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Democratic lawmakers unveil sweeping bill on race, police in wake of Floyd



Uniformed military personnel walk in front of the White House ahead of a protest in the aftermath of the death in of George Floyd, in Washington. REUTERS/Lucas Jackson

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Democrats, led by a group of black lawmakers, unveiled sweeping legislation on Monday to combat police violence and racial injustice, two weeks after George Floyd's death in Minneapolis police custody led to widespread protests.

The 134-page bill would take numerous steps including allowing victims of misconduct to sue for police damages, ban chokeholds and require the use of body cameras by federal law enforcement officers, restrict the use of lethal force, and facilitate independent investigations of police departments with patterns of misconduct.

"A profession where you have the power to kill should be a profession that requires highly trained officers who are accountable to the public," Representative Karen Bass,

who chairs the Congressional Black Caucus, told a news conference.

The legislation does not call for funding of police departments to be cut or abolished, as some protesters and activists have increasingly sought. But lawmakers called for funding priorities to change.

"We have confused having safe communities with hiring more cops on the street ... when in fact the real way to achieve safe and healthy communities is to invest in these communities," said Senator Kamala Harris, seen as a potential running-mate to presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden in the Nov. 3 election.

Democrats hope to bring the legislation to the floor of the House of Representatives before the end of June. But its

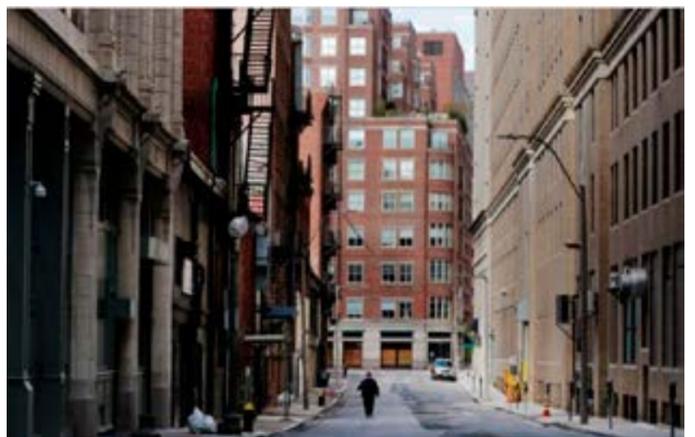
reception in the Republican-controlled Senate is unclear, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell noncommittal on the need for legislation.

Floyd's death in Minneapolis, where a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes on May 25, was the latest in a string of deaths of black men and women by police in the United States that have sparked anger on America's streets and fresh calls for reforms here

U.S. economy entered recession in February

(Reuters) - The U.S. economy ended its longest expansion in history in February and entered recession as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the private economics research group that acts as the arbiter for determining U.S. business cycles said on Monday.

The Business Cycle Dating Committee of the National Bureau of Economic Research said in a statement that members "concluded that the unprecedented magnitude of the decline in employment and production, and its broad reach across the entire economy, warrants the designation of this episode as a recession, even if it turns out to be briefer than earlier contractions."



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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

06/08/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY



A group of Houston faith leaders came together to pray and asked for protection for change. They asked Mayor Sylvester Turner for the expansion and greater visibility of the independent police oversight board. They also stated the need for more police department diversity as well as the need for de-escalation training for all law enforcement officers.

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden will be Houston today to meet with Floyd's family. Former Secretary of State General Colin Power said in a television interview that Donald Trump has not been an effective president. Former Secretary of Defense James Mattis and General John Allen have declared that the U.S. constitution is under threat.

The final viewing of George Floyd will be held today at The Fountain of Praise Church in southwest Houston where mourners will be able to view his casket. His funeral will be held tomorrow followed by burial in the Houston Memorial Gardens cemetery in Pearland where he will be laid to rest next to his mother, Larcenia Floyd.

In the last two weeks the George Floyd protest and demonstration movement has become a worldwide event and has included many European countries. Southern Korean people are now openly supporting equal right for all its citizens. In the meantime, the coronavirus pandemic still continues to spread around the globe. The world is now facing its biggest challenge since World

Shake The World - Floyd Coming Home

War II.

Under our constitution, it is very clear that the president is not the only person who can control the federal government. We also have the U.S. Congress and the Supreme Court to balance the government's power. We are not going to allow any politician to abuse and steal the power.

We as Asian Americans today are facing the issues like other minority groups. The immigration, college entrance exams and other equal opportunity issues all could affect our next generation's rights.

George Floyd's case teaches the

nation and the world a very big lesson: the people and leaders need to work together to solve the shared universal political and economic issues. Otherwise, the threats to our civilization will continue.



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BUSINESS

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7 In 10 Americans More Anxious About Racial Divide Worsening Following George Floyd Death, Survey Says



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Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

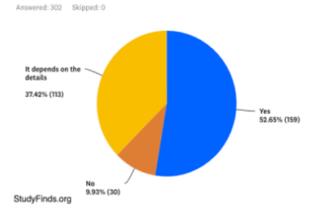
BALTIMORE — We're less than half-way through the year, and one thing is becoming disturbingly clear: 2020 will likely go down as one of the most tumultuous years in American history. As protests over the tragic death of George Floyd continue, a survey by StudyFinds.org shows that nearly seven in ten Americans are battling another surge of anxiety. Perhaps not surprisingly, about the same number agree that the racial divide in 2020 has split even further, adding more pressure to a country that is seemingly bursting at the seams.

month, while 43% are also feeling an uptick in nervousness, but to a lesser degree. Of course, in addition to the Floyd protests, fallout from the coronavirus pandemic continues, and tensions were already reaching boiling point following the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia and Breonna Taylor in Kentucky. Still, nearly three in ten respondents rate their anxiety as unchanged. Meanwhile, when asked about the racial divide in America, 68% agree it's getting worse, while 23% feel it's unchanged despite the recent events. Interestingly, nearly one in ten say things are improving.

So how do Americans feel President Donald Trump is responding to all of the

challenges he's facing in 2020? It appears that many aren't thrilled with his performance thus far. Though 14% of respondents think Trump is doing a "great job" and 11% rate his efforts as a "good job," the numbers are significantly higher for those who feel the opposite. Forty-percent say the president is doing a "very bad job," while another 12% feel he's doing a "bad job." The jury is still out for 23% of respondents.

Should all four fired Minneapolis police officers be charged with murder in the George Floyd case?



As for how Americans feel directly in response to George Floyd's death and the arrest former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who is charged with murder and manslaughter, most appear in agreement. Nearly three in four (73%) say Chauvin will be convicted of murder. When asked about all four officers who involved in Floyd's arrest and subsequently fired, 52% say they should also be charged with murder. That said, 37% aren't leaving it out of the question, but are waiting for more details to emerge to be sure either way. Just 10% don't believe the other officers should face murder charges. Finally, the survey asked participants whether or not they trust the police. Almost one in five — 18% of respondents — have no trust in their local law enforcement. The other 82% give their police department a vote of confidence, but only a quarter have "complete" faith in officers. Fifty-seven percent trust police "somewhat," according to the results. Of course, as the days wear on and protests continue, all it takes is one or two powder-keg moments to push the needle in another direction for these questions. On the other hand, a peaceful, positive,

and palpable step forward would bring a much-needed move towards healing. After all, this is supposed to be the United States of America, isn't it? This survey was conducted by SurveyMonkey.

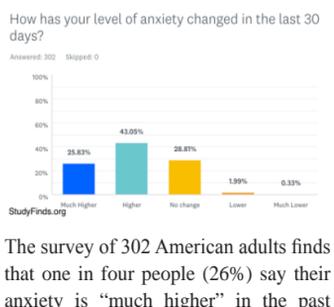
Related Minneapolis To Disband Police Department

The Minneapolis City Council on Sunday voted to disband its police department and invest in community-based public safety programs following calls from activists to "defund the police," in the wake of George Floyd's death at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer. **KEY FACTS** City Council President Lisa Bender, along with a majority of council members that cannot be vetoed by Mayor Jacob Frey, announced a plan to "end our city's toxic relationship with the Minneapolis Police Department." "We're here because we hear you. We are here today because George Floyd was killed by the Minneapolis Police," Bender declared. "In Minneapolis and in cities across the United States it is clear that our existing system of policing and public safety is not keeping our communities safe." "Our efforts at incremental reform have failed. Period," she added.



MINNEAPOLIS, MN - JUNE 6: Demonstrators calling to defund the Minneapolis Police Department march on University Avenue on June 6, 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The march, organized by the Black Visions Collective, commemorated the life of George Floyd who was killed by members of the MPD on May 25. (Photo by Stephen Maturen/Getty Images) Bender said that the council would start a conversation with the community about

what the new "community-led" public safety program will entail. The police department had already lost much of its support from the community, with key partners including Minneapolis Public Schools, the University of Minnesota and Minneapolis Parks and Recreation severing ties. The move comes as protesters and activists at protests across the country have been calling for their cities to "defund the police," declaring reform too piecemeal to achieve the desired results. **KEY BACKGROUND** Protests against police violence and racism have erupted in cities across the country in the last two weeks in the wake of George Floyd's death. Floyd was seen on video saying "I can't breathe," as a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly 9 minutes. **CHIEF CRITIC** President Trump has been a frequent and vocal opponent of defunding the police, tying Democrats, and in particular former Vice President Joe Biden, to the proposal, which has mostly been espoused by left-wing activists. "Sleepy Joe Biden and the Radical Left Democrats want to 'DEFUND THE POLICE,'" Trump tweeted Sunday. "I want great and well paid LAW ENFORCEMENT. I want LAW & ORDER!" Mayor Frey also said he opposes the move. (Courtesy forbes.com)



The survey of 302 American adults finds that one in four people (26%) say their anxiety is "much higher" in the past

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Editor's Choice



A man falls after being shot by a driver who tried to drive through a protest against racial inequality in Seattle, Washington. REUTERS/Lindsey Wasson



Ballerinas Kennedy George, 14, and Ava Holloway, 14, pose in front of a monument of Confederate general Robert E. Lee after Virginia Governor Ralph Northam ordered its removal, in Richmond, Virginia. REUTERS/Julia Rendleman



A firework explodes as police officers clash with demonstrators in Whitehall during a Black Lives Matter protest in London, Britain. REUTERS/Dylan Martinez



A firework explodes as police officers clash with demonstrators in Whitehall during a Black Lives Matter protest in London, Britain. REUTERS/Dylan Martinez



People attend the first 'corona-proof' dance event in Nijmegen, Netherlands. REUTERS/Piroschka van de Wouw



The casket carrying the body of George Floyd is brought inside before a memorial at Cape Fear Conference B headquarters in Raeford, North Carolina. Ed Clemente/Pool via REUTERS



A group of children hold up their fists in front of a Black Lives Matter sign near the White House in Washington. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts



A demonstrator holds up her fist in front of police officers during a protest organized by Black Lives Matter Belgium, in central Brussels. REUTERS/Yves Herman

New COVID-19 Treatment Therapies Showing Promise

In The First U.S. Study Of COVID-19 Blood Plasma Transfusions, 76% Of Patients Improve



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

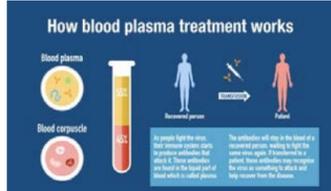
HOUSTON — New research from Houston Methodist concludes that plasma transfusions from recovered COVID-19 patients are a safe and at least somewhat effective treatment option for people still dealing with severe coronavirus symptoms. Out of 25 patients given a transfusion, 19 saw their condition improve and 11 were discharged.

This was the first U.S. convalescent plasma transfusion trial, and participating patients saw no negative nor adverse side effects after receiving the treatment. There have, however, been smaller studies conducted on blood plasma transfusions for COVID-19 patients. All of those projects came to similar conclusions.

“While physician scientists around the world scrambled to test new drugs and treatments against the COVID-19 virus, convalescent serum therapy emerged as potentially one of the most promising strategies,” comments corresponding study author Dr. James M. Musser, chair of the Department of Pathology and Genomic Medicine at Houston Methodist, in a statement. “With no proven treatments or cures for COVID-19 patients, now was the time in our history to move ahead rapidly.”

This treatment approach for viral diseases certainly isn't new; blood transfusions were used in

the same way during the Spanish Flu outbreak of 1918, and more recently during the 2003 SARS pandemic, the 2009 influenza H1N1 outbreak, and the 2015 Ebola outbreak in Africa. The first signs that plasma transfusions from recovered COVID-19 patients could help others came from China. A small number of Chinese patients showed improvement after receiving blood transfusions. Once news of that project was reported to the team at Houston Methodist, they immediately started thinking about how to apply convalescent serum therapy to COVID-19.



(© Dimitrios – stock.adobe.com)

Many of the patients' health outcomes following the plasma transfusions mirrored what happened to COVID-19 patients who were given the antiviral drug remdesivir. Furthermore, while some patients in this trial study did experience complications after receiving blood,

the research team believe those problems were caused by the coronavirus infection itself and not the transfusions.

All of the plasma transfusions given for this trial were done on an emergency basis for patients in critical condition. With that in mind, the study's authors say much more research is needed before the therapeutic effects of convalescent serum therapy can be determined.

A randomized control trial for just this purpose may take place at Houston Methodist in the future. Wherever it happens, that trial will focus on more specific aspects of the treatment like timing of the transfusion in reference to the emergence of coronavirus symptoms, the number and volume of transfusions (depending on the patient), and anti-body levels in the plasma. In theory, a more thorough trial will help inform doctors of the best time to administer transfusions for individual patients.



More patients have already been given plasma transfusions since this first trial. In all, 74 critically ill COVID-19 patients have received blood from recovered patients at Houston Methodist. Of that group, 50 have been discharged thus far. There's also no shortage, it seems, of blood to work with; over 150 recovered coronavirus patients have donated so far, with many making more than one donation. (Courtesy studyfinds.org) The study is published in *The American Journal of Pathology*.

LONG ISLAND, N.Y. — There may soon be a new treatment option for coronavirus patients dealing with mild to moderate symptoms that don't require hospitalization. A new study finds that Famotidine (Pepcid AC), a widely available drug used for stomach indigestion, may be an effective way to curb COVID-19 symptoms. The research was small in scope, only consisting of 10 patients (6 men, 4 women), but those individuals felt the benefits of Famotidine within 24-48 hours of taking the drug. A much more expansive clinical trial on famotidine and COVID-19 is already being prepared.

Famotidine, which belongs to the histamine-2 receptor antagonist family of drugs, decreases the amount of acid produced by the stomach. It's usually taken to treat acid reflux or heartburn, up to four times a day, at doses of 20-160 mg.

All 10 of the participants in this study started taking famotidine while they were experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Among that group, seven tested positive for COVID-19, two had coronavirus antibodies, and one patient wasn't tested but was diagnosed with COVID-19 by a physician. The group was also quite diverse; a wide variety of ages (23-71 year old), ethnicities, and known risk factors (obesity, high blood pressure).

Most patients took 80 mg three times a day, for an average of 11 days (some took the drug for only five days, while others kept up with the drug for 21 days).

Incredibly, all 10 said that their symptoms greatly improved within two days, with most saying they were feeling healthy after two weeks. Patients reported improvements across all major symptom categories, but respiratory problems (coughing, shortness of breath) seemed to clear up especially fast.

Forgetfulness is a documented possible side effect of famotidine, and three patients did report feeling that complication.

In summation, while the study's authors are pleased with their findings, they caution that further research on more patients is needed before any conclusions can be drawn. For instance, they aren't sure how famotidine helps fight the coronavirus; does it stop the infection from functioning in some way or change the body's immune response instead?

“Our case series suggests, but does not establish, a benefit from famotidine treatment in outpatients with COVID-19,” they write.

“Clinically, we unreservedly share the opinion that well designed and informative studies of efficacy are required to evaluate candidate medications for COVID-19 as for other diseases.”

“An outpatient study of oral famotidine that investigates efficacy for symptom control, viral burden and disease outcome and assesses the effects of medication use on long term immunity should be considered to establish if famotidine may be of use in controlling COVID-19 in individual patients while also reducing the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission,” the study

concludes. (Courtesy studyfinds.org) The study is published in *Gut*.

Related
US should have a 'couple hundred million' doses of a Covid-19 vaccine by the start of 2021, Fauci says

(CNN)The United States should have 100 million doses of one candidate coronavirus vaccine by the end of the year, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, said Tuesday.

“Then, by the beginning of 2021, we hope to have a couple hundred million doses,” Fauci said during a live Q&A with the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

However, it's still not clear whether the vaccine will be effective against the novel coronavirus. “The real business end of this all will be the Phase 3 that starts in the first week of July, hopefully,” Fauci said. “We want to get as many datapoints as we can.”

Phase 3 will involve about 30,000 people. The vaccine will be tested in people ages 18 to 55, as well as in the elderly and in people who have underlying health conditions.

“It's going to be the entire spectrum,” Fauci said.



Fauci said Phase 2 of the trial started a few days ago. A few hundred volunteers will be involved in that part of the trial.

The plan is to manufacture doses of the vaccine even before it is clear whether it will work, making close to 100 million doses by November or December, Fauci said. If it does work, then it can be deployed quickly.

Scientists should have enough data by November or December to determine if the vaccine works, Fauci said. (Courtesy cnn.com)

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