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Inside C2

# Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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## Half of U.S. states to end Biden-backed pandemic unemployment early

Half of U.S. states, all of them led by Republican governors, are cutting off billions of dollars in unemployment benefits for residents, rebuffing a key part of President Joe Biden's response to the coronavirus recession.

The payments - an extra \$300 per week from the federal government to unemployment recipients because of the pandemic - have become part of a political battle in Washington over how to best guide the country out of an economic downturn.

Maryland on Tuesday became the 25th state to announce it would stop the \$300-per-week benefits before the federal program lapses in September. Governor Larry Hogan said that while the program gave "important temporary relief" during the pandemic, it was no longer needed now that "vaccines and jobs ... are in good supply."

Hogan is following 24 other GOP state leaders and business lobbying groups, who say the benefits mean people are turning down good jobs, leaving companies without the workers they need to reopen.



for the program. Benefits expire June 12 in Alaska, Iowa, Mississippi and Missouri, with the other 21 states falling off through July 10.

Unemployed workers may still be eligible

finish getting vaccinated," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said on Wednesday. The White House would not try to stop states from cutting special unemployment benefits, she said last month.

Based on data from May 8 Department of Labor records, about 2.8 million people were collecting pandemic benefits in the 25 states terminating the program in the next few weeks.

Job postings are at a record high in the United States, while job growth in April was a disappointing 266,000. Employers in industries from manufacturing to hospitality say they're desperately seeking more workers.

White House officials fear that rushing to kill programs too early, before mass vaccination is completed, could hurt working people and an economy still struggling to get back to health and millions of jobs short of where it was before the pandemic.

A May Quinnipiac poll found that 54% of Americans agree states should cut off the extra benefits early. Surplus money for workers was popular with voters through 2020, when Biden's promise of stimulus helped the Democrat garner the votes needed to defeat Republican President Donald Trump.

Enriching and expanding unemployment insurance - broadening eligibility to include "gig" workers and topping up the state payments with what was initially \$600 per week - was considered key in the Biden White House battle against what threatened to be a deep and enduring pandemic recession.

The extra money led to the odd circumstance of many workers earning more on unemployment than in their jobs, but that helped boost the economy in unexpected ways: personal income actually rose during the pandemic, household saving spiked, consumption held up as people splurged on new cars and appliances, and a feared wave of debt defaults never occurred.

### A red state roll off

25 states with Republican governors will end the \$300-per-week federal pandemic unemployment benefit between June 12 and July 13. Among GOP-led states only Miss. and Vermont plan to keep the benefit until it expires in September.

States ending federal unemployment benefits early

● REP - Dem Governor ● GOP ● PS - GOP



The Biden administration, Democrats, workers, activists and some economists argue, however, that a host of ongoing troubles - from lack of childcare to continued fear of infection to low wages - are keeping people out of the labor force. Just over 41% of the United States' 328 million people are fully vaccinated.

The United States is about to undergo a real-time test of the issue. The 25 states turning down the federal cash have announced different end dates

for regular state unemployment benefits. But those vary widely. Unemployed people must take suitable jobs that are offered, White House officials have emphasized.

"Our view is that it's going to take time for workers to regain confidence in the safety of the workplace, re-establish childcare, school, and commuting arrangements, and



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# WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

## CORONAVIRUS DIARY

06/02/2021



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## “Taiwan Can Help” Becomes “Taiwan Needs Help”

With the recent COVID-19 outbreak causing hundreds of local transmissions per day, the founder of Foxconn, Terry Kuo, wanted to buy 10 million doses of Pfizer vaccine to distribute in Taiwan. Kuo and his Yonglin foundation want to split the cost with Foxconn Technology.

been involved in the negotiations. The Taiwan government said that all requests for vaccine from overseas would have to pass through the central government. Some of the local governments run by the KMT have expressed a willingness to buy vaccine from China.

According to the report, Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical Chairman Guo Guangchang also has

The COVID-19 pandemic is getting serious in Taiwan. Some specialists have called for a full



lockdown in Taiwan because the medical system in Taipei and New Taipei is overloaded with the COVID cases.

Taiwan's Central Epidemic Command Center announced that they have signed an agreement to purchase 10 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines from two local firms. So far only 1.5 % of the

population has been vaccinated.

The head of Sun Yat-sen Professor Chang Ya-Chung also announced that they intend to donate ten million vaccine doses to Taiwan. Five million would be BioNtech vaccines and another five million would be Chinese-manufactured Sinopharm vaccines.

This is a very critical time for the Taiwan people's survival. The current government is still using political reasons to try and block the vaccine from being imported which is unbelievable

“Taiwan can help” now has become, “Taiwan Needs Help.”



**Southern DAILY** Make Today Different

## Editor's Choice



A truck sprays disinfectant amid the coronavirus outbreak in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. REUTERS/Stringer



The aerobatic demonstration team of the Italian Air Force, the Frece Tricolori (Tricolor Arrows), perform over the city on Republic Day, in Rome, Italy. REUTERS/Remo Casilli



The skyline with Chao Phraya River is photographed during sunset in Bangkok, Thailand. REUTERS/Athit Perawongmetha



A view of the court during the first round match between Serbia's Novak Djokovic and Tennys Sandgren of the U.S. at the French Open in Paris. REUTERS/Christian Hartmann



A displaced Congolese child who evacuated from recurrent earth tremors as aftershocks after homes were covered with lava deposited by the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, waits to receive water at a distribution point by Doctors Without Borders (MSF) team members near their temporary camp in Sake, Democratic Republic of Congo. Medecins Sans Frontieres/via



Firefighters douse water on a home after a firefighter shot one colleague to death and severely wounded another at their Los Angeles County firehouse before the suspect apparently took his own life outside his nearby home as his dwelling went up in flames, officials said, in Acton, California. REUTERS/Mike Blake



## World’s Largest Meat Supplier JBS Is Hit By Cyberattack – Plants Shut Down In Australia And Canada



It is not clear yet who is behind the JBS hack. In early May a Russia-based group took control of Colonial Pipeline and demanded a ransom, and received \$4.4 million.

**Key Points**  
*The U.S. division of Brazilian meat company JBS announced the hack on Sunday*

*The U.S. headquarters also controls operations in Canada and Australia*

*Canada and Australia both reported shut downs in their work due to the hack*

*The U.S. is not believed to have been affected so far by the hack*

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

The world’s largest meat supplier has been hit by a cyberattack, with hackers shutting down internal computer systems and forcing the company to suspend parts of its operations in Canada and Australia. JBS, a Brazilian meat company which operates in 15 countries and employs 250,000 people, announced on Sunday that it had been attacked - weeks after the Colonial Pipeline, transporting fuel from Texas to the East Coast, was shut down by hackers from Russian-based group Dark Side. That hack caused days of misery for drivers,

as fuel pumps ran dry amid panic-buying of gas. A \$4.4 million ransom was paid after the May 7 attack, their CEO confirmed. JBS USA oversees beef and lamb operations in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand - a huge operation that includes 18 beef processing units, six feedlots, two leather units, two lamb units and one pork unit, eight processed food units, nine logistics centers and eight distribution centers in the three countries.

The U.S. was not affected by the hack, Bloomberg reported - but it was unclear whether that was because the plant was shut for Memorial Day. In Canada, their beef plant in Brooks, Alberta - around 120 miles east of Calgary - was not operational on Monday, a union representative told Bloomberg. Scott Payne, spokesman for United Food and Commercial Workers Canada Union Local 401, said: ‘There are no unionized workers there. That means effectively the plant’s operations have shut for the day.’



JBS, the world’s largest meat supplier, said on Sunday that their U.S. division had been hacked. The U.S. itself is not believed to be affected, but Canada and Australia - which are part of the U.S. division - have reported being shut down. Workers are seen at a JBS plant in Lapa, Parana state, in Brazil in March 2017.

The JBS packaging facility in Belleville, Ontario - where beef, pork and salmon are prepared for grocery stores - was operating normally, said Tim Deelstra, a spokesman for UFCW Canada Local 175. In Australia, JBS’s entire beef and lamb kills were cancelled across the nation, affecting facilities in Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania.

JBS said in a statement that the ‘organized cybersecurity attack’ was detected on Sunday, ‘affecting some of the servers supporting its North American and Australian IT systems.’



The entrance to the JBS Australia’s

**Dinmore meatworks facility, west of Brisbane. JBS operates in 15 countries worldwide, employing 250,000 people.**

They continued: ‘The company took immediate action, suspending all affected systems, notifying authorities and activating the company’s global network of IT professionals and third-party experts to resolve the situation.

‘The company’s backup servers were not affected, and it is actively working with an Incident Response firm to restore its systems as soon as possible.’

JBS said they did not believe that ‘any customer, supplier or employee data has been compromised or misused as a result of the situation.’

The company warned that delays may be likely.

‘Resolution of the incident will take time, which may delay certain transactions with customers and suppliers,’ they said.



**Butchers are seen working in a JBS facility. The company not only provides meat: it also trades in leather, biodiesel and collagen, in addition to running huge packaging facilities.**

Paul Rosenzweig, a former senior Department of Homeland Security official, told USA Today that the attacks on an oil pipeline and then a meat supplier ‘shows that nothing is safe.’

‘Not the meatpacking industry, not the chemical industry, not the wastewater treatment industry, not Sony. Nothing,’ he said. ‘And the only way to be safe in this world is to unplug completely. And you can’t do that and be economically competitive.’

Rosenzweig, a Cybersecurity and Emerging Threats senior fellow at the non-partisan R Street Institute public policy research organization in Washington, said that the success of the Colonial Pipeline cyberattack

has emboldened hackers. ‘Until they actually pay consequences, they’ll keep doing it,’ he said. ‘I mean, the Colonial guys got away with \$50 million or whatever it was – not bad for a week’s work. ‘Who knows what the JBS guys might get away with? ‘So long as the internet is a place of anonymity, the criminals will be able to act with impunity. ‘And why would they stop?’ (Courtesy <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/>)



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## SPECIAL REPORT

## The World Has Entered A New Age Of Epidemics

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

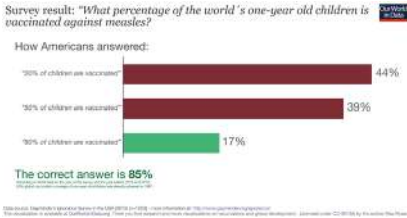


Illustration above depicts the world in a Petri dish.

In the 1950s, 400–500 Americans died every year from measles and another 100 from chicken pox. In the last major outbreak of rubella — in 1964–’65 — some 11,000 pregnant American women lost their babies and 2,100 newborns died. • **The 1960s vaccine revolution** all but wiped out these diseases by 2000. But now they are back — in the U.S. and around the world. • **Much onus for this regression** so far has been laid on the global anti-vaccination movement. But experts blame much more sweeping reasons, primarily a tectonic change in how humans live now as opposed to three, four and five decades ago. • **At the top of the list:** we are living closer together in ever-swelling cities, trading and traveling much more, creating climate change, migrating in big numbers — and failing to keep vaccination levels high enough for “herd immunity.” “What changed is that society changed,” Jeremy Farrar, an expert on infectious disease and director of the U.K.-based Wellcome Trust, tells Axios. • **Driving the news:** Disease was un-

der control for a few decades, but now the environmental circumstances under which they were contained have utterly changed. So new answers have to be found.

**The big picture:** For 2019, U.S. officials have confirmed 481 measles cases in 16 states as of Saturday, according to the website Precision Vaccinations. The Centers for Disease Control confirms 151 cases of mumps for January and February in 30 states and the District of Columbia. And Kentucky alone has an outbreak of 32 cases of chickenpox as of last week. Measles cases will “certainly” surpass 2018 due to lack of vaccinations



**Europe, too, has had a surge of mumps, pertussis, rubella and tetanus** over the last two years, reports the World Health Organization. Measles alone killed 72 people in Europe last year, among 82,596

who contracted the disease, according to the agency.

- In the U.S., the outbreaks are often concentrated in tight-knit communities like former Soviet immigrants in Clark County, Washington.
- Three states — New York, Texas and Washington — are the “leading measles hot-spots” in the U.S., per Precision Vaccinations.
- The diseases are often brought into these communities by travelers returning from countries like Israel, Madagascar, the Philippines and Ukraine.

**How the revolution happened:** The vaccine against measles was licensed in 1963, chickenpox in 1995, mumps in 1967, and rubella in 1969. Jonas Salk’s polio vaccine — igniting the vaccine revolution — came into use in 1955, and the oral version, created by Albert Sabin, was commercialized in 1961.

**But the revival of these once-unavoidable,** disfiguring and sometimes deadly diseases is only part of the new age of epidemics — they are a component of the general breakdown of the decades-old political and social order.

- **This is particularly apparent in the anti-vaccination movement,** what has been rebranded “vaccine hesitancy.” “People wonder, ‘Why am I still getting vaccinated if disease no longer exists?’ It’s not a stupid question,” Farrar said.
- **But the trend includes the other social factors as well:** climate change, migration, urbanization and elevated travel, which are spreading disease-carrying species such as mosquitoes, bats and rats.



**What’s next:** Farrar is pressing for governments to create a commercial impetus for companies to figure out how to navigate the new age. But to get started, says Peter Hotez, dean at the Baylor College of Medicine and author of “Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel’s Autism,” they need to separate out the various factors.

• **Malaria in Greece and Italy** have been blamed on climate change, but Hotez

says human migration and re-emerging poverty may also be at fault.

- **In Texas, the appearance** of Zika and dengue may be attributable to any or all the same factors. “We don’t know,” he said. (Courtesy axios.com)

**Related**  
**Measles outbreak is bringing vaccine exemptions into spotlight**

The federal government may try to take action if states don’t tighten their vaccine exemption laws and measles continues to spread in sections of the U.S., FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb tells Axios.

**Driving the news:** Overall case numbers of measles remain low in the U.S. but the disease is growing in areas of high non-vaccination rates. Some states like Washington are considering tightening their exemptions even as they continue to face a more organized anti-vaccination movement.



“It’s an avoidable tragedy,” Gottlieb, who says he’s usually a proponent of state rights, tells Axios. “Too many states have lax laws.”

**Background:** The highly contagious disease can only be controlled if there’s a large vaccination rate in the population, which the World Health Organization says should be 93%–95% of people.

- States are allowed to adopt their own rules over what types of exemptions are allowed for vaccines. All of them allow exemptions for medical reasons, but many also provide exemptions on religious and/or philosophical grounds.
- These pockets of unvaccinated people are transmitting measles in the U.S., which is particularly dangerous to those who can’t get vaccinated, including babies under 12 months and people with susceptible immune systems.
- Gottlieb says the vaccine is one of the most effective ones (97% with 2 doses) created so far, and for one of the most contagious viruses.
- Measles can cause various complications, including pneumonia, brain damage and sometimes death, and it has been

linked to longer term immune problems.

**What’s happening now**  
**WHO reported last week** that measles cases tripled globally in 2018 from the prior year, and current reports show multiple deadly outbreaks in the Philippines, Ukraine, Israel and Madagascar.

**In Washington state,** the number of confirmed cases has more than doubled since Gov. Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency on Jan. 25, to 54 as of Feb. 13.

• Clark County, where a majority of the Washington cases are located, reported a 70% MMR vaccination rate for 19–35 month olds. But since the outbreak, there was an almost 450% increase in vaccination rates in January compared with the same month the prior year.



**In New York,** there is an outbreak in Rockland County, Monroe County and New York City, and Texas reported 8 cases in 5 different counties as of Feb. 14.

“It’s a self-inflicted wound,” says Peter Hotez, dean at Baylor College of Medicine who published a study last year showing possible U.S. “hotspots” of measles due to vaccine exemptions, that he says is already proving to be true.

• Pro-vaccination groups are “losing the battle” to anti-vaccination groups, who’ve been very active on social media and forming at least one PAC to promote their message, he says.

**The other side:** Barbara Loe Fisher, co-founder and president of the nonprofit National Vaccine Information Center often labeled as anti-vaccination, tells Axios that 100 cases of measles in a population of 320 million “is not a public health emergency.”

• “[It] should not be used to justify eliminating the legal right to exercise informed consent to vaccination, which is protected by the inclusion of flexible medical, religious and conscientious-belief vaccine exemptions in public health laws,” she says. (Courtesy axios.com)