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AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2020 ✓

USA OUTLOOK

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Foto: The Hill

Business groups applaud Trump's tariff relief

Business groups applauded President Trump's decision to defer collecting some tariffs for 90 days but asked him to go further.

"The White House announcement that the government is providing a limited duty deferral for importers is welcome news to retailers struggling to find any good news during this extremely difficult time," National Retail Federation President Matthew Shay said in a statement. "We encourage the administration to broaden these deferrals for additional relief."

On Sunday, the Trump administration announced it would postpone some tariff collections for 90 days, providing temporary relief to businesses and consumers as the country grapples with coronavirus shutdowns.

But the relief does not apply to all tariffs imposed as part of Trump's trade war. It excluded changes to antidumping and countervailing duties and tariffs under sections 201, 232 and 301 of the trade code, which Trump used to ramp up import taxes in the trade war.



Foto: NBC News

Senate passes coronavirus relief bill, which Trump is expected to sign

The Senate passed a nearly \$500 billion interim coronavirus bill by voice vote Tuesday that includes additional money for the small-businesses loan program, as well as for hospitals and testing, making way for the legislation to become law as soon as the end of the week.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said in a joint statement that they were "proud" to have secured an interim aid bill that went beyond the initial Republican proposal.

"Democrats flipped this emergency package from an insufficient Republican plan that left behind hospitals and health and frontline workers and did nothing to aid the survival of the most vulnerable small businesses on Main Street," they said.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said in a statement announcing the deal that in more than a week of negotiations, "while our Democratic colleagues delayed the urgent [Paycheck Protection Program] funds, additional federal help for hospitals and health care providers became urgent as well."

"I am just sorry that it took my colleagues in Democratic leadership 12 days to accept the inevitable, and that they shut down emergency support for Main Street in a search for partisan 'leverage' that never materialized," McConnell added.



Foto: Flipboard

Trump says he may extend coronavirus social distancing guidelines to early summer

President Donald Trump said Thursday that his administration may extend its national social distancing guidelines until early in the summer or later. "We may, and we may go beyond that," Trump said at a White House press briefing when asked if the federal guidelines would need to be extended at least until the start of summer.

"We're going to have to see where it is," Trump said. "I think people are going to know just out of common sense. At some point, we won't have to do that. But until we feel safe, we're going to be extending."

Trump's remarks came a day after multiple White House acknowledged that the U.S. would likely still be dealing with the deadly coronavirus by the fall and winter, when the flu season kicks up.

The federal guidelines, which were first shared in mid-March and had already been extended once, were set to expire at the end of April.

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Two-thirds of US voters back mail-in presidential election in November despite Trump's objections

A new poll has found that close to two-thirds of the US electorate are in favour of conducting November's presidential election entirely by mail. The findings come in spite of many Republican leaders' insistence that mail-in voting is an invitation to rampant Electoral fraud – an idea lately propagated by the president himself.

In the poll, commissioned by The Wall Street Journal and NBC, the people polled were asked whether they favored changing election laws to allow everyone to vote by mail in general; those who said no were then asked if they favored changing the law for this year alone "given the concern that the coronavirus may still be contagious this fall".

All in all, 67 per cent agreed that in the current circumstances, they would support changing the law so that mail-in voting was available to all Americans.

Some states already vote entirely by mail, among them Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon and Utah. Washington State has used postal balloting for some time; officials there have cautioned that other states looking to set up mail-in systems in time for the presidential ballot have a difficult task on their hands, with everything from procuring equipment to deciding on postage fees having to be completed in just a few months.



Foto: The Times and Democrat

Preliminary antibody testing in New York suggests much wider spread of coronavirus

A preliminary study of 3,000 New Yorkers found that 13.9% tested positive for coronavirus antibodies, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Thursday. The revelation provides further evidence that the coronavirus spread earlier and infected more people than official tallies show.

Both California and Indiana are retracing their coronavirus timelines after discovering that the highly infectious disease started killing people earlier than previously known. In addition, researchers at Northeastern University estimated that the virus had spread widely in major cities as early as March 1.

Taken together, these discoveries emphasize just how much about this pandemic remains uncertain and unknown. Four months since the novel coronavirus was

first discovered in Wuhan, China, experts worldwide still do not fully understand How the virus started, how it impacts the body or what treatments are effective.

Dr. Amesh Adalja, an infectious disease expert at Johns Hopkins University, said New York's antibody testing results could be good news, as it means that the virus's fatality rate may be lower than the official fatality rate.

"It tells us this virus is much more widespread than we thought. When we look at the models that are using hospitalization rates and case fatality ratios, that those are likely overestimating because they're based on skewed data," he said. "The hospitalization rate may be much lower because the denominator (of people infected) is so much bigger.