

Nebraska State and Legislative Actions:

Emergency Funds

During Tuesday's press briefing, Gov. Pete Ricketts announced that Nebraska has only used \$24.7 million of the \$83.6 million in emergency funding that the Nebraska Legislature passed in March. ¹ The state has spent a large portion of the \$24.7 million on personal protective equipment, as well as \$58,685 on ventilators. Ricketts said that he hopes the state will get reimbursed for the funds taken out of the rainy-day fund through money allocated to states from the CARES Act.

Governor Update

Gov. Pete Ricketts kicked off his Wednesday press briefing by announcing TestNebraska has conducted 491 tests since launching Monday. The end goal is to be able to test up to 3,000 people a day, Ricketts said. Outside of the TestNebraska program, Nebraska is administering on average 1,500 tests through public health labs, hospitals, and private labs. Ricketts reminded viewers that the more tests administered will equate to more positive cases being reported.

National Guard

Gov. Ricketts took time to thank members of the Nebraska National Guard for their volunteer work. He said nearly 400 members have been called to serve, which is more than last year's catastrophic floods. Major Gen. Daryl Bohac, the Adjutant General for the Nebraska National Guard, reported that 6 teams are currently helping with testing, all of which are doing so voluntarily. He said those teams have visited 26 counties and 18 public health districts. Guard members have also been assisting with food banks and distributing PPE.

Q&A

Q: Some residents of Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health District (Burt, Madison, Cuming, and Stanton Counties) are upset that they cannot reopen businesses because of Madison County's high number of cases. What do you say to them?

A: Ricketts: It makes it easier to enact directive health measures by health district. Please continue to be patient.

Q: Is the UNMC model better than the national models regarding projecting cases?

A: Ricketts: Yes, because the model uses Nebraska data.

Q: Some employers have been encouraging employees to not sign up for TestNebraska, to keep employees from getting testing. What is your response?

A: Ricketts: A worker who is sick can infect others. Employees who are sick should be at home, regardless if they have had a test.

¹ https://journalstar.com/legislature/state-has-spent-less-than-a-third-of-coronavirus-emergency-funds/article_d542b728-e7fa-5c19-9d56-cc53b9b49c0e.html

Federal:

Congress

Senators remained divided on Tuesday over funding to state and local governments, especially within the GOP party. Over lunch yesterday, GOP Senators had a meeting where some members argued against sending more money to states and local governments. Other senators argued that we should give more flexibility with the funds already sent to states through the CARES Act. No consensus was reached between GOP lawmakers, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said there is no “vast new rescue package” for state and local governments. To read more on yesterdays meeting, visit [here](#).