



# BORGEAS: WHAT WE'VE LEARNED ABOUT THE PANDEMIC RESPONSE

### July 23, 2020 | Senator Andreas Borgeas

As your state senator, I have listened to people in our community voice their experiences and concerns on California's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We cannot allow political discord on the pandemic to continue to divide us in destructive and irreversible ways.

In some instances, our community clearly agrees on an issue. In other cases, the community is split on how to tackle these challenging circumstances.

Despite these divides, though, we must become more disciplined in our efforts to protect public health, responsibly restore our economy, and ultimately eliminate the pandemic so we can return to normalcy. In addition to anecdotal insights from community members, my office recently administered two online surveys to better understand public sentiment within the 11 counties of the 8th Senate District. We received over 15,000 responses. By no means were these surveys scientific, but rather were focused on receiving community feedback.

#### What We Have Learned

- <u>Masks</u>: The clear majority of people support wearing a mask to protect themselves, others, and to help keep our local businesses open.
- Government Mandates: Many believe the governor's mandates are confusing. There is little transparency in the administration's decision-making processes and the governor is prone to change existing laws without the involvement of the Legislature.
- <u>Local Control</u>: The majority of people believe counties and cities should be empowered to tackle their respective public health challenges, as each region is different, and state intervention should only occur if there are failures at the local level.
- <u>Schools</u>: Most parents would prefer in-person instruction for their children. Some parents are not yet comfortable sending their children back to school and prefer distance learning. Yet a majority agree it should

be up to local school districts, after meaningful consultation with teachers and parents, whether to open or close.

- <u>Childcare</u>: If children cannot return to the classroom, most would prefer and would benefit from childcare/daycare support when they need to reenter the workplace.
- Employment Development Department (EDD): An overwhelming number of people have contacted my office regarding the agency's gross unpreparedness as they have failed to deliver unemployment benefits in a reasonable fashion. This has imposed unbelievable hardship on working individuals and families.
- <u>COVID Lawsuits</u>: Business owners and employees in our community are concerned about the need for legal protections against foreseeable COVID-19 lawsuits.

#### **Consensus on a Path Forward**

- We should defer to health experts and wear masks so we can keep each other safe and get our businesses and economy back open.
- The Legislature must reliably reconvene to fulfill its constitutional role as a co-equal branch of government. To do so, the Legislature must remove archaic legal impediments that prevent it from using remote vot-

If we insist on productive solutions, based on reason, data and science, and the collective discipline to implement such solutions, we will emerge as a stronger state and nation. To do otherwise, would be a dereliction of our obligations as Americans.

ing technology to conduct the people's business. California cannot have an absent Legislature and by default allow the state to be run solely by the executive.

- The governor and Legislature should empower local authorities with the necessary resources and medical support to succeed in fighting the virus, and only intervene if there are failures based upon identified metrics.
- Local school districts should provide a hybrid option, consider outdoor and alternative learning environments to the extent possible, and take all available...



## July 22, 2020 | Jim Jakobs

Fresno area hospitals are scrambling to make bed space available in every nook, cranny, and extra building they have. But despite their best efforts, ICU bed space continues to dwindle. The latest numbers from the state show Fresno County only has 16% of its ICU beds available. Just last week that number was above 20%. With each passing day, and patient totals continuing to rise, Fresno officials are reluctantly taking steps to once again get the Fresno Convention Center ready for patient overflow.

#### **Convention Center**

In April, the convention center housed a 250-bed field hospital site to help alleviate the projected strain on local hospitals. At the time, the site was intended for treating non-COVID-19 cases. However, Fresno County reported just 94

positive cases of coronavirus on April 3. Thus, the site was not needed and eventually closed. Now, there are almost 11,000 COVID-19 cases in the county. The drumbeat to reopen the convention center grows louder by the day.

"We do feel like it can help decompress, and get some of the patients out of our acute care hospitals," Dr. Rais Vohra, interim Fresno County health officer, said on a Zoom call Wednesday. Fresno County EMS Director Daniel Lynch also announced the county has signed a contract with a group called AMI that would provide staffing for the center — if and when it opens. Earlier this week, the county health officials announced they were out of the drug remdesivir. Only area hospitals had a few doses on hand. On May 1, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorization...

# COULD LOCAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS REOPEN WITH WAIVER FROM COVID-19 CLOSURES?

#### July 22, 2020 | Nancy Price

Big Creek Elementary School sits high in the Sierra southwest of Huntington Lake and serves 56 students. Thus far, there have been no reported cases of COVID-19 in the tiny community. So Big Creek might seem a likelier candidate than most schools to qualify for a waiver from Gov. Gavin Newsom's mandate announced last Friday that schools in counties on the COVID-19 watchlist must remain closed.

But Fresno County's interim health officer Dr. Rais Vohra told GV Wire on Wednesday afternoon that he's not optimistic that any schools in Fresno County — even in remote locations like Big Creek — can get a waiver based on the county's rising infection rates. Instead of pinning their hopes on the possibility of a waiver, Vohra said, school officials need to "spend their time, energy and talent" on designing the best possible online learning curriculum for the new school year. "The big lesson here is that a waiver is a shortcut," he said. "We can't cut corners when it comes to safety and keeping people out of harm's way..."

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# COSTA REMEMBERS JOHN LEWIS: HE TRIED TO HEAL 'RACIAL DIVIDE'

July 22, 2020 | GV Wire

The death of civil rights leader and congressman John Lewis late last week prompted poignant memories from Rep. Jim Costa (D – Fresno). "I served with John Lewis for 16 years in the United States House of Representatives," Costa said, "And I must say that, clearly, he was the conscience of the Congress." Lewis died on July 17 at the age of 80. He was one of the Big Six civil rights activists who organized the 1963 March on Washington and represented the Atlanta area in the House since 1987. "He was a drum major for justice," Costa said. "His entire career was spent on trying to heal the racial divide that exists in our country today."

#### Joined Lewis in Commemorating Civil Rights March

Costa recalled joining Lewis twice in recent years on visits to several southern states to reflect on the legacy of the 1960s civil rights movement. Those trips included retracing the iconic "Bloody Sunday" civil rights march in 1965 across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where Lewis was severely beaten by Alabama...

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# MODERNA STARTING LAST TRIAL OF COVID-19 VACCINE, EXPECTS TO MAKE I BILLION

## July 23, 2020 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — Three out of four Americans, including a majority of Republicans, favor requiring people to wear face coverings while outside their homes, a new poll finds, reflecting fresh alarm over spiking coronavirus cases and a growing embrace of government advice intended to safeguard public health. The survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research also finds that about two-thirds of Americans disapprove of how President Donald Trump is handling

Support for requiring masks is overwhelming among Democrats, at 89%, but 58% of Republicans are in favor as well. The poll was conducted before Trump, who for months was dismissive of masks, said this week that it's patriotic to wear

the outbreak, an unwelcome sign for the White House in an election year shaped by the nation's battle with the pandemic.

More than four months after government stay-athome orders first swept across the U.S., the poll spotlights an America in-

creasingly on edge about the virus. The federal government's response is seen as falling short, and most Americans favor continued restrictions to stop the virus from spreading even if they might hamstring the economy. Support for requiring masks is overwhelming among Democrats, at 89%, but 58% of Republicans are in favor as well. The poll was conducted before Trump, who for months was dismissive of masks, said this week that it's patriotic to wear one.

"Not wearing a mask, to me, poses a greater risk of spreading the COVID," said Darius Blevins, a 33-year-old Republican-leaning independent from Christiansburg, Virginia, who works in bank operations. Blevins said he wears a mask in public because "it's much more effective than not wearing the mask." It's an opinion echoed by data analyst James Shaw, an independent who tilts Democratic. "If you understand the facts, there is really no issue," said Shaw, 56, of Noble, Illinois.

"The data is crystal clear."

# The U.S. Has More Than 3.9 Million Known Cases of the Coronavirus

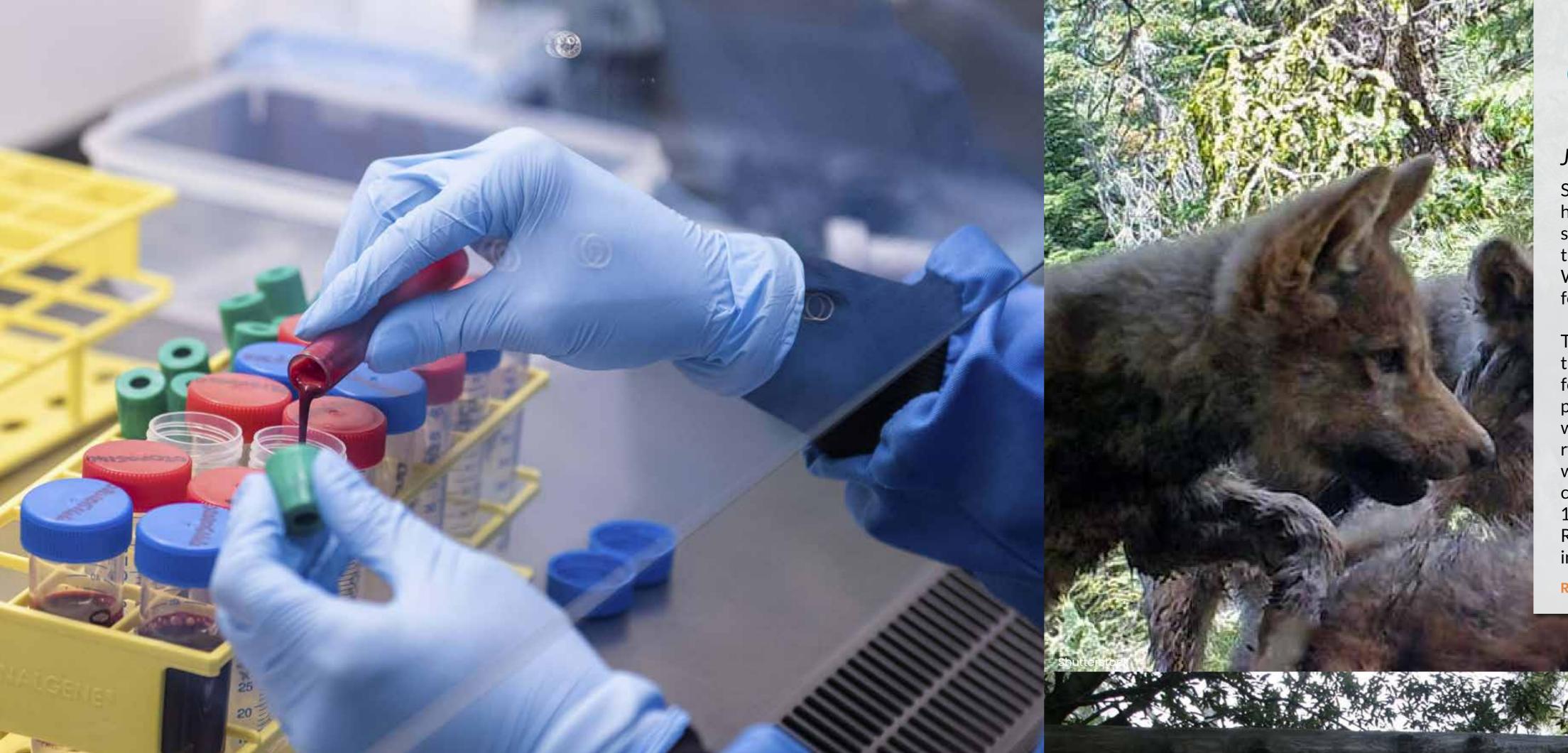
For months health officials have said several simple steps could save lives — washing hands frequently, staying away from crowds, especially while indoors, and pulling on a mask when heading out to the supermarket, the office or a restaurant. And despite heated rhetoric about masks in some corners, 95% of Democrats and 75% of Republicans said they're wearing face coverings when leaving the house. Overall, 86% of Americans say they're doing so, compared with 73%

in May. As the tally of coronavirus infections continues to climb, state and local governments have tried to find a balance between restrictions intended to limit the virus' spread, such as closing bars and in-

The U.S. has more than 3.9 million known cases of the coronavirus, with many more undetected, and more than 140,000 people have died of it this year. The U.S. leads the world in confirmed cases and deaths and ranks near the top on a per-capita basis.

door dining at restaurants, and getting workers back on the job after many businesses were idled and millions of people were left jobless by the initial stay-athome orders.

The U.S. has more than 3.9 million known cases of the coronavirus, with many more undetected, and more than 140,000 people have died of it this year. The U.S. leads the world in confirmed cases and deaths and ranks near the top on a per-capita basis. California, which earned plaudits from health officials for aggressive early action that included the first statewide stay-at-home order, is among states seeing a surge. On Wednesday, California passed New York for the most confirmed cases with 409,000. About half of Americans now say they're extremely or very worried...



# CALIFORNIA'S ONLY GRAY WOLF PACK HAS 8 **NEW PUPS**

July 22, 2020 | AP News

SAN FRANCISCO — California's only known gray wolf pack has eight new pups. Eight youngsters were tallied in the Lassen Pack in northeastern California, according to an Aprilthrough-June report from the state Department of Fish and Wildlife. Genetic testing of their excrement shows at least four are male and two are female, according to the agency.

The father is a black-furred male that began traveling with the pack last year. He isn't related to any other known California wolves, and his origin isn't clear, the agency said. The pack in Lassen County now has at least 14 animals. Gray wolves were eradicated in California early in the last century because of their perceived threat to livestock. An Oregon wolf with a radio collar, dubbed OR-7, arrived in 2011, becoming the first confirmed wolf in the California wild since 1924. OR-7 later returned to Oregon, where he founded the Rogue Pack before vanishing last fall. Other Oregon wolves, including several offspring of OR-7, have turned up in...

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# **SIERRA CLUB TRUTH-TELLING:** MONUMENT REMOVAL, CALLING **OUT MUIR'S RACISM**

July 22, 2020 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — The Sierra Club is calling out its founder, naturalist John Muir, for racist remarks he made more then a century ago as the influential environmental group grapples with a harmful history that perpetuated white supremacy. Executive Director Michael Brune said Wednesday that it was "time to take down some of our own monuments" as statues of Confederate officers and colonists are toppled in a reckoning with the nation's racist history following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

#### **Muir Called Native Americans 'Savages'**

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Muir, who founded the club in 1892, helped spawn the environmental movement and is called "father of our national parks," is the focus of what Brune called a "truth-telling" about the group's history. "He made derogatory comments about Black people and Indigenous peoples that drew on deeply

harmful racist stereotypes, though his views evolved later in his life," Brune wrote on the group's website. "As the...

# July 22, 2020 | Jim Jakobs

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A vaccine created by the National Institutes of Health and Moderna Inc. is set to begin final-stage testing on Monday. Several sites in California will participate. The final stage test ing in this study of 30,000 people will see if it really is safe and effective.

Moderna spokesperson Ray Jordan tells GV Wire<sup>™</sup> by email that everything is on track. "We still do expect our Phase 3 mRNA-1273 trial to begin dosing on July 27," says Jordan. Moderna reported it is possible that under emergency use, a vaccine could be available to some people, possibly including healthcare professionals, this fall.

In a nutshell, the results are promising. "At least they proved the concept," Vanderbilt University Medical Center staff scientist and protein chemistry expert Sanjay Mishra told the Associated Press. "The results show that when you give this vaccine, the body makes antibodies. But we don't know whether those antibodies will lead to immunity in the body because all of the results that we have are observed outside the body (in blood samples)."

TESTING OF MODERNA

COVID-19 VACCINE CANDIDATE STARTS MONDAY &

COVID-19 antibodies were found in all 45 participants, the biotech company announced in a May news release. Moderna said the early vaccine data indicated that it provided...

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# VIRUS SENDS JOBLESS CLAIMS UP FOR FIRST TIME SINCE MARCH

## July 23, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The viral pandemic's resurgence caused the number of Americans seeking unemployment benefits to rise last week for the first time in nearly four months, evidence of the deepening economic pain the outbreak is causing. The increase in weekly jobless claims to 1.4 million served to underscore the outsize role the unemployment insurance system is playing among the nation's safety net programs — just when a \$600 weekly federal aid payment for the jobless is set to expire at the end of this week.

Last week's pace of unemployment applications — the 18th straight time it's topped 1 million — was up from 1.3 million the previous week. Before the pandemic, applications had never exceeded 700,000. An additional 975,000 applied last week for jobless aid under a separate program that has made self-employed and gig workers eligible for the first time. The weakening of the labor market has raised fears that the economy will

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"The labor market remains in a precarious place as COVID-19 cases surge in some parts of the country

and fresh lockdown measures are adopted in response," said Nancy Vanden Houten, lead economist at Oxford Economics, a consulting firm. In contrast to the U.S., the outlook has brightened for some other major economies. Europe is forecast to rebound next year after having managed to shrink its coronavirus caseload. Unemployment in the 19 countries that use the euro has remained contained, reflecting aggressive government efforts to keep workers on payrolls.

The Painfully High Number of Layoffs Reflects a Pandemic That's Causing Both Confirmed Infections and Deaths

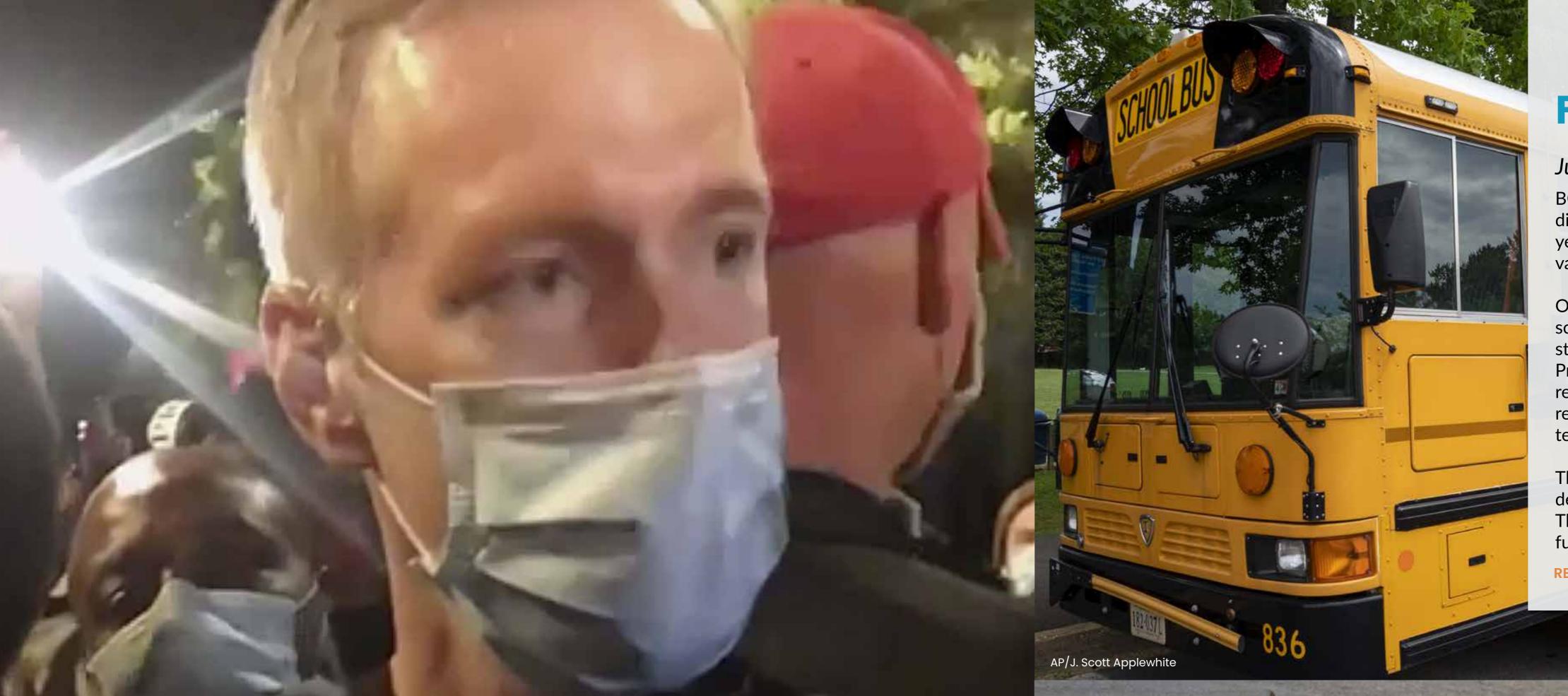
And China has become the first major economy to grow since the start of the pandemic. Economists say China

will likely recover relatively fast because of the Communist Party's move to impose early and intensive anti-disease measures. The U.S. government also said Thursday that the total number of people receiving jobless bene-

The federal government's \$600 weekly benefit for laid-off workers — which is in addition to whatever jobless aid a state provides — is the last major source of economic help from the \$2 trillion relief package that Congress approved in March.

fits fell 1.1 million to 16.2 million. That was a hopeful sign that even as layoffs remain persistently high, some companies are recalling workers. Yet that figure is still roughly 10 times what it was before the pandemic.

The painfully high number of layoffs reflects a pandemic that's causing both confirmed infections and deaths to rise nationally. Laboratories are buckling under a surge of coronavirus tests, creating processing delays that are undercutting the pandemic response. With the U.S. tally of confirmed infections nearing 4 million and deaths above 143,000, some workers are being kept off the job while awaiting test results. Analysts say the economy can't improve until authorities can control the spread of the virus, a need that is complicating the reopening of businesses and schools. Last week, applications for unemployment benefits declined in many states that have been hard hit by the virus, including Texas, Florida, Georgia and Arizona. Jobless claims rose in other states that are also seeing increases, however, including Louisiana, California, and Tennessee. The resurgence of confirmed virus cases has forced some businesses to close a second time or to impose tighter restrictions on customers in response to state mandates. The...



# AP-NORC POLL: VERY FEW AMERICANS BACK FULL SCHOOL REOPENING

July 22, 2020 | AP News

BOSTON — Virtual instruction. Mandated masks. Physical distancing. The start of school will look very different this year because of the coronavirus — and that's OK with the vast majority of Americans.

Only about 1 in 10 Americans think daycare centers, preschools or K-12 schools should open this fall without restrictions, according to a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs. Most think mask requirements and other safety measures are necessary to restart in-person instruction, and roughly 3 in 10 say that teaching kids in classrooms shouldn't happen at all.

The findings are a sharp contrast to the picture that President Donald Trump paints as he pressures schools to reopen. The Republican president claims to have wide support for a full reopening, arguing that Democrats oppose it for...

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# PORTLAND'S MAYOR TEAR-GASSED BY US AGENTS AS PROTEST RAGES

### July 23, 2020 | AP News

PORTLAND, Ore. — The mayor of Portland, Oregon, was tear-gassed by U.S. government agents late Wednesday as he stood at a fence erected to protect a federal courthouse during another night of protests against the presence of the agents sent by President Donald Trump to quell the city's ongoing unrest.

Mayor Ted Wheeler, a Democrat, appeared slightly dazed and coughed and said it was the first time he'd been tear gassed. He put on a pair of goggles someone handed him and drank water but did not leave his spot at the front and continued to take gas as the protest raged — with demonstrators lighting a large fire between the fence and the Mark O. Hatfield Federal Courthouse amid the pop-pop-pop sounds of the federal agents deploying tear gas and stun grenades into the crowd. It wasn't immediately clear if the agents knew Wheeler was among those in crowd when they used the tear gas.

Earlier in the night, Wheeler was mostly jeered as he tried to rally demonstrators who have clashed nightly with federal agents but was briefly applauded when he shouted...

# HOUSE VOTES TO REMOVE CONFEDERATE STATUES FROM CAPITOL

July 22, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The House has approved a bill to remove statues of Robert E. Lee and other Confederate leaders from the U.S. Capitol, as well as a bust of Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, the author of the 1857 Dred Scott decision that declared African Americans couldn't be citizens. Besides Taney, the bill would direct the Architect of the Capitol to identify and eventually remove from Statuary Hall at least 10 statues honoring Confederate officials, including Lee, the commanding general of the Confederate Army, and Jefferson Davis, the Confederate president.

Three statues honoring white supremacists — including former U.S. Vice President John C. Calhoun of South Carolina — would be immediately removed. "Defenders and purveyors of sedition, slavery, segregation and white supremacy have no place in this temple of liberty," House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said at a Capitol news conference ahead of...

AP/J. Scott Applewhite

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# UK CORONAVIRUS VACCINE PROMPTS IMMUNE RESPONSE IN EARLY TEST

July 20, 2020 | AP News

LONDON — Scientists at Oxford University say their experimental coronavirus vaccine has been shown in an early trial to prompt a protective immune response in hundreds of people who got the shot. British researchers first began testing the vaccine in April in about 1,000 people, half of whom got the experimental vaccine. Such early trials are designed to evaluate safety and see what kind of immune response was provoked, but can't tell if the vaccine truly protects. In research

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Lancet, scientists said
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published Monday in the journal Lancet, scientists said that they found their experimental COVID-19 vaccine produced a dual immune response in people aged 18 to 55 that lasted at least two months after they were immunized. "We are seeing good immune response in almost

everybody," said Dr. Adrian Hill, director of the Jenner Institute at Oxford University. "What this vaccine does particularly well is trigger both arms of the immune system," he said.

Hill said that neutralizing antibodies are produced — molecules which are key to blocking infection. In addition, the vaccine also causes a reaction in the body's T-cells which help to fight off the coronavirus. The experimental COVID-19 vaccine caused minor side effects like fever, chills and muscle pain more often than in those who got a control meningitis vaccine. Hill said that larger trials evaluating the vaccine's effectiveness, involving about 10,000 people in the U.K. as well as participants in South Africa and Brazil are still underway. Another big trial is slated to start in the U.S. soon, aiming to enroll about 30,000 people. How quickly scientists are able to determine the vaccine's effectiveness will depend largely on how much more transmission

there is, but Hill estimated they might have sufficient data by the end of the year to decide if the vaccine should be adopted for mass vaccination campaigns.

#### Hill Said Oxford Has Partnered With Drugmaker Astra-Zeneca to Produce Their Vaccine Globally

He said the vaccine seemed to produce a comparable level of antibodies to those produced by people who recovered from a COVID-19 infection and hoped that the T-cell response would provide extra protection. "There's increasing evidence that having a T-cell response as well as antibodies could be very important in controlling

COVID-19," Hill said.
He suggested the immune response might be boosted after a second dose; their trial tested two doses administered about four weeks apart.

British officials said Monday they had also signed a deal to buy 90 million doses of experimental COVID-19 vaccines being developed by the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and others.

#### Hill said Oxford's vac-

cine is designed to reduce disease and transmission. It uses a harmless virus — a chimpanzee cold virus, engineered so it can't spread — to carry the coronavirus' spike protein into the body, which should trigger an immune system response. Hill said Oxford has partnered with drugmaker AstraZeneca to produce their vaccine globally, and that the company has already committed to making 2 billion doses. "Even 2 billion doses may not be enough," he said, underlining the importance of having multiple shots to combat the coronavirus. "There was a hope that if we had a vaccine quickly enough, we could put out the pandemic," Hill said, noting the continuing surge of infections globally. "I think its going to be very difficult to control this pandemic without a vaccine." Numerous countries including Germany, France, the Netherlands, Italy, U.S. and the U.K. have all signed deals to receive hundreds of millions of doses of the vaccine — which has not yet been licensed — with...



# **AP EXCLUSIVE: IN 'SHADOW** SYSTEM,' MIGRANT KIDS HELD IN US HOTELS, THEN DEPORTED

### July 22, 2020 | AP News

HOUSTON — The Trump administration is detaining immigrant children as young as 1 in hotels, sometimes for weeks, before deporting them to their home countries under policies that have effectively shut down the nation's asylum system during the coronavirus pandemic, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press. A private contractor for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is taking children to three Hampton Inn & Suites hotels in Arizona and at the Texas-Mexico border, where they are typically detained for several days, the records show.

The hotels have been used nearly 200 times, while more than 10,000 beds for children sit empty at government shelters. Federal anti-trafficking laws and a two-decade-old court settlement that governs the treatment of migrant children require that most kids be sent to the shelters for eventual placement with family sponsors. But President Donald Trump's administration is now immediately expelling...

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# **ASTRONAUTS SQUEEZE IN** LAST SPACEWALK BEFORE SPACEX RETURNS TO EARTH

July 21, 2020 | AP News

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Astronauts squeezed in one last spacewalk Tuesday before turning their attention to the all-important end to SpaceX's first crew flight. NASA's Bob Behnken and Chris Cassidy floated out of the International Space Station on their fourth and final spacewalk in under a month. Instead of swapping batteries, they had to route cables, hook up a tool storage chest and perform other maintenance. It was the 10th spacewalk in each of their careers, tying the U.S. record set by previous space station residents.

In less than two weeks, Behnken and Doug Hurley, who monitored the spacewalk from inside, will depart the orbiting they arrived at the end of May. SpaceX is aiming for a splash-

complex in the same SpaceX Dragon crew capsule in which down off the Florida coast in August — the first splashdown for astronauts in 45 years. Weather permitting, the Dragon capsule will parachute into the Gulf of Mexico off the...

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## July 21, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department on Tuesday accused two Chinese hackers of stealing hundreds of millions of dollars of trade secrets from companies across the world and more recently targeting firms developing a vaccine for the coronavirus.

The indictment, which officials expected to discuss at a news conference, says the hackers in recent months had researched vulnerabilities in the computer networks of companies publicly known for their work in developing vaccines and treatments. The indictment includes charges of trade secret theft and wire fraud conspiracy against the hackers, who federal prosecutors say stole information that they knew would be of interest to the Chinese government.

There was no immediate indication from the indictment that the hackers had successfully obtained any COVID-19 research, despite efforts to snoop on the companies.

The case was filed earlier this month in federal court in Washington state and was unsealed on Tuesday. An email sent by The Associated Press to the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C., seeking comment on the hacking charges was not immediately returned...



