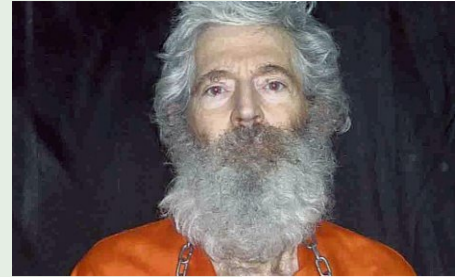


**THE VIRUS CRISIS, 4A**  
**Rick Scott: Reduce unemployment benefits in relief bill**



**NATION, 8A**  
**Family: U.S. believes Coral Springs' Robert Levinson has died**



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## THE VIRUS CRISIS



Customers line up six feet apart outside Warrior Gun Range and Gun Shop in Doral on Tuesday. Shop owner Charlie Berrane said he is experiencing soaring sales of guns and ammo during the coronavirus pandemic.

CHARLES TRAINOR JR. [ctrainor@miamiherald.com](mailto:ctrainor@miamiherald.com)

## Gun sales soaring on coronavirus fears

**Nervousness about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic is prompting people to buy guns and ammunition at unprecedented levels, with background checks in Florida up 500 percent in recent days.**

BY LINDA ROBERTSON  
[lrobertson@miamiherald.com](mailto:lrobertson@miamiherald.com)

Gun shop owners have never seen such a surge in sales — not after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, not in reaction to mass shootings, not even when Category 5 hurricanes threatened to flatten South Florida.

Fear and uncertainty about the coronavirus pandemic are motivating people to buy guns and ammunition as they seek protection from possible doomsday disintegration into lawlessness, with home invasions, looting, runs on banks and fights over food, medicine, hospital beds and shelter

across the land. “Our sales are up 80 percent, with a huge increase in first-time buyers who are worried about martial law, economic collapse, shortages, delinquents roaming the streets,” said Alex Elenberg, manager of Charlie’s Armory on West Flagler Street. “If you can’t defend your house and your family, what good are you?”

SEE GUNS, 2A

### More inside

Miami-Dade mayor promises ‘action’ in enforcing rules on businesses, 3A

Brightline lays off 250 workers after suspending South Florida service, 4A

Officials fear virus spread among Miami homeless, 7A

Cruise ships to dock in Miami with 30 sick, 7A

An ‘apocalyptic’ virus surge at NYC hospital, 8A

## Congress moves toward passing \$2 trillion relief deal

**The measure is unprecedented in its sheer scope and size, touching on every facet of American life with the goal of salvaging and ultimately reviving an economy that has been battered by the coronavirus pandemic.**

BY EMILY COCHRANE AND NICHOLAS FANDOS  
*The New York Times*

WASHINGTON

The \$2 trillion economic stabilization package agreed to by Congress and the Trump administration early Wednesday is the largest of its kind in modern American history, intended to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and provide direct payments and jobless benefits for

individuals, money for states and a huge bailout fund for businesses.

The measure, whose final details were still being drafted Wednesday evening, amounts to a government aid plan unprecedented in its sheer scope and size, touching on every facet of American life with the goal of salvaging and ultimately reviving a battered economy. Its cost is hundreds of billions of

SEE DEAL, 4A



WIN MCNAMEE/Getty Images

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Wednesday: ‘Americans are going to go to their mailbox and find four-figure checks.’

## Which group homes have had coronavirus? Florida won’t say

**Journalists and elder advocates have pressed state leaders for information about where long-term care residents and staff have been exposed to the coronavirus. The DeSantis administration has not been specific.**

BY CAROL MARBIN MILLER  
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Elder advocates are calling them cruise ships on dry land: Close to 200,000 Floridians live in nursing homes and retirement homes, which could become incubators for disease among sometimes



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Gov. Ron DeSantis has called Atria Willow Wood, where three residents died of COVID-19, a ‘problem facility.’

frail elders as the coronavirus pandemic spreads throughout the state.

The state Department of Health said that, as of

Monday, 33 Floridians living in a skilled nursing or assisted living facility

SEE ALFS, 2A

## Supply of Florida hospital beds could be swamped by spread

**Without social distancing and more available beds, Florida hospitals could be overrun by coronavirus cases, a Harvard analysis found. Maps show pressure on hospital capacity depending on how quickly the disease spreads.**

BY SARAH BLASKEY, RYAN CALLIHAN AND BEN WIEDER  
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As cases of COVID-19 increase across the state, Florida hospitals are bracing for a spike in patients that experts project will leave them scrambling for available beds.

In Florida alone, at least 688,000 people 18 and up

are projected to need hospitalization from the disease, according to an analysis by the Harvard Global Health Institute and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The projection accounts for the large portion of Floridians over 65 — nearly 20 percent of the state’s adult population — who are more likely to be hospitalized than younger people as a result

of the disease. Whether Florida hospitals will be able to handle the influx of patients from COVID-19 largely depends on how fast the virus spreads (which experts say depends on the state’s ability to maintain social distancing) and whether hospitals across the state take actions to free up more beds. Some Florida hospitals have started to limit elective surgeries to make space. Another set up outdoor tents to be ready for a surge.

Although the outbreak is

SEE BEDS, 4A

### NOTE TO READERS

We are committed to continue to deliver a printed newspaper to you during the coronavirus pandemic, but if conditions arise such as curfews, closures or circumstances that prevent print

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In addition, you may notice that we’ve moved some content to other sections. This is a temporary measure, and content will return to its usual place as soon as possible.

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 Deaths 8A  
 Lottery 6A

Music reviews 3G  
 Puzzles 10-11G  
 Television 14G

