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WHO team, on tightly controlled China mission, visits hospital



Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Democrats clear path for approval of Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID package



WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Joe Biden and his Democratic allies in Congress forged ahead with their \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package on Friday as lawmakers approved a budget outline that will allow them to muscle Biden's plan through in the coming weeks without Republican support.

FILE PHOTO: U.S. President Joe Biden speaks during an event at the White House in Washington, U.S., January 21, 2021. REUTERS/Jonathan Ernst/File Photo

By a party line vote of 219-209, the House of Representatives passed the budget plan, after the Senate approved it in a pre-dawn vote. Vice President Kamala Harris cast the tie-breaking vote in the Senate for the first time.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi predicted the final COVID-19 relief legislation could pass Congress before March 15, when special unemployment benefits that were added during the pandemic expire.

Meeting at the White House, Biden and top Democrats said they wanted to enact the massive aid package as

quickly as possible to beat back a pandemic that has killed more than 450,000 Americans and left millions of jobless.

Biden said he was open to compromise with Republicans as long as they did not slow things down.

"If I have to choose between getting help right now to Americans who are hurting so badly and getting bogged down in a lengthy negotiation ... that's an easy choice. I'm going to help the American people hurting now," he said.

Continued weakness in the job market, underscored by data released on Friday, proved the need for aggressive action, Biden said.

Republicans have floated a \$600 billion aid package, less than a third the size of the Democratic plan. Even some Democrats, like Larry Summers, an economic adviser to former President Barack Obama, have warned that Biden might be spending too much.

Republican Representative Michael Burgess said Congress should wait until all of the previous \$4 trillion in pandemic relief has been spent. He said \$1 trillion

has yet to go out the door.

"Why is it suddenly so urgent that we pass another \$2 trillion bill?" Burgess demanded.

The budget resolution enables Democrats to pass Biden's plan by a simple majority in the 100-member Senate instead of the 60 votes required for most legislation. That means Democrats, who control 50 seats in the 100-seat chamber, might not need Republican votes. Democrats have a 10-seat majority in the House.

In its overnight session, the Senate voted to oppose an immediate increase of the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 per hour to \$15 per hour. Senators also backed a motion calling for direct payments of up to \$1,400 to be tailored to low-income earners. The White House says it is open to that idea.

The House vote Friday incorporated the Senate's changes.

The approved amendments do not carry the force of law in a budget blueprint, but can serve as guidelines for developing the actual coronavirus aid bill in coming weeks.

S&P 500, Nasdaq post biggest weekly gains since early November

(Reuters) - U.S. stocks extended their recent rally on Friday and the S&P 500 and Nasdaq indexes scored their biggest weekly percentage gains since the U.S. elections in early November, boosted by optimism over earnings, stimulus talks and progress on vaccine rollouts.

Both the Dow Jones industrial average and S&P 500 rose for a fifth straight session in their longest streak of gains since August, while the S&P 500 and Nasdaq posted record closing highs for a second day in a row.

A smaller-than-expected rebound in the U.S. labor market last month highlighted the need for more government aid to shore up the economy. The Labor Department on Friday reported a 49,000 increase in nonfarm payrolls last month, but job losses in manufacturing and construction.

U.S. President Joe Biden and his Democratic allies in Congress moved ahead with their \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package as lawmakers approved a budget plan that will allow them to muscle Biden's plan through in the coming weeks without Republican support.

"The upcoming package of stimulus is going to be big," said Alan Lancz, president of Alan B. Lancz & Associates Inc, an investment advisory firm based in Toledo.

"You have a situation where there's a lot of cash on sidelines and bonds have really underperformed, so that's helped some sectors that have really done poorly."

Upbeat earnings this week have also supported investor optimism. So far, stronger-than-expected corporate results in the fourth quarter have driven up analysts' expectations, and S&P 500 companies are on track to post earnings growth for the period instead of a decline as initially expected.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 92.38 points, or 0.3%, to 31,148.24, the S&P 500 gained 15.09 points, or 0.39%, at 3,886.83 and the Nasdaq Composite added 78.55 points, or 0.57%, at 13,856.30. For the week, the S&P 500 gained 4.65%, the Nasdaq added 6.01% and the Dow increased 3.89%. The small-cap Russell 2000 index rose 7.7% for the week, its biggest weekly percentage gain since the week ended June 5.

The Cboe Volatility index fell and had its biggest weekly point drop since the week ended Nov. 6.

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WHO team, on tightly controlled China mission, visits hospital

WUHAN, China (Reuters) - The World Health Organization-led team investigating the origins of COVID-19 during a mission that has been tightly controlled by its Chinese hosts visited a hospital on Saturday in the central city of Wuhan that treated early coronavirus patients.

On its second day after two weeks in quarantine, the team went to Jinyintan Hospital, where doctors had collected samples from patients suffering from an unidentified pneumonia in late 2019.

“Important opportunity to talk directly w/ medics who were on the ground at that critical time fighting COVID!”, team member Peter Daszak said on Twitter.

Team members leaving the hospital did not speak to journalists, who have been kept at a distance since the group left its quarantine hotel on Thursday.

“Just back from visit at Jinyintan hospital, that specialised in infectious diseases and was designated for treatment of the first cases in Wuhan. Stories quite similar to what I have heard from our ICU doctors,” team member Marion Koopmans tweeted.

The WHO-led probe has been plagued by delays, concern over access and bickering between Beijing and Washington, which accused China of hiding the extent of the initial outbreak and criticised the terms of the visit, under which Chinese experts conducted the first phase of research.

The WHO, which has sought to manage expectations for the mission, said on Friday that team members would be limited to visits organised by their Chinese hosts and would not have any contact with community members, due to health restric-

tions. Exactly a year ago, the WHO declared a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), its highest level of alarm.

The group’s itinerary has not been announced but the WHO has said the team plans to visit the seafood market at the centre of the early outbreak as well as the Wuhan Institute of Virology. One hypothesis, rejected by China, is that the outbreak was caused by a leak at the government lab.

Later on Saturday, the WHO team went to an exhibition centre that features an exhibit commemorating early efforts to battle the outbreak in Wuhan, which included a 76-day lockdown of the city of 11 million.

The investigating team had been set to arrive in Wuhan earlier in January, and China’s delay of their visit drew rare public criticism from the head of the WHO, which former U.S. President Donald Trump accused of being “China-centric”.

China has pushed the idea that the virus existed abroad before it was discovered in Wuhan, with state media citing the presence of the virus on imported frozen food packaging and scientific papers saying it had been circulating in Europe in 2019.



China’s foreign ministry has also hinted that the sudden closure of a U.S. army laboratory at Fort Detrick in Maryland in July 2019 was linked to the pandemic.



Stay Home!

BUSINESS

Wear Mask!

Virus Experts Say Johnson & Johnson Vaccine Could Be A ‘Game Changer’



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

PORTLAND, Ore. (KATU) - Professors at Portland State University tell KATU News that Johnson & Johnson will likely apply for emergency use authorization for its COVID-19 vaccine within the next two weeks. Ken Stedman, a biology professor at PSU, says don’t be concerned by the lower efficacy rates. Experts are comparing the vaccine to a successful flu shot. Johnson & Johnson says its vaccine is about 66% effective, which is lower than Pfizer and Moderna’s shots. They’re about 95% effective. Both have been approved for use in the United States. Stedman says with just one shot, the Johnson & Johnson option will be a game changer. “Sixty-five percent is not getting moderate to severe disease. But the really severe disease and hospitalization seems to be 100%,” he said. Experts say this vaccine could be accessible in the next month. “Oregon is probably in the same situation as other states. We depend, basically 100%, on what the federal government delivers to the states,” Carlos Crespo, with OHSU-PSU School of Public Health, said. The professors also expect Novavax and AstraZeneca will apply for authorization in

the weeks ahead. “I don’t know what the magic number is. I hope that at least half the population are able to be vaccinated before June; or I’m thinking spring break; but, you know, depends when spring break is in different places,” Crespo said. Stedman says when it comes to the best vaccine to get, he recommends the one that’s available when the time comes. (Courtesy <https://katu.com/>)

Related
Johnson & Johnson Could Be The ‘Workhorse’ COVID Vaccine, Colorado Doctor Says



Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center investigational pharmacy tech-

nician Sara Berech holds a dose of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine before it is administered in a clinical trial on December 15, 2020 in Aurora, Colorado. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine could be submitted for emergency use by late January and is the only vaccine among leading candidates given as a single dose. (Photo by Michael Ciaglo/Getty Images)

(CBS4) – Johnson & Johnson could be close to filing for an emergency use authorization for its COVID-19 vaccine, but some have raised disappointment about its effective rate, which is 66% for preventing moderate and severe disease. CBS4 Medical Editor Dr. Dave Hnida said he still considers it to be a game changer. Hnida spoke about the vaccine on CBSN Denver and said it’s necessary to take a closer look at what those trials actually reveal about the vaccine, even at that effectiveness number which is far lower than the other vaccines currently available. “No one wound up becoming sick enough to be hospitalized and no one died. In essence, this vaccine was just as effective as the other two vaccines in terms of preventing illness to the point where you wind up landing in the hospital, where you wind up dying from COVID.” Hnida said it’s important to consider some other factors. Johnson & Johnson is a one-dose vaccination, it’s easy to store and inexpensive to produce. “It can sit in the refrigerator for weeks at a time,” he explained, “so there really is a very minimal risk of having doses lost or wasted.” “I think this really has the potential to become a workhorse vaccine when it comes to vaccinating millions of people, the potential is there.” Hnida said if someone told him he could have the Johnson & Johnson vaccine today versus a 4 to 6 week wait for the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, he would take the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to get that degree of protection.

Johnson & Johnson Could Deliver 100 Million COVID Doses By June

Johnson & Johnson could deliver about 100 million doses of its coronavirus vaccine by the end of June, officials said Monday — if it’s cleared for use by the federal government. Andy Slavitt, a White House adviser on

COVID-19, gave the estimate during a briefing on the battle against the virus, but noted that the feds are planning cautiously by not assuming the shot will be green-lit — and that even if is, the bulk likely won’t arrive until closer to the summer. “The schedule, if it were to be approved under EUA [the FDA’s Emergency Use Authorization] would be about 100 million doses by the end of the second quarter. That’s the end of June,” said Slavitt. “I would not, at this point, be overly confident that those doses would come evenly. I would expect that they would come towards the end of that contract. “We’re not planning for facts that aren’t yet in evidence,” he added. “Obviously, there would be some improvement should there be a third dose. The expectation, however, should not be that that is an immediate, dramatic shift.”



The Johnson & Johnson shot has only been found to have about 72 percent efficacy in US trials. (REUTERS/Dado Ruvic/Illustration/File Photo)

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine would have some advantages and disadvantages compared to the two inoculations currently available in the US, made by Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech. Unlike the two existing vaccines, the Johnson & Johnson version would not need to be stored at super-cold temperatures, allowing it to be more widely distributed to areas that may not have ready access to the extreme storage measures. Additionally, it would be available in one shot, as opposed to the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, which both require two doses administered a few weeks apart. However, the Johnson & Johnson shot has only been found to have about 72 percent efficacy in US trials, whereas the other two vaccines rank in the 90s. Speaking during the same briefing as Slavitt, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s leading infectious disease expert, said that, should the Johnson & Johnson vaccine hit the market, it may suit some

people’s needs more than the Moderna and Pfizer products. “There will be situations where people will say to themselves, ‘Do I want to get a single-dose vaccine and know that I’m protected against serious disease, or do I want to go with a number that’s a 94-to-95 [percent efficacy],” said Fauci. “I can tell you that there are many people who would rather have the convenience of a single dose. ... There’s a lot more to protection than just preventing from getting infected.” The nationwide vaccination effort has been hampered by supply-chain issues and limits on the federal government’s allocation of shots to states. But after 1.6 million people were vaccinated on Inauguration Day, the effort did not exceed that mark until Jan. 28, when 1.7 million people were inoculated, according to Bloomberg News’ tracker. In the past week, the country has averaged around 1.3 million shots a day. The figures exceed the 1 million daily pace needed to meet President Biden’s pledge to inoculate 100 million Americans during his first 100 days in office. (Courtesy <https://nypost.com/>)



Editor's Choice



A woman infected with COVID-19 carries her baby in the maternity ward. REUTERS/Luis Cortes



A nurse monitors the vital signs of a newborn baby infected with the coronavirus, lying in an incubator, at the COVID-19 neonatal unit of the Maternal Perinatal Hospital 'Monica Pretelini Saenz' in Toluca, Mexico February 4, 2021. REUTERS/Luis Cortes



A lorry drives towards the border control at the Port of Dover, following the end of the Brexit transition period, in Dover, Britain, January 4, 2021. REUTERS/Toby Melville



Christopher Plummer, a patrician Canadian who starred as widower Captain von Trapp opposite Julie Andrews in the blockbuster 1965 musical "The Sound Of Music" and in 2012 became the oldest actor to win an Oscar, died February 5 at 91.



Hal Holbrook, an award-winning actor acclaimed for his one-man portrayal of American literary legend Mark Twain, died January 23 at the age of 95. In 2008, at age 82,



Actress Cloris Leachman, who won eight Emmys for her work on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" and other television programs as well as an Academy Award for "The Last Picture Show," died January 27 at the age of 94. "There was no one like Cloris"



Baseball Hall of Famer Hank Aaron, the quiet, unassuming slugger who broke Babe Ruth's supposedly unbreakable record for most home runs in a career and battled racism in the process, died January 22 at the age of 86.



Larry King, who quizzed thousands of world leaders, politicians and entertainers for CNN and other news outlets in a career spanning more than six decades, died January 23 at age 87. Millions watched King interview world leaders, entertainers and other celebrities on CNN's "Larry King Live"

A Message From Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo



The County Connection Lina Hidalgo | Harris County Judge



Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo

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

Most everyone has had an experience with trying to get a COVID-19 vaccination within the past few weeks -- whether for themselves, for a friend, or an elderly relative. And extremely limited vaccine supply made available via random drops announced at the last minute has rendered getting a vaccine appointment -- a matter of literal life or death to many -- next to impossible.

those who work long hours must resign themselves to being locked out completely. That is why, like in everything we do to fight COVID-19, I have instructed our agencies to build Harris County's vaccine registration system through the lens of efficiency, fairness, and equity.

a "smart waitlist" system for residents who want a vaccine. Vaccine recipients are selected from the waitlist through a randomization and prioritization process each time we receive a shipment (more info on that and how to register below).



To be clear, this new process does not mean we've received an abundant amount of vaccine for all of our residents. Vaccine supply continues to be extremely limited and new deliveries are unpredictable. The process of vaccinating Harris County residents will last many months and likely extend through the summer. I cannot tell you how long it will take for those on this waitlist to be contacted for an appointment, but I can promise that, moving forward, we will continue to apply this same lens of efficiency, fairness, and equity to every part of this process.

With an undertaking this large, no system we create will be perfect. I appreciate your understanding and patience as we work to support vaccination efforts in our community. Keep wearing those masks, social distancing, and avoiding gatherings. Vaccinations and eventual herd immunity will take time, but we are moving in the right direction and the finish line is finally coming into sight. Let's make it across having saved as many lives as possible.

Abrazos,

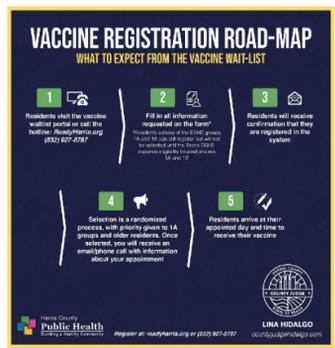


Lina Hidalgo

Related County News

Harris County Public Health Expands Vaccine Registration Process with New COVID-19 Vaccination Portal

On January 26th, Harris County Public Health (HCPH) launched a new COVID-19 Vaccination Portal for residents who meet the Texas Department of State Health Services(DSHS) criteria for receiving a vaccine. The portal allows individuals to be placed on a waitlist and contacted once vaccines and appointments are available. Eligible residents without internet access can also call (832) 927-8787 to be placed on the waitlist. The call line is available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.



Only individuals who fall under the DSHS Phase 1A and 1B category are eligible to receive the vaccine at this stage. Those who are not qualified to receive the vaccine under 1A or 1B are able to be placed on the waitlist but will not be contacted to schedule an appointment until the State of Texas expands eligibility beyond 1A and 1B, likely not until the Spring or Summer.

Priority phases:

Phase 1A: Individuals in Phase 1A who register for the waitlist are prioritized before those in Phase 1B to ensure everyone in Phase 1A has an opportunity to receive the vaccine.

Within Phase 1A, individuals are selected at random from the following age cohorts, with oldest cohorts prioritized first: 75+, 65-74, 55-64, 45-54, 35-44, 25-34, 18-24.

Phase 1B: Individuals in Phase 1B who register for the wait list are selected at random from the following age cohorts, with oldest cohorts prioritized first: 75+, 65-74, 55-64, 45-54, 35-44, 25-34, 18-24.

Future Phases: Individuals who are not qualified to receive the vaccine under Phases 1A or 1B are able to register for the waitlist. However, they will not be contacted to schedule an appointment until the Texas DSHS expands eligibility beyond Phases 1A and 1B.

Once individuals are selected to receive a vaccine, they are provided a link with instructions on how to select a location and time to get vaccinated at a HCPH site.

In addition to the new registration portal, HCPH has launched a COVID-19 Vaccine Data Hub. The Data Hub shows vaccine availability, distribution, and other demographic data. More information about COVID-19 vaccines is available at www.hcph.org or ReadyHarris.org.



美国生活 Daily News

从美国家庭教育看文化差异

大家以前肯定听过这样的故事：一位华人去美国朋友家做客，聊天时美国夫妻的宝宝突然摔倒了，哇哇大哭，但美国父母不去抱他，而是当什么都没发生一样，任凭孩子坐地上哭闹。然后中国人就很惊讶，为什么不哄哄孩子呢？

哈佛大学医学院教授皮特·葛瑞斯可表示：“如果一个孩子知道他有父母可以依靠，那他会更愿意探索世界。”

看到这里，很多读者可能会问：“不是说哭的时候不能抱么？怎么这又要温暖，又要爱的？”

其实以上这些意见全部都是针对孩子学会爬行之前，也就是我们说的绝对不会惯坏孩子的那个阶段。只有在那个阶段跟宝宝建立起稳定的关系，在后期对于宝宝偶尔的摔倒才能采取这样的方式。

当宝宝受到惊吓的时候，通常没有人来安抚他。当宝宝对某件事展现出兴趣的时候，家长不予理会或者直接否决。



说完了心理上的前提条件，下面我们来谈物理上的。美国的父母之所以敢在孩子摔倒后不过去扶是因为凡是孩子活动的地方他们都会弄得特别安全。

附录：美国家长与宝宝的关系分类 1、稳定关系：是最好的关系。处在这一类关系里的孩子感觉可以依靠自己的父母，他知道父母是他坚强的后盾，他也知道他做了什么父母会怎么样反应。

跟父母分开的时候他们会很难过，一般会哭很长时间。矛盾关系中的家长：当宝宝哭泣的时候，家长有时候理会有时候不理。