

The Washington Post

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Late haggling delays vote on rescue bill

Cases in region top 1,000 as virus's spread, testing accelerate

BY ANTONIO OLIVO, OVETTA WIGGINS, GREGORY S. SCHNEIDER AND DARRAN SIMON

The tally of novel coronavirus cases in the Washington region climbed past 1,000 Wednesday as Maryland, Virginia and the District reported their largest single-day increases — a grim marker that illustrates both the continued spread of the virus and the fact that more testing is being done to detect it.

Maryland announced 74 additional cases, bringing the state's total to 424, and extended its closure of public schools another four weeks, through April 24. Virginia reported 101 additional cases, for a total of 392. The District reported 48 new cases Wednesday, including an eight-week-old infant, for a total caseload of 235.

Overall, the region had 1,051 reported cases as of Wednesday evening, with 20 deaths.

"It's clear that we've got community spread now; that is quite obvious," said Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam (D), a physician by training who on Wednesday directed hospitals to stop performing elective surgeries so that supplies of masks, gloves and other personal protective equipment are not depleted.

"We are just at the beginning of this. We are not at the middle," Northam said. "We are talking about months, and we are going to see these numbers, unfortunately, continue to rise."

The 1,000-case milestone for the Washington region happened as the nation and countries around the world continued to battle a pandemic that has caused more than 21,000 deaths. New York, the hardest-hit state, reported an additional 5,000 cases, and New York City's public hospital system said 13 people died of

SEE REGION ON A15

PERSPECTIVE

We will miss Opening Day, but sense of joy will return soon

BY THOMAS BOSWELL

I once titled a book "Why Time Begins on Opening Day." For others, time may seem to begin when gardens bloom, ski slopes open or a Kennedy Center opera season launches. Elk season, no doubt, lifts some hearts, though not those of elk.

But I was somewhat serious. The start of the baseball season, which would have been Thursday for the World Series champion Washington Nationals and every other team, means that for 60 percent of the year there will be major league baseball almost every day. The weight of that — or rather the buoyancy of it — is no small gift.

I have said that baseball is a great support to people who have emotional voids, gaps, difficulties. That is to say: all of us. Those parts of us that don't function well. Those parts of us that are sad or depressed — not every day — can really use baseball. It isn't just the child in a wheelchair or the shut-in senior citizen listening to the radio that needs the game. Part of us, part of everyone, is a baseball fan who needs the game at that level.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, when life was suddenly more serious more of the time, there also was more need for it to be fun at least some of the time. I wrote then that, as soon as

SEE BOSWELL ON A16



BONNIE JO MOUNT/THE WASHINGTON POST

A pedestrian waits Wednesday to cross a deserted M Street during what normally would be rush hour in Washington's Georgetown neighborhood. The District ordered all nonessential businesses to close as of 10 p.m. Wednesday and urged residents to stay home.

Lawyer's tweet picking economy over the elderly enrages America

BY MARC FISHER

Scott McMillan had it with being cooped up, with the whole country being closed, with the collapsing market and the isolation, the constant worry and the politicians who didn't take the coronavirus seriously when they could have.

On Sunday night, McMillan, a 56-year-old lawyer in La Mesa, Calif., near San Diego, saw President Trump's tweet about how "WE CANNOT LET THE CURE BE WORSE THAN THE PROBLEM ITSELF." The lawyer took to Twitter to add his own two cents:

"The fundamental problem is whether we are going to tank the entire economy to save 2.5% of the population which is (1) generally expensive to maintain, and (2) not productive."

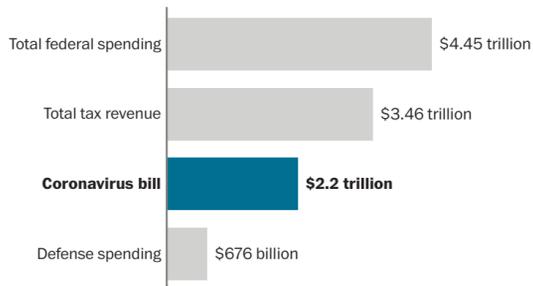
At which point, McMillan instantly became Scrooge, a "ghoul," an advocate for the

SEE ELDERLY ON A24

Recently ascendant firms swell queue for taxpayer aid

How big is the coronavirus relief bill?

How the proposed coronavirus bill compares to government spending and revenue in 2019



Source: Congressional Budget Office

THE WASHINGTON POST

More coverage

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BY JONATHAN O'CONNELL

When airline executives realized a few years ago that they could charge passengers extra fees for just about anything — meals, checking bags, even choosing seats — their businesses seemed bulletproof.

"I don't think we're ever going to lose money again," American Airlines chief executive Doug Parker told giddy investors in 2017. As such companies continued to thrive, they also undertook share buybacks, boosting investor value. President Trump and congressional Republicans sweetened the outlook for big businesses further when they passed a \$1.5 trillion tax cut that slashed the corporate rate beginning in 2018.

That seems so long ago. Now airlines, hotels, cruise lines, coal-mining companies and others strangled by coronavirus shutdowns are lining up to receive slices of a \$2 trillion aid package funded by taxpayers.

Yet many of these companies behaved in ways before the current economic crisis that are making a bailout tough to swallow. **SEE COMPANIES ON A18**

Militaries across the globe get marching orders as lockdown enforcers

BY KEVIN SIEFF

Around the world, as a consensus has formed around the need for quarantine and social distancing to fight the coronavirus, a more delicate question has emerged: How do you enforce those new rules?

In every region, under all kinds of political systems, governments are turning to increasingly stringent measures — and deploying their armed forces to back them up.

Countries as varied as China, Jordan, El Salvador and Italy have sent service members into the streets. Guatemala has detained more than 1,000 people. In Peru, those who flout government restrictions can be jailed for up to three years. In Saudi Arabia, it's five.

At no time since World War II have so many nations wrestled with what it means to be in a state of emergency and how to impose fundamental and sudden changes in human behavior.

Deploying troops is a startling but often effective way to keep people indoors, but its impact

SEE SOLDIERS ON A13



ALTAF QADRI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soldiers stand guard as authorities clear the Shaheen Bagh protest site on Tuesday in New Delhi. A number of countries are using their militaries to help enforce coronavirus containment measures.

FINE PRINT TRIPS UP \$2.2 TRILLION DEAL

Cuomo demands more as N.Y. hospitals struggle

BY ERICA WERNER, MIKE DEBONIS AND PAUL KANE

The Senate on Wednesday evening rushed to pass a \$2.2 trillion emergency relief package that was designed to flood the U.S. economy with money, as households and businesses continue to reel from the coronavirus outbreak.

But shortly after announcing the deal, Senate leaders struggled to fend off a number of last-minute snags, and they encountered various hurdles as they tried to write the bill's fine print.

New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D) demanded changes to help his state deal with a flood of new virus cases. Four Republican senators on Wednesday said a provision in the bill needed to be fixed immediately or it would incentivize people not to return to work. And House Democrats wouldn't provide a firm timeline for when they would vote to pass the bill.

The final-stage drama was just the latest twist for the spending legislation, which had snowballed from President Trump's push for an eight-month payroll tax cut into the largest emergency relief bill in American history. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) announced the agreement on the Senate floor around 1:30 a.m. Wednesday, after a long day of talks with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and other administration officials.

"I will sign it immediately," Trump said Wednesday evening as Senate lawmakers tried to set a time for a vote.

The bill would extend \$1,200 to most American adults and \$500 for most children, begin a \$500 billion lending program for

SEE STIMULUS ON A19

Hospitals debate do-not-resuscitate orders over fears for staffers' health

BY ARIANA EUNJUNG CHA

Hospitals on the front lines of the pandemic are engaged in a heated private debate over a calculation few have encountered in their lifetimes — how to weigh the "save at all costs" approach to resuscitating a dying patient against the real danger of exposing doctors and nurses to the contagion of coronavirus.

The conversations are driven by the realization that the risk to staff members amid dwindling stores of protective equipment — such as masks, gowns and gloves — may be too great to justify the conventional response when a patient "codes," and their heart or breathing stops.

Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago has been discussing a do-not-resuscitate policy for infected patients, regardless of the wishes of the patient or their family members — a wrenching decision to prioritize the lives of the many over the one.

Richard Wunderink, one of Northwestern's intensive-care medical directors, said hospital administrators would have to ask Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker for help in clarifying state law and whether it permits the policy shift.

"It's a major concern for everyone," he said. "This is something about which we have had lots of communication with families, and I think they are very aware of the grave circumstances."

Officials at George Washington University Hospital in the District say they have had similar conversations.

SEE HOSPITALS ON A8

IN THE NEWS

War's latest brutal chapter In Syria's Idlib province, fighting leaves millions of struggling civilians trapped between rival forces. **A10**

THE NATION Joe Biden is working to significantly escalate his public presence. **A2**

THE WORLD Turkey indicted 20 Saudis in the killing of Jamal Khashoggi. **A11**

LOCAL LIVING

Staying calm in the storm

A psychologist offers tips for emotional resilience during the pandemic.



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