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Mr. Lee's Commentary and Dairy



Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

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## U.S. House approves \$2,000 coronavirus aid checks sought by Trump



FILE PHOTO: Workers shovel snow from the steps of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, U.S., December 16, 2020. REUTERS/Erin Scott/File Photo

WASHINGTON/PALM BEACH, Fla. (Reuters) - The Democratic-led U.S. House of Representatives voted 275-134 to meet President Donald Trump's demand for \$2,000 COVID-19 relief checks on Monday, sending the measure on to an uncertain future in the Republican-controlled Senate.

The Republican Trump last week threatened to block a massive pandemic aid and spending package if Congress did not boost stimulus payments from \$600 to \$2,000 and cut other spending. He backed down from his demands on Sunday as a possible government shutdown loomed, brought on by the fight with lawmakers.

But Democratic lawmakers have long wanted \$2,000 relief checks and used the rare point of agreement with Trump to advance the proposal - or at least to put Republicans on record against it - in the vote on Monday, less than a month before he leaves office.

A total of 130 Republicans, two independents and two Democrats opposed the increase on Monday, which required two-thirds of those present and voting to pass it.

Trump, who lost November's election to Democratic challenger Joe Biden but has refused to concede defeat, finally signed the \$2.3 trillion package into law after holding it up with a veiled veto threat. But he continued demanding \$2,000 checks.

The \$2.3 trillion includes \$1.4 trillion in spending to fund government agencies and \$892 billion in COVID-19 relief.

It is not clear how the measure to increase aid checks will fare in the Senate, where individual Republican lawmakers have complained the higher amount would add hundreds of billions of dollars to the latest relief bill.

Increasing the checks would cost \$464 billion, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation, which prepares cost estimates for legislation before Congress.

The Senate is due to convene on Tuesday. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Sunday made no mention of Senate plans for a vote, after welcoming Trump's signing of the relief bill.

The coronavirus pandemic has killed nearly 330,000 people in the United States and led to widespread economic hardship, with millions of families relying on unemployment benefits and COVID-19 relief funds.

Global markets were buoyed after Trump approved the package.

Wall Street's main indexes hit record highs on Monday as Trump's signing of the aid bill bolstered bets on an economic recovery and drove gains in financial and energy stocks.

House lawmakers on Monday will also seek to override Trump's recent veto of a \$740-billion bill setting policy for the Defense Department. If successful, it would be the first veto override of Trump's presidency.

Asked at the end of an event in Wilmington, Delaware, whether he supported expanding the payments to \$2,000, Biden replied: "Yes."

Georgia Republicans Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue, who face crucial Senate runoff's next month that could determine who controls the chamber, welcomed Trump's move, without saying whether the payments should be increased.

As the floor debate was under way, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said: "Republicans have a choice, vote for this legislation, or vote to deny the American people the bigger paychecks that they need."

And Democratic U.S. Representative Dan Kildee said: "We would have included much larger payments in the legislation had he (Trump) spoken up sooner. But it's never too late to do the right thing."

But Republican Representative Kevin Brady said the bill does nothing to help people get back to work. "I worry that as we spend another half a trillion dollars so hastily, that we are not targeting this help to the Americans who are struggling the most and need that help," he said.

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## WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

12/28/2020

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

Wealee@scdaily.com

## An Anxious and Frustrating Christmas

President Trump signed the stimulus bill and the government spending bill Sunday night to avoid government shutdown.

We are really very sad at this Christmas time. So many people are suffering while the politicians are living a life of luxury and don't have any feelings for those people in the bottom rungs of society.

We are also watching many citizens who are lending a helping hand to their neighbors and friends. Some of the people deliver food bags in front of their neighbor's

door. Some students were singing songs in front of their teacher's house. Other people are giving out toys to the disadvantaged kids. After all, we are all brothers and sisters.

The year of 2020 is almost over. And as President-elect Biden said, "Our dark days are not over yet."

We just all need to stick together. Later, history will give all those arrogant politicians a serious judgment.



The Coronavirus is still attacking our nation in many ways. We all want the vaccine to come more quickly to let more

people have a chance to get vaccinated. This is probably the only way we can survive



Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee

Stay Home!

## BUSINESS

Wear Mask!

Lockdown Order Includes Los Angeles And San Diego, Home To About 24 Million People Or Almost Half Of The State's Population

## California Gov. Newsom Orders New limits On Businesses And Activities As COVID-19 Soars



California Gov. Gavin Newsom has outlined his administration's response to the rapid virus spread.

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

The vast region of Southern California has been placed under new lockdown orders as the state scrambles to slow the rapid escalation of coronavirus cases that threatens to overwhelm hospitals. The California Department of Public Health announced Saturday that a shortage of intensive care beds in the 11-county Southern California region had triggered the new measures. The new restrictions went into effect in Southern California at 11:59 p.m. Sunday and will last for at least three weeks. The region includes the cities of Los Angeles and San Diego and is home to about 24 million people, almost half of the state's population. The order was also put in effect for the San Joaquin Valley. The new state stay-at-home order bans all on-site restaurant dining and closes hair and nail salons, movie theaters and many other businesses, as well as museums and playgrounds. It also means people may not congregate with anyone outside their household and must always wear masks when they go outside.

The following sectors will stay open but with limited capacity, mandatory masks and social distancing measures in place:

- Outdoor recreational facilities, but without food, drink or alcohol sales, and no overnight camping
- Retail businesses and malls, with indoor capacity limited to 20%; no eating or drinking will be allowed inside stores
- Hotels and offices that support critical infrastructure
- Restaurants offering takeout, pick-up or delivery
- Places of worship can hold outdoor services
- Professional sports and entertainment production without live audiences
- Non-urgent medical and dental care



With so many hospitals in the state experiencing a rapid surge of patients with the disease,

the "regional stay-at-home" order described by Newsom is likely to limit activities across California throughout the holiday season and possibly into the new year.

"The bottom line is, if we don't act now, our hospital system will be overwhelmed," Newsom said in a midday news conference. "If we don't act now, we'll continue to see our death rate climb, more lives lost."

Despite initial indications that 11 counties in Southern California and 12 counties in the San Joaquin Valley could be required to implement the new restrictions immediately, state health officials later provided a list showing no regions currently at the threshold for closure — meaning no more than 85% of their intensive care unit beds are filled. State officials intend to update the estimates of ICU capacity daily and post the information online. Once a region's ICU bed capacity falls below 15%, the shutdown rules will take effect within 24 hours. But with the state's decision to have the public health order take effect Saturday afternoon, the earliest any region could see closures would be Sunday. A shutdown affecting the Southern California region includes Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Imperial, Inyo and Mono counties. State officials divided California's counties into five regions for the purpose of determining intensive care unit capacity and potential shutdowns of local services.

**COVID-19 stay-at-home regions**  
California's new stay-at-home orders are broken down by five regions based on ICU capacity within regional hospital networks. No region is under the order yet, but would be locked down if its ICU availability falls below 15%.



As Californians hunker down for the new restrictions, the nation also is in the worst phase of the pandemic. More than 100,000 people are currently hospitalized with COVID-19 na-

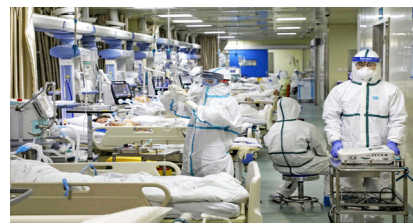
tionwide, the highest national level ever and soaring above the first two waves of the pandemic, according to the COVID Tracking Project. More than 276,000 people have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. Affected communities will be required to close personal service businesses, including hair and nail salons, playgrounds, zoos, museums, aquariums and wineries. Overnight, short-term stays at campgrounds would be prohibited. Restaurants will be required to return to take-out service only. Retail businesses will be limited to 20% of their customer capacity inside at any one time, with requirements for store officials to ensure there's no indoor drinking or eating. The California governor, who remains in quarantine with his family after his children were exposed to people who subsequently tested positive for COVID-19, said the new order is "fundamentally predicated on the need to stop gathering with people outside of your household [and] to do what you can to keep most of your activities outside."

Data compiled by The Times show the state has averaged nearly 15,000 cases a day over the last week, triple the rate in the last month. COVID-19 hospitalizations have also tripled over the same period. And an average of 67 Californians were dying daily from COVID-19 over the last week, a 60% jump from mid-November.



**Retail shops closed down in Los Angeles complying with Gov. Newsom's lockdown order. The order could last for three weeks.** Unlike the shutdown Newsom issued in the spring, most outdoor activities, including beach access and hiking, are not affected. But similar to other state government rules, the order allows local leaders to impose public health rules that are stricter. But stronger orders by the state would supersede more permissive local orders. That means the expected implementation of the order in Southern California would require, for example, restaurants to shutter outdoor dining currently allowed in their local jurisdiction.

Strict new limits on shoppers in the run-up to the holiday season could strike a powerful blow to the state's already hobbled economy. In recent days, Newsom has announced a variety of loan and grant efforts for small businesses as well as the expansion of a program that allows businesses to delay payment of sales tax collections and use the money as a short-term bridge loan. In most of the state, nonessential retail stores are capped at 25% capacity. Some counties, however, already meet this stricter threshold: L.A. County on Monday lowered its cap on capacity at nonessential retail stores to 20%, and Santa Clara County has limited its cap on nonessential retail to 10% of capacity.



**California governor said without another lockdown, hospitals will run out of beds.**

One sector of life unchanged by the new rules: K-12 schools. Public school campuses that were allowed to open for at least partial in-person instruction when conditions were better in early fall can remain open. Epidemiologists said state officials had no choice but to impose a stricter shutdown to avoid one of the worst public health catastrophes in the state's modern history, with California's death toll of nearly 20,000 plausibly doubling by the end of winter. The initial coronavirus wave "has now become a viral tsunami," said Dr. Robert Kim-Farley, a medical epidemiologist and infectious disease expert at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. "The virus is now everywhere, and so, therefore, the restriction of activities needs to also be applied everywhere to be able to return to where we were — on a decreasing trend." The governor defended Thursday his administration's actions as rooted in science and public health best practices. "We want to mitigate mixing, period, full stop," he said. "We want to diminish the amount of mixing. And we really need to send that message broadly. And we need to create less opportunities for the kind of contact and extended period, extended time of contact, that occurs in many of these establishments." (Courtesy www.latimes.com)



Editor's Choice



U.S. President Donald Trump plays golf at the Trump International Golf Club in West Palm Beach, Florida. REUTERS/Marco Bello



The Duomo Cathedral is seen during a snowfall, in Milan, Italy. REUTERS/Flavio Lo Scalzo



Investigators work near the site of an explosion on 2nd Avenue that occurred the day before in Nashville, Tennessee. REUTERS/Harrison McClary



A relative of mother and son Sonya and Frank Anthony Gregorio, who were shot and killed by an off-duty police officer, cries at their funeral, in Paniqui, Tarlac province, Philippines. REUTERS/Eloisa Lopez



Lorries queue on the M20 motorway as part of Operation Stack near Harrietsham, Britain. REUTERS/Peter Cziborra



A Palestinian man is seen reflected in broken glass in a mosque damaged in an Israeli air strike in Gaza City. REUTERS/Mohammed Salem



A street vendor sells roasted chestnuts on Via Frattina, as Italy goes back to a complete lockdown, in Rome, December 24. REUTERS/Yara Nardi



People gather near an illuminated installation depicting polar bears ahead of the New Year and Christmas holiday season in a park in Moscow, Russia. REUTERS/Evgenia Novozhenina



Immigrants Were Handed A Big Win - And  
The Implications Go Far Beyond Immigration

Judge Orders Government To  
Fully Reinstate DACA Program



A June demonstration in San Diego in support of beneficiaries of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. (Photo/S. Huffaker/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images)

KEY POINT

Up to 300,000 additional undocumented immigrants could be allowed to apply for protection from deportation under a new court ruling. President Trump had sought to cancel the program.

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

A federal judge on Friday ordered the Trump administration to fully restore an Obama-era program designed to shield young, undocumented immigrants from deportation, dealing what could be a final blow to President Trump’s long-fought effort to end the protections. The program, known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, was created by President Barack Obama in 2012. Over the years, it has protected more than 800,000 individuals, known as “dreamers,” who met a series of strict requirements for eligibility. But those protections have been under legal and political siege from Republicans for years, leaving the immigrants who were enrolled in DACA uncertain whether the threat of deportation from the United States could quickly return with a single court order or presidential memorandum. Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis of the U.S. District Court in Brooklyn directed the administration on Friday to allow newly

eligible immigrants to file new applications for protection under the program, reversing a memorandum issued in the summer by Chad Wolf, the acting secretary of Homeland Security, which restricted the program to people who were already enrolled. As many as 300,000 new applicants could now be eligible, according to the lawyers who pushed for the reinstatement.



People hold signs during a rally in support of the Supreme Court’s ruling in favor of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, in San Diego, on June 18.

(Photo/S. Huffaker/AFP/Getty Images)

The memo from the Department of Homeland Security also limited benefits under the program, including permits to work, to one year, but the judge ordered the government to restore them to a full two years. Judge Garaufis, who was appointed by President Bill Clinton, also said the government must find a way to contact all immigrants who are eligible for the program to inform them of the change. The judge said the government must announce the changes to the program on its website by Monday. Lawyers who had challenged the Trump administration in the case celebrated the decision, saying that amid a pandemic and global economic recession, it granted some stability to a vulnerable group. “This is a really big day for DACA recipients and immigrant young people,” said Karen Tumlin, director of the Justice Action Center, who litigated the class-action case. “It’s a day that many of them have been waiting for for over three years.” She said it could open the door for hundreds of thousands of immigrant youths “who have been unfairly denied their chance” under the DACA program. The program still faces other challenges, including a case in federal court in Texas, where Republican attorneys general have asked a judge to declare it unlawful. And Mr. Trump’s administration could appeal the ruling by Judge Garaufis in the days ahead.



Immigration advocates said they hoped the administration would not continue its legal fight to end the program given the arrival of a new, Democratic administration in less than two months. President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has vowed to restore the DACA program when he takes office, but a legislative solution that would permanently allow the dreamers to live and

work legally in the United States remains elusive, leaving their fates to the shifting political winds in Washington. If the judge’s order still stands by the time Mr. Biden takes office in January, the new president would need to do nothing to make good on his promise. But Mr. Biden is certain to face intense pressure from immigrant groups to fight for a broad overhaul of the nation’s immigration laws that would take care of the dreamers and millions of other undocumented immigrants. Comprehensive legislation, including one that would provide a path to citizenship for some immigrants, would be less vulnerable to legal challenges than DACA, which Mr. Obama created using the executive powers of his office after Congress repeatedly refused to act. But securing passage of a bill that includes citizenship for undocumented immigrants could be difficult for Mr. Biden, especially if Republicans still control the Senate after two runoff elections in Georgia early in January. Americans have historically considered DACA beneficiaries to be among the most sympathetic categories of immigrants. Having violated immigration laws through no fault of their own by being brought to the United States as minors, they are required to have a high school diploma or G.E.D., unless they have served in the military, and they must maintain a clean criminal record to hold on to their status. In a Pew survey conducted in June, about three-quarters of respondents, including majorities of both Democrats and Republicans, favored extending a pathway to permanent legal status to dreamers.



The program has had generational impact. Researchers estimate that 250,000 U.S.-born children have at least one parent who is enrolled in DACA, and that about 1.5 million people in the United States live with a beneficiary of the program. The judge’s ruling on Friday is a significant legal setback to Mr. Trump’s yearslong attempt to terminate the program. As a candidate, Mr. Trump insisted that DACA was unconstitutional, and as president he moved to end it in September 2017. That effort was put on hold by federal judges while the merits of the president’s actions were evaluated. The legal battle culminated in a Supreme Court ruling this summer in which the justices said the president had not followed proper procedures to end the program. In the wake of that ruling, Mr. Wolf only partially reinstated the program, refusing to allow new immigrants to apply and slashing the length of renewals to one year, instead of the two years previously allowed. In November, Judge Garaufis determined that the partial reinstatement was invalid because it had been issued in the form of a memo by Mr. Wolf, who Judge Garaufis found had been unlawfully appointed to his position. Officials at the Department of Homeland Security and the Justice Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Friday night. But the administration has disputed the judge’s determination that Mr. Wolf was not properly appointed and has signaled in the past that it intends to fight challenges to the president’s efforts to end or scale back the program. (Courtesy www.nytimes.com)

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