us to begin to get our arms around the fact, is this yet another – is this yet the same movie we're going to see again? And so that's why we've been wanting to try to begin to give some sense of this to the public. And I think I'm going to use a word, I suspect, Judy will agree with me. We have our first imperfect step in that direction today. Beth and I were back and forth over the weekend, Judy and I were back on it this morning as well. We hope to be able to have that information and have it more and more robust over time.

I saw the 45-day recommendation from the CAP team, and they're outstanding, by the way. We are, as we sit here today, until further notice. I'm not smart enough to know today on April 6th whether or not that date is early, late or in the middle of this, but I do know that we're going to be up against it at least between now and then. What it looks like then, I don't know. Broadly sympathetic with the long six to six-and-a-half weeks of stay at home, we're already into this. We were among the earlier states to get into this. I wish I could say that means we'll get out of it sooner. That would be nice and I hope that's the case, but I can't commit to that today. Judy, do you mind handling the question on volunteers?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Sure. They're all good questions, by the way, and we have three individuals that have volunteered to sort through the 17,000 names, identify. We've already identified those with licenses or medical personnel that could work in hospitals, in the field, and in the alternate care sites. All of those that have licenses go through DCA to make sure that their license is not revoked for something that you would want to avoid them coming back into the workforce.

We've sorted them by North, Central and South. There's a priority to where they would work. The first would be the field hospitals, because we have to bring up staff. We will be accepting our first patients by the way, in Secaucus. Today's the soft opening. We will accept our first patients tomorrow. But we also want to help the hospitals who have opened up more bed spaces but do not have the staff. We also have to look at some of the individuals who recently retired. Can they do a full eight-hour shift? Some of them are volunteering for four hours. How we manage all of that is the reason we're bringing on three volunteers just to do that and then also, work with two or three agencies that are currently contracted with. It's a big process, staffing coordination. It's not an easy one and we're going to try to do it from North to South. So more to come on that, and we'll be happy to share.

David Levinsky, Burlington County Times: Do you have a number, how many people you would like to see, or how many we need and how many we have at this point?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: At this point, we need everybody. I don't have an exact number. But if we're bringing up, we had staffed about 20,000 beds, and we're bringing up another 10,000 beds. You know, just simple math. We need a lot more.

Governor Phil Murphy: Yeah, I haven't said this today so I'll be mad at myself if I don't repeat the fact we're grateful for what we've got on ventilators. We're still short. We're grateful for what we got on PPE, we're still short. We're grateful for the extraordinary expansion of beds, we're probably still short. And last, we certainly are still short of healthcare workers. Thank you.

By the way, this is what I've called Operation Dolly Levi, from The Matchmaker. This is the folks over here that have volunteered. These are where our needs are. There's a massive coming together of that that population with where the opportunity or their needs are. Thank you, David Levinsky, Burlington County Times. Elise.

Elise Young, Bloomberg: FEMA has asked for inventories of states' usable vents, their ICU beds and anesthesia machines that can be converted to vents. I'm wondering whether New Jersey has provided that information yet? And whether the release of, I believe you said 500 ventilators yesterday and tomorrow was in response to New Jersey's figures? On vents, it seems that you're roughly at half of your ask now.

Also, how many temporary morgues has FEMA provided? And how many beds –

Governor Phil Murphy: I'm sorry, temporary what?

Elise Young, Bloomberg: What? How many temporary morgues has FEMA provided, the refrigerator trucks? And how many more are expected? How many beds can New Jersey make use of on the Comfort ship? And will they be COVID patients or acute care patients? Do you know whether Governor Cuomo was aware of President Trump's promise for New Jersey to have access to that ship?

Governor Phil Murphy: So let me start and then I'm going to ask both Pat and Judy to come in. The ventilators that came in, the 500 was triggered by a whole series of calls, including with the Vice President and myself on both Saturday and Sunday. I mentioned, I think 250 are here and the other 250 will be here, I believe, later today.

I believe FEMA, Pat, rather, FEMA had put this – or Judy this request for inventory, Pete Gainer went over on our video call, but that really came out on an email, I believe, he sent out last night. Is that correct?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: That's correct and we did, as we're sitting here, that report just came across, Elise. So that's a daily report that we're going to forward to FEMA to show exactly that data, bed capacity, ventilators, just to capture that universe so FEMA has a global perspective across the country of our need.

Governor Phil Murphy: I do not have an update on the refrigerator trucks. Do you all? Do you have it, Pat?

State Police Superintendent Col. Patrick Callahan: I do. We have 20 ordered at this juncture, Elise, for a capacity of 1,680.

Governor Phil Murphy: The Comfort ship, I think it's too early to say because I literally just got off the call with the President and the Vice President as I was coming here. But he did say affirmatively, the President that is, said that Governor Cuomo was aware and that I should work it out both with the White House on the

federal side as well as with Governor Cuomo and his team. Are you good with that? Okay, thank you. John, last but not least.

John McAlpin, Bergen Record: I have a couple of questions on the modeling and then a few from other people. Can you define better the daily growth rate, specifically how relates to the lag in testing. If the testing isn't, you know, figure on a 7-to-10 day delay, how can you project the daily growth rate? And in this modeling, again, can you back up on the 31%? Are you using, in some of your models, again, I know you answered this before, but just trying to get a sense of just how well we're doing on that? Did you model in any of these things, a projected number of deaths? The White House has done that and said deaths for the country. Do you have a number for New Jersey? And is that something you would make public? And then another issue, Governor, have you spoken to the legislative leaders about the possibility of moving the property tax deadline back from May 1 to at some point, either to coincide with the state income tax deadline? And then a few days ago, you guys said that the surge had hit the northern hospitals. Any idea if that surge is now at the central and southern and others? Especially given the shore towns, given that heat map of call-ins with symptoms?

Governor Phil Murphy: Is that it? Do you all, Judy and Beth, want to go through the modeling questions? Does that make sense?

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Sure. So very briefly –

Governor Phil Murphy: Could you hit – is your mic on there?

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Let me speak into the mic. Apologies. So I think on the first question, what we're doing is developing a curve based on the five days previously, so let me do my layperson's translation and Judy can correct me here as well. But we're essentially looking at the past five days to understand and predict the future. That allows us to understand whether the curve we have is appropriate. Do you want to say anything on the deaths front?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Well, you know, the prediction is that deaths, if you look at what's gone on in Italy, that it would be about 1.5%. We're looking right now, with the information that we have, it's like 0.01% of our total population, but it's probably around 2.4% of the positives. We're keeping an eye on that. We think we'll be pretty much what everyone else has experienced, you know, between 1% and 1.5%, but it changes every day and it's the information we have. And again, what we don't have is everyone home with mild or moderate symptoms, who are positive COVID-19, that we will probably never get tests on.

Governor Phil Murphy: Judy, how about the stress on the hospitals in the north, you mentioned, is that is finding its way into the central?

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: Yeah, I suggested that this surge was beginning in the north and we are seeing, particularly in Middlesex and Somerset, which I consider as central. It's up to you. We see them being stressed, but we kind of monitor that by the hospitals that go on divert, and they're primarily up in the north. Hudson, particularly, is getting hit pretty hard. We expect this to go on for a couple weeks. I was looking for my list of hospitals that are on divert, or were on divert last night. They were primarily in Hudson.

Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck: Maybe while you're looking, I'll just add one other thing while you're looking for that. One of the other things we do is to look at, since we're a little bit behind in terms of what happened in China, and what happened in Italy, we're also able to look at what the growth curve was in those two places that helped to inform our forward-going projections.

Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli: We had six hospitals on divert, three full divert, and three critical care divert, and they were all in Hudson, and one in Somerset.

Governor Phil Murphy: John, I would just say, we're going to have to wrap up here in a second, but sorry, property tax deadline, I've got no nothing new to report there. Again, if you look at, again, one of the models of the several that we're using, and Beth or Judy will correct me if I'm wrong, had a runaway freight train estimation, I believe of about 3 million infections. I believe that's correct. We're now looking at, if you looked at the infections chart that came up when I was speaking, that's, you know, the worst case is meaningfully less than that. Here we go. So the worst case, that's you'll see the 3 million number at the very top, and you'll

see below that the best case which is battling 1,000. And the worst case of 509,000 cases on May 11. And what would otherwise have been, and Beth reminds me, as does Judy, that the 3 million, even that's probably understated, given that we made decisions as far back as two months ago.

Now again, there's good news and bad news here and as Judy said, you could do the math of what percentage of these folks – and we're doing this, trying to model what percent get hospitalized, what percent get critical care, sadly, what percent need ventilators, and ultimately what percent of that group sadly will leave us.

The good news and this is probably as good a place to leave it as any. The good news is the worst case is a lot better than a runaway freight train. The bad news is the worst case still swamps the healthcare system and still too many people get sick and too many people pass. So I would conclude here by saying again to everybody, thank you for everything you are doing. It is extraordinary and there are only very few folks who are non-compliant. Overwhelmingly, this state, by the millions, is doing the right thing. Thank you.

But secondly, you have to continue to do it. Even while that looks like a huge victory, it's still too many folks getting sick. It's still too many folks hospitalized, and sadly, it'll still be too many folks whose lives are lost. I would just beg all of you and all of us to stay at this. And again, the temptations, I look out this window, it's a really nice day outside. That'll be more often than not the case as we go through the spring. But we've got to make sure we're staying home, we're keeping social distance, we're doing the right things because it is making a difference. But we can't take our foot off the gas. I want to thank everybody for everything you have done and everything we need you to continue to do.

I want to thank Judy Persichilli, the outstanding woman who needs no introduction, Commissioner of Health. Her colleague, Dr. Ed Lifshitz. Thank you both and your colleagues. Beth Noveck, thanks to you and your, I'll repeat as you want me to say, I know, very small team. Thank you for everything that they're doing. Pat, to you and your colleagues, and by the way to members, the healthcare workers up and down the state are heroes, but also first responders whether they be state police, county or local, bless you all and thank you.

Tomorrow we are back here at 1:00 p.m. and we will have with us the Commissioner, in addition to Judy and Pat and myself, we will have the Commissioner of the Department of Education. I will be putting this on as I leave. I won't make you sit here and watch me struggle with putting it on, but I will be putting on as I walk to the car. Thank you all so much.

Governor Phil Murphy

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