



[Latest Developments on the Coronavirus Crisis in the United States](#)

Cases of the novel coronavirus have continued to increase, with positive tests reaching near 80,000 in the United States, and 500,000 around the world. Wednesday brought the greatest number of deaths in a single day due to the disease in the United States, with 223 people passing away. The federal government has taken steps to address the crisis, with the Senate unanimously passing a \$2 trillion stimulus package on Wednesday. The House of Representatives is expected to take up and pass the bill on Friday, and leaders on both sides of the aisle are pushing for a unanimous vote to send it to President Trump's desk to sign. State governments have also started enacting measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus; the governors of Minnesota, Wisconsin, New York, California, Hawaii, Virginia, and others all signing slightly differing versions of stay-at-home orders, requiring citizens to only leave home for essential tasks.

After an initial stimulus proposal was voted down in the Senate last Thursday, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle frantically worked to put a new proposal together. A group including Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi found agreement on the basic text of the bill on Tuesday, and Senators passed the measure unanimously on Wednesday. Senator Schumer said the stimulus package was a "war-time" level of investment in the economy, which was necessary due to the growing number of Americans losing their jobs. Last week, over three million people filed for unemployment benefits after losing their jobs because of the coronavirus, which is the largest single-week filing in history by over 2.5 million. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin had previously warned that unemployment could reach 20% as businesses shut down to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The stimulus package significantly boosts unemployment benefits and provides for direct cash payments of \$1,200 to American adults. The House of Representatives will take up the bill on Friday, and there are hopes to pass it by unanimous consent which would expedite the process, and allow members to remain in their districts where they currently are.

State governments have also started taking measures to slow the spread of the virus. New York currently has the highest number of cases in the country, and Governor Andrew Cuomo shut the state down last Friday. All non-essential businesses are closed, and private sector workers are being asked to work from home. New York has roughly 30,000 diagnosed cases of the coronavirus, just under half of the total for the entire country. One emergency room doctor in New York City described the scenes in hospitals as "apocalyptic" as the situation deteriorates. New York is currently seeking medical devices and protective materials for its healthcare staff, with Governor Cuomo saying he had only 11,000 surgical masks out of the 30,000 he needed. Cuomo has commended private businesses for their willingness to step up and help provide materials, but he has criticized the federal government for not doing more to help states.