Daily Update on the Coronavirus Outbreak

April 7, 2020

INFORMS Members In The News

• ‘Half-hearted effort’: Experts say Missouri governor’s stay-at-home order too porous (The Kansas City Star)
  Member: Julie Swann

U.S. Federal Policy Update

• The Treasury Department is reportedly planning to request $250 billion from Congress for additional funding for the Paycheck Protection Program, the small business relief program that was created by the CARES Act. On a call this afternoon, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin stated that the department was looking “forward to the Senate passing that on Thursday, and the House passing that on Friday.” In response to this request, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has suggested that the Senate could approve this additional funding request by voice vote during the Senate’s pro forma session. However, while Speaker Nancy Pelosi voiced her support for the additional funding, she has maintained that she wants “to make sure that the program is administered in a way that does not solidify inequality in how people have access to capital.”

• President Trump has removed Glenn Fine from his role as the acting Inspector General of the Defense Department. This also effectively removes Fine from his role in leading the newly-created Pandemic Response Accountability Committee. President Trump has now appointed Sean O’Donnell – who was previously the Environmental Protection Agency’s Inspector General – to be the new acting Inspector General.

• Vice President Mike Pence is planning to hold conference calls with House Democrats and House Republicans tomorrow in order to brief the members on the administration’s coronavirus response. Senate Democrats and Republicans will be briefed on Thursday.

• Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden urged that the November presidential election should not be delayed. He stated during an interview that that the U.S. “cannot delay or postpone a constitutionally-required November election.”

• On this afternoon’s CISA and FEMA call with stakeholders, officials announced that they are working on the next iteration of their guidance for the essential critical infrastructure workforce.

• Senator Rand Paul (R-KY), who was the first senator to test positive for coronavirus, tweeted this morning that he has “been retested,” and has tested negative.

Global Response

• Chinese authorities officially announced that they would be lifting the lockdown on Wuhan after 11 weeks. Residents will now be allowed to travel in and out of the city, which is where the coronavirus outbreak was first reported.
• Healthcare experts from Germany launched a free smartwatch app on Thursday called the “Corona-Datenspende,” which translates to the “Corona Data Donation” app. This voluntary app is reportedly going to be used to help experts to visualize the spread of the virus, by monitoring and mapping the distribution of the virus across the population.

• Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe officially declared a state of emergency for Tokyo and six other major Japanese cities that have been affected by the pandemic.

• Singapore’s Parliament passed legislation requiring that all social gatherings of any size must be banned – regardless of whether or not these gatherings are in private or public spaces.

• Finland’s government has introduced an initiative to randomly test 750 citizens of the country for coronavirus antibodies each week.

• Saudi Arabia announced that the government is mandating the closure of nine more cities to be on lockdown.

• The city of Paris announced that there would be a ban on outdoor exercise from 10 AM to 7 PM. This will take effect starting tomorrow.

• Austria and Denmark announced that that they will begin to reopen their countries after completing their coronavirus lockdowns, with the belief that they are rounding the corner on the first wave of the virus. Similarly, Belgium and Spain are also reportedly looking to loosen these restrictions.

State Update

• After much back-and-forth, the state of Wisconsin continued forward as planned with the state’s primary election today. This was after Governor Tony Evers attempted to delay the election until June, but this attempt was overturned by resistance from Republicans and court decisions blocking the move.

• New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy announced that he is planning to close all state and county parks, and also that the state’s health emergency order would remain in effect for an additional 30 days.

• New York Governor Andrew Cuomo spoke at a press conference stating that the state needs an additional federal stimulus bill in order to assistance them in restarting their economy – emphasizing that “there’s no other way to do this.”

Economic Update (as of close of the markets)

• Although stocks opened with even more gains this morning, all three indices reported losses by the end of the day. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed with losses by 0.1%, the S&P 500 by 0.2%, and the Nasdaq Composite by 0.3%.

Latest Impact Data

• In the United States: Over 391,665 cases and 12,561 deaths in 50 states, 4 territories, and Washington, D.C.

• Worldwide: Over 1,418,925 cases and 81,507 deaths in at least 204 countries and territories.

In the News (4/7/20)

• $350B wasn't enough, Congress says, racing to send billions more to small businesses (Politico)
• Trump decries IG report on hospital shortages as 'another fake dossier' (The Hill)
• Senate Democrats push pandemic hazard pay for front-line workers (Roll Call)
• Companies Offer FEMA Critical Supplies the Government Can't Buy (Wall Street Journal)

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