



Office of Governor Christopher T. Sununu
Press Conference
Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Governor Sununu:

Hey, how are you. Well, good afternoon. Sorry, we're running just a little bit behind this afternoon. It is Thursday, I guess. Well, thanks, everyone, for joining us. Well, a lot to talk about today, so I think we're just going to kind of jump right into it. And then, I'll ask Commissioner Shibinette to come up and give a public health update.

But, to get started a little bit, just as a reminder to folks, we've been talking about the Main Street Relief Fund. We have approximately 7,000 individuals and small businesses have completed their final grant submission. But we just want to remind folks that if you did submit your Pre-Grant Qualification Form a couple weeks ago that you still have until tomorrow at midnight to get in your final grant submission. And we just want to remind folks to keep an eye on their emails.

If they have any questions, feel free to reach out to either the Governor's Office, the GOFERR Office, or the Department of Business and Economic Affairs through that process. And the hope is we will start getting some of those checks rolling as early as next week, which is, I think, pretty exciting and will provide a lot of much-needed relief to many businesses across the Granite State.

Another area that we're announcing today surround CARES Act funding. So, we have a variety of new funding opportunities before us. We have not spent all of our CARES Act money. But, as I've always said, it doesn't do anyone any good to have it just sit at the State. It's really designed to get out and really provide some relief to folks that have been affected by COVID, whether they be businesses or nonprofits, areas where we clearly need to make investments to help and make sure that we're closing those gaps that may have either been exacerbated by or more problematic through the COVID crisis.

So, today, we're doing a couple things. First, the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority has been looking a lot at housing data across the State. And they estimate that renters are twice as likely as homeowners to have lost their jobs as a result of COVID-19. And so, obviously, there's a need there. And we need to help provide some support and relief to renters.

And today, we're authorizing a \$35 million Housing Relief Fund to assist families and individuals facing housing insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We feel like this is a great opportunity for individuals all across the State.

The program really has two components that we're announcing. First is a one-time grants for households that have suffered a limited short-term loss of household income, or increased expenses, that obviously can threaten a family's ability to pay bills and rent.

The second is a short-term rental assistance program. And the program is really designed to provide an offramp as we lift the moratorium on eviction. Since the very beginning, I've made it very clear that we're going to have a moratorium on evictions and foreclosures, so folks were not losing their homes through a lot of the economic uncertainty that has panned out over the past 100 days.

And to that end, we're issuing an Order today that terminates the ability to withhold the evictions or foreclosures effective July 1st. So it's not immediate, but it is July 1st. And in conjunction with this

relief program, we want folks to have, again, that offramp, that ability to work out payment structures, or restructuring their rental payments with their Landlords over the next couple weeks, hopefully to avoid foreclosure.

We're also extending what is traditionally a seven-day foreclosure window from the time that you're foreclosed on to the time you are asked to leave the premises. We're extending that to 30 days, again, to provide a little more flexibility for those renters, give them a little more time to work our payment plans or whatever they have to do to hopefully get into compliance, to take advantage of this new \$35 million Fund for renters and Landlords alike.

About 90% of the rental units in New Hampshire are owned by small Landlords. These aren't large, massive landlord companies like you see in some of the major cities across the country. These are Landlords that are people's just rental properties. They might have 10 units or less. And when they don't have a lot of those rental payments coming in, it creates a lot of financial hardship on them. It puts them in potential delinquency with their banks.

And it creates this domino effect that, I think, over the first few months here, there was an understanding and a lot of flexibility on the banks' parts. And we thank the banks very much. The banks in New Hampshire have been great partners through this whole economic crisis providing a lot of the liquidity we're looking for, the financial flexibility for homeowners, and the Landlords alike. But, now, obviously, we're trying to move beyond that a little bit, provide that offramp, get back into a little more of a state of normalcy, but also have some financial support there for those individuals to help minimize the potential evictions that could be coming down the road.

I don't read speeches very often. But I don't want to lose my place. I miss one page, I'm going to miss the next big fund, which is something we've been talking about quite a bit. The next issue we want to talk about is broadband.

So, one of the amazing opportunities in many ways that we've had across this country, but specifically New Hampshire, it things like telehealth, remote learning, working from home. All of these opportunities, instead of just shutting everything down, but allowing some flexibility, so some assemblance of education, medical support, healthcare support, and working from home, remote working, so not everyone had to go off the job, as some of the restrictions had come into place.

Also, exposed some of what we call the digital divide in New Hampshire, the fact of the matter that certain people have better access to digital enhancements and broadband, and things of that nature, that become very important, when you're doing things remotely. And so, we want to enhance that.

So we're announcing a \$50 million broadband initiative. It's going to be unlike anything we've done before. It's an initiative that really focuses on what we call the last mile, making sure that homes and schools, and libraries, those areas where people are really using the computer at that end level, have real access to some form of broadband capability. Without a doubt, this will help thousands of people across the Granite State get connected and hooked up in a way that they can continue, if they were to so choose, a remote learning atmosphere, telehealth opportunities, working remotely from home, whatever it might be.

Ten years ago, maybe even more than, maybe 12 years ago now, the State made a very large investment with ___ that really looked at creating a kind of a broadband loop, a fiber loop around the State. And that loop created a great backbone and infrastructure. But so often, in so many areas, especially in our rural communities, that last mile was never really hooked up. And that's really what we're focusing on now, going to the individual homes and facilities, places of business, whatever it might be to get them hooked up in a way that allows them to really work remotely in whatever fashion it may

be, whether it's through education or otherwise, and really be part of what is, I think, a 21st-century opportunity in flexibility that everyone has come to expect.

There's a couple other smaller programs that we're talking about today, as well, in terms of CARES Act funding. First, also, we're finalizing plans to allocate \$15 million of aid to homeless shelters. There's obviously been a great need also exposed through this COVID pandemic for increased capacity. We will provide some more guidance on that later next week. But we're announcing the \$15 million homeless shelter opportunity today, as well.

Also, folks have been asking about Chambers of Commerce. Chambers of Commerce are amazing institutions. They really connect not just one trade association or one area of our business sector, but kind of connect all the different businesses, regardless of what your business is, to your community.

They're great tools for marketing, for data collection, for small businesses to understand what's happening out there from a business perspective. A lot of business-to-business transactions happen through Chambers of Commerce.

And we're announcing today a \$2 million contract partnership with our Chambers, so that we can, I think, better utilize them for, again, those marketing and data collection capabilities, so that we are more integrated with what's happening at a localized level within the State of New Hampshire, to all the businesses, whether they're one- or two-person businesses, or larger companies, whatever they may be.

Chambers would just provide a great opportunity. We know they're going through some financial hardship. And so, instead of just handing out grants, because they are effectively a trade association, really creating this partnership, we think, will allow the opportunity to open more doors between the State and the local Chambers and make that business connection that really allows, I think, all the rising tide to float all boats, just so we can push, as we drive forward to open up other parts of our economy. They can play a huge part in that, to be sure.

Finally, we're also announcing an allocation of \$10 million to private colleges and universities in the State of New Hampshire. We did an initial allocation for our public university system, as well as our community college system, about a month-or-so ago, maybe a month and a half ago. I lost track of time a little bit.

But, today, we're announcing a \$10 million initiative. We really engaged with a lot of the private colleges and universities so that, again, they can have the opportunity to recover some of their losses and their COVID costs, things where COVID has really affected not just revenue losses. It's really more about covering a lot of their expenses that they've had to bear because of the COVID crisis, and working with the Council here in the State of New Hampshire and some of the private institutions, directly, and making sure that those institutions that are in most need are at the front of the line, to make sure that they are viable. We have great private colleges and universities. And we want to stand with them to make sure that they are part of our success and we are part of theirs.

Lastly, a little bit ago, we did announce the \$30 million earmarked funding for the Emergency Healthcare System Relief Fund to go to long-term care facilities. So we have this Hospital Fund. We've put additional dollars in there, specifically for long-term care facilities.

We just want to remind folks, tomorrow the Application will go live so that long-term care facilities can apply for these emergency funds in a streamed-line manner. The Application period will last about a week. And we expect the money to go out the door shortly thereafter. So we've spent a little extra time getting the Application piece right so that, again, once those requests come in, we can streamline the process and get the dollars out very quickly.

One of the areas that we are going to be dealing with, with the COVID-19 epidemic for quite some time is going to be surrounding our long-term care facilities. We're know they're at frontlines today. They're going to continue to be on the frontlines. And one of the biggest concerns that we have is that those facilities are going to face potential and frankly probably inevitable financial hardship. And again, we want these COVID Relief Funds and CARES Act funds to be there for them.

And so, to have that ability to inject some financial capital into those organizations and make sure that they are taking care of our loved ones, that they're there for us in all parts of our community, is going to be vitally important, not just for the next couple weeks, or the next couple months, but really until we get through this entire COVID epidemic and pandemic, whenever that vaccine may come, or whenever we get to the point where we're not carrying that anxiety, as individuals, with us all the time.

But they really are on the frontlines. I think they've done a tremendous job. Every once in a while, you'll hear about an outbreak within a facility. But we're also hearing of a lot of the facilities actually coming out of outbreak status, actually clearing up with the two-week window that we ask for, between the time of that last positive COVID outbreak to now, and the fact that we've been able to take some of these facilities off of the outbreak list, I think, is a great sign that we're moving in the right direction. They're doing tremendous work. And again, we just want to support them any way we can.

With that, I'm going to ask Commissioner Shibinette to come on up and give us a public health update.

Commissioner Shibinette:

Thank you. Today, we are announcing 34 new cases of COVID-19 for a total of 5,209. We have four new hospitalizations, for a total of 504; and seven new deaths, for a total of 308. All seven of those deaths were associated with a long-term care facility. Our testing totals look like we've tested about 97,000 people in the State of New Hampshire.

For a long-term care update, we are announcing one new facility outbreak, which is Bedford Hills Center in Genesis Facility. Nine residents testing positive, 11 staff testing positive, for a total of 20. We are announcing one outbreak that has closed, which is the Kimi Nichols Center. And that closed on 06/10/2020. Thank you.

Governor Sununu:

Thank you, Commissioner. So we're obviously announced a lot of money going out, CARES Act money being spent to provide relief to the State. But, as we've been discussing, on June 15th, we expected some pretty significant changes, as well, in terms of our businesses and our ability to keep flexing things open in a smart, stepwise, responsible manner, always making sure that public health and the safety of individuals is first and foremost.

And given what we've seen in other parts of the country, some of the models and successful models we've been able to implement here in New Hampshire. In other parts of our economy, we feel very confident in taking some additional steps forward.

So, first, as we've been kind of hinting at a little bit, the data still supports the idea that, on June 15th, our Stay-at-Home Order will expire. And we will transition to a Safer-At-Home Advisory. This removes the social gathering limitation of 10 people-or-less. It removes that limitation. And it also removes the concept of essential versus nonessential businesses, the fact that we've been able to flex

virtually all businesses open at this point, or are in the process, thereof. We ask businesses to, again, adhere to those universal guidelines that we've put together, and the specific guidelines for their industries.

So, our hats off again to the Reopen New Hampshire Task Force that's done a great job providing those individual guidelines to those businesses. And again, we just want those businesses to refer to those stipulations.

Some are in a phased approach. Some are a little more expansive. But I think all were done, again, with a lot of attention and stakeholder input that give not just my office but Public Health and I think the businesses, themselves, the confidence, in terms of operating and not creating these super cluster events and not transmitting the virus in an aggressive way.

On June 15th, the following areas will also be able to reopen under new guidance, or move to Phase 2 of reopening: gyms. Traditional gyms will be able to open at 50% capacity to normal gym activity, starting on June 15th, with some strengthened guidance.

Amateur sports can now move into what we're talking about Phase 2, which will include the reopening of indoor athletic facilities, road races, things of that nature. Bowling alleys will be able to reopen on June 15th with strengthened guidance and capacity limitations, as well.

Things like tourist trains, organized motorcycle rides, small racetracks, that is, will be able to reopen as part of the newly revamped outdoor attractions guidance. And for the purposes of this guidance, the racetracks, that seems to be a question mark lately. We have had a few issues. But most racetracks will be able to open at 50% capacity, again keeping with the 6 feet of social distancing between individuals or families and groups that come from a similar venue.

And also just as a note, we're still working with a viable plan specifically with New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon, obviously one of our premier racetracks in the State, much larger in capacity. And we're looking forward to the NASCAR race coming to New Hampshire. And we're going to continue working with them to see what kind of capacity guidance.

It's a bit of a different situation, given they are so large. I think they hold somewhere into the 60,000, 70,000 range in terms of capacity. And we've maintained a great relationship with them. And we're going to work with them, specifically in terms of what NASCAR may hold for us. And we will continue to do so in the coming weeks.

Charitable gaming facilities, museums, libraries, and funeral homes will also be able to move forward on June 15th, again with new guidance and capacity limitations. And again, all the guidance documents can be found at nh.gov under the Stay-at-Home 2.0 button. So, there's a big list there. But I think it's very organized. You can find your area of operation for your guidance document. But all that goes into effect on June 15th, this coming Monday. So we're taking, I think, some really positive steps.

There's a few areas that won't be able to move forward right away. But we are announcing a June 29th opening date. The final guidance documents are not finalized. But we continue to work on them with confidence that we can meet a June 29th deadline. Some of the last industries we're talking about such as indoor movie theaters, performing art centers, and amusement parks will all be able to reopen on June 29th with capacity limitations and some of the other strengthened guidelines that we continue to work with the stakeholders in finalizing.

I guess that's it. I mean, those are the final three areas, frankly. And once we get through those final couple ones, we've always talked about amusement parks and movie theaters, and things of that nature being some of the toughest things to really manage going forward. But, seeing some of the other models in the other countries, I got to tell you, I didn't think we were going to be able to get here by

June 29th. But we are. And we're doing it with great confidence. Our numbers continue to drop in New Hampshire. That's a great sign.

I think we want to keep encouraging everyone to wear their masks when out in public and they can't socially distance. It really does make a difference for the positive, to be sure. And a lot of these guidelines will remain in place for quite some time. And so, this is, again, people might be tired of hearing the term "the new normal". But it is the new normal, at least for the time being.

I think the next big inflection point we will see is, come September, when we start looking at schools and universities opening with their new guidelines. I think that's when we will finally feel like things are somewhat back to normal, to be sure.

But there's a lot of hope for some business activity to take place, limited as it may be, but really allow some of our summer business operations that are so vital to the State of New Hampshire to really commence in a positive way and a very safe way. With that, we can take some questions. Yes, sir.

Q&A Session

Governor, I know Dr. Chan's not here. But can you explain why, from a medical standpoint, it's safe to take these final steps? And also piggybacking on that, what would have to happen? Is there a threshold for you to have to unfortunately rollback some of this stuff?

Governor Sununu:

So, the question is about the confidence we have in terms of the safety to take some of these steps. And the one area I'll put that into context with is the idea of social gatherings, right, the idea that you can put potentially a lot of people together in one area.

Look, we're still asking folks and requiring folks in many ways to maintain that 6-foot distancing. We're still encouraging folks to wear their masks. And in areas where we've been able to flex small pieces of this, it's gone off very well. And there's very little sign, if any, that we have expansive viral spread. We've been able to maintain positive numbers on a positive trend. There's really no data to support that we're spiking any higher.

Now, look, I've always said that, from a natural course of things, we're going to see a second surge. I don't think it's directly related to the guidance documents we've put in or how we flex open as much as just the natural course as we hit the fall.

I've been talking a lot about the common cold or the common flu. Well, the COVID is anything like those two viral spreads. Traditionally, it does seem to work in a very similar way, in terms of being transmitted. And I've always said it's just likely to assume that we're going to have some surge of our numbers at some point. I think it's likely in the fall.

But we're doing it in a way that can manage. I always go back to the healthcare system. We have capacity in our healthcare system. We have the beds and the ventilators for those who need the most serious health considerations, when they need it. And that's, I think, a very positive sign and gives us a lot of confidence that even if you were to see small rises or falls in the numbers, it's all manageable. It's all things that the State can handle very well.

We don't have any misunderstanding that these guidance documents are going to get our viral load to zero. That's not realistic to think. It'd be wonderful if that happened. But that's not realistic. So we're in a process where we're managing things, allowing things to flex open, get people back to normal.

And there's some models that show, and the models, being, I should say, examples that show, in some of these large gatherings, there may be a little COVID spread. But, people are wearing their masks. They're doing the right thing by social distancing. And again, we feel confident that it's something that the people of New Hampshire can manage. Yes?

Well, what were your thoughts with regard to lifting the ban on gatherings? Did you think about setting a new limit, or did that just not make sense?

Governor Sununu:

Yeah. No, we definitely thought about it. I mean, so you think about -- the number 10 really comes about saying, look, it's not realistic to have a number less than 10. You're not going to ban 10 people in the same room, per se, on an everyday basis and expect that to be upheld in any normal way.

But when you talk about, well, we could go to 50, or 100, or 500, at some point the number becomes arbitrary, right? Why is 50 better than 100 if people are wearing their masks and if they are doing social and physical distancing? Why is 500 okay? Why is 100 okay? Why is 1,000 better than 500? Why can you have 1,000 people do a protest, but you can't have 500 people over there?

They're all different situations, to be sure. But, again, I think as long as we keep a strong and elevated message through this new advisory, specifically for folks that are 60 years old and over, folks with underlying health conditions, they really need to stay at home. They really do, because this virus, while it can spread asymptomatically, we know that, can become deadly, especially for those populations. And so, those that are in those vulnerable populations, we're really keeping a very strong warning to be careful about venturing outside of the home and into areas that potentially could be of a large gathering perspective.

So, again, the data supports what we're doing. We always look at the data. And more to your question, when you look at 50 versus 500, at some point, you're kind of throwing a dart at a dartboard blind there. And the most important tools we have are the social distancing and the masking.

After June 15th, are there any businesses that are not being allowed to reopen with new guidance? Is there anything left?

Governor Sununu:

So, after the 29th, I should say. Yeah, the 29th; no, we don't believe so. If there is, please let us know. But I mean, I couldn't tell you how many guidance documents we've put out, dozens and dozens, because we've tried to really listen to each stakeholder individually, as opposed to creating one, big overlapping thing that just only works for half of the businesses, but not the other half.

And look, we know, for example, with the salons and the barbers, it works for some, not for others. With our restaurant guidance, it works for some and not for others. We very much appreciate that. That is not missed on us by any means. But we've really tried to create guidance documents that work for the vast majority of these businesses, provide as much flexibility as possible. And as the data shows, hopefully make it that next gaiting step to give more flexibility in the coming weeks. Yes, sir?

I'm Tony Schinella from Patch. Real quick, well, couple of quick things, on the endowment, the private colleges and universities, many of the colleges in the State have really large endowments. And in fact, most of the big ones have hundreds of millions of dollars, billions of dollars. Even some of the small ones are at \$15 million or \$20 million. Shouldn't they be asked to kind of tap into that, before they tap into taxpayer money?

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, so we're creating the Private College Fund of \$10 million is for schools with endowments under \$300 million. There are laws and rules that prevent universities from over-tapping into their endowment for operational purposes. So we can expand that a little bit. But, they're still very limited in that way.

We have some schools with large endowments here. And the larger ones are not part of this program. Again, it's kind of like the Main Street Relief Fund. We're trying to focus on the little guys. We also have stipulations in there that they have to be a financially healthy institution. There are metrics for that, certain scales that we look at to determine, make sure you're financially healthy prior to the COVID epidemic, so we're not just pumping good money after bad, so to say.

So we are putting certain metrics and guideposts in there to make sure that it's those that are in most need, those that can use the funds, I think, most effectively, and just understanding. I had the same question about endowments. I didn't even realize, until just a couple months ago, that some of these endowments are very limited by rules and law, State and Federal Law, sometimes, in terms of how they can use those funds for operational purposes, same with hospitals. Many hospitals have very, very large endowments. I'm shocked with how big they are. But they're very limited in how they can use them.

I can tell you I was talking to the folks at Elliot Solutions Health. They look very financially healthy. But to be honest, they don't have an endowment as much as they've created a capital fund. They've raised a lot of money to invest capital. They're eating into their capital fund for operational purposes. And God love them for doing it. I know that that stings. That hurts, because that's really limiting their ability to expand, as they may have originally planned. And they're doing a great job with Elliot in Nashua, Southern Hospital. They're doing a great job. They are.

So, endowments versus capital funds, the folks that do have those capital funds, they are eating into them as best they can, even with all the Federal money coming in, even with the \$100 million that we're putting in our hospital fund. And we may increase that dollar amount, as well. We do want to make sure that these folks aren't just barely getting through the COVID crisis and literally having nothing left, in terms of reserves and capital. So, we're trying to be very cognizant of that.

Couple of quick health update questions for either the Commissioner or you; on Wednesday, you had the 15th death of someone under 60. Are you still working with the premise that all of the individuals who are under 60 as well as over 60 have underlying health conditions chronically?

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, I think we can say most, to be sure.

And also, we're at the sixth of 10-day window marked for all of New Hampshire's George Floyd memorials and vigils. We were working under the premise it was five to 14 days was kind of an incubation period, correct? So, have we seen any contact tracing and/or any of the most recent patients who have been positive connected to any of those events?

Governor Sununu:

I don't believe so. Commissioner? No, right now there's no contact tracing to indicate that right now. But, obviously, we will keep an eye out. We're still right in the middle and maybe early in that period. And we have one of the best contact tracing teams in the northeast to be sure. So, I know they'll stay very on it.

Governor, on the CARES Act funding, do you know how much New Hampshire is going to be left with now, after this latest amount of spending? And do you know how that money might be spent?

Governor Sununu:

So, I'm going to ballpark it at about \$250 million to \$300 million. One thing that we're looking at is some of the funds we've created it, some of them aren't being drawn down as much as we had anticipated.

I'll give you one example. The Long-Term Care Stipend that we did for folks that work in long-term care facilities with Medicaid patients, those folks typically don't get paid a whole lot of money, really at the lower end. We looked at the overall payments, how much those folks put into payroll. And to be honest, the number of facilities that have applied is about what we expected. But the number of dollars drawn down is about a third to a half of what we anticipated, because it's not great news. So little goes to some of those frontline workers, frankly. And so, we're shocked at how much that hasn't been drawn down upon.

So my point there is we have about \$250 million to \$300 million leftover. But I think we could have a little more even beyond that, when all these funds run through in kind of unused funds. We always tried to do the math and get it as accurate as we could. But the First Responder Stipend, the hazard pay for First Responders we did, I think we got that one pretty much right on target. We got the number right pretty much. So that one will come almost in balance.

But, some of them weren't drawn down nearly as much as we thought. So there could be some opportunity on the backend. My sense is the dollars have to be spent by December. I think we will have a bit of an accounting come November, something like that. And the dollars will be spent. Don't get me wrong. But there'll probably be a little bit of a truing up and maybe replenishing some of these funds and getting those last dollars out prior to December to make sure they're being spent in an appropriate way.

Contact tracing question for Commissioner Shibinette; Commissioner, have you been able to determine how many long-term care facility employees are contracting COVID-19 from within their facility, versus how many are coming in from community spread?

Commissioner Shibinette:

That's really tough to tell. I mean, even if we understand how many long-term care employees are positive for COVID-19, it's really difficult to tell whether those employees got it at the grocery store, got it outside in the community somewhere, versus got it from a peer or a resident. It would be tough to be able to make that decision on where they got it.

Oftentimes, our contact tracing doesn't bring it back to someone specifically that they got it from, right? And we say that it's based on widespread community transmission, because we don't know where they got it. And I think a lot of the healthcare facility, if we can't trace it back to, let's say, a household member that was positive for COVID, or someone that was in close contact with COVID, there is an assumption that they probably picked it up, if they're in an outbreak facility.

But we have seen long-term care workers that, through our surveillance program, or through our widespread testing program, has tested positive for COVID. And none of their coworkers are positive. And none of the residents are positive. And we have one or maybe we have two Nurses or LNAs that are positive for COVID and that's it. And we know they didn't transmit it to the residents. And they may have transmitted it to each other. But, we know at least one of them picked it up outside of the facility, so hard to tell.

And Commissioner, on testing, you said everyone can get a test, should get a test. If you don't have symptoms in the first place, is it worth it to get that test? And how effective?

Commissioner Shibinette:

Yes, it is worth it to get that test for the basis of community surveillance. We're seeing large numbers of people that are asymptomatic-positive. And I know that there is a lot of discussion on whether asymptomatic-positive can transmit the virus.

We are still going by that they can. That is the premise that we're working from is that they can spread the virus. So, the earlier you get tested in that process, the earlier that you get to isolate, or quarantine. And we get to prevent the spread of virus.

So, everybody having a test is a great idea. It's good for the community. It's good to protect not just yourself but all of your households and everybody in the community. So I would encourage everybody to get a test.

And quickly, say you get a test on the Monday but the result doesn't come in until Wednesday or Thursday, would you need to get tested again?

Commissioner Shibinette:

No, I mean, if you want to monitor whether you ever contact COVID and you're asymptomatic, yeah, you would probably get tested every five days. I think there are definitely people that take this very serious, and I see them getting tested about every two weeks.

I think that what we would end up doing, if you ended up testing positive and you got it on Monday and didn't get the results back on Wednesday or Thursday, we would do the contact tracing between Monday and Thursday and found everybody that you came in contact with. And then, we would suggest, in five days, for them to go get tested. That's kind of how contact tracing works.

Have any of those people that you've seen that have tested themselves every two weeks been positive? Or have they always been negative? Or do you have any idea?

Commissioner Shibinette:

I don't have the exact numbers of those people. A lot of those people are people that work in healthcare. And they say, because of their close contact with patients and with the public, that they ask their employer. Or if their employer is offering testing, they will ask to be tested every two weeks. Or they will go to one of our testing sites, or Rite Aid, or CVS to get tested.

For both of you really quick, it's a follow-up on the reopening scaleup and everything. What would be the numbers by which there would be a point where everybody would get in a room together and say, hey. I mean, would it be 200 positives a day? I mean, we haven't gotten that high, but we've been up-and-down. Would it be 500 positives within a day? Would it be a cluster outbreak not associated with -- I mean, do you have a plan in place to say, here's the point where we all get back together and say, we've made a mistake on X business or whatever?

Commissioner Shibinette:

So, I'll answer from my point of view. I mean, we've had cluster outbreaks in places other than long-term care facilities. They just haven't been huge, right? It may be three, or four, or five people. And we can contact trace that back to one employer.

We're getting in a room and we're talking about this multiple times a week to begin with, right? Every single day, we do a briefing on COVID-19. I don't see that stopping anytime soon. But to get in the room and say, okay, let's reevaluate our Stay-at-Home Advisory, for me it would be an exponential growth, or exponential evidence that there's significant community transmission, right?

So we're not talking about just one event or one data point, for that matter. You're talking about positive cases, percentage of positivity, our testing data, our hospitalization rates, our ability to manage that population in the hospital. All of those things impact our ability to care for the residents in New Hampshire. And it impacts the decision-making. So, I'll let the Governor answer that.

Governor Sununu:

No, obviously, I agree with all of that. Oh, thanks, my answers. No, I agree with all that. I'd say this, again, not to focus on the negative, but when students potentially come back to the university, I imagine you're going to have times when we have a few hundred students, potentially, that get infected.

Again, you have to weigh. Are they being hospitalized? Is it something that they can manage? It's typically a younger population, a little healthier doesn't have a lot of the underlying health conditions. They can weather the storm a little bit with COVID. Our contact tracing can quarantine them off and segregate them off, and let them work it through, so to say, without the fatalities and the need for an overwhelming push onto the healthcare system. Those are the types of variables that will come into play.

So, for me, and I think I speak for some folks at Public Health, frankly, that we all understand it's about the pressure on the system, really, and those other variables, as opposed to just, well, we've hit a certain number. So we have to take more drastic measures.

And where they are, too; I mean, are we seeing more outbreaks in long-term care facilities? Or are we seeing more this community outbreaks in our neighborhoods and communities, and for those of us who aren't in long-term care? How's that ratio being balanced?

So it's really a perfect storm in your mind versus, say, a number?

Governor Sununu:

Yes. Yeah, I think it is. All the variables, all the puzzle pieces have to be assessed, to be sure. And again, we've got the team to do it. That's the good news. And we know more now, right? Just in 100 days, what we know and understand about this virus is just astronomically more advanced. And I think it allows us to make better decisions and more acute decisions, if you will, as opposed to got to just shut it all down and hope for the best. You've got to just weather this storm.

We can weather the storm while remaining open in a lot of the functions. But if the variables don't pan out and we're in a real crisis situation, there's nothing that prevents me from having to pull back. And I'm more than willing to do that, whatever it takes to maintain the public health of the State.

Governor, just within the last week-or-so, we've seen two different very approaches on education: Saint Anselm College coming back in the fall; SNHU is not. What's your read on the university system, how it would like to operate, and then how you think it should operate?

Governor Sununu:

Sure, so all universities are different. SNHU not coming back in the fall, SNHU is very much set up for online learning, as a lot of us know. It's one of the best online learning facilities in the world, frankly. And so, they're really set up for that. And I don't think it has as much of an impact on them. It does impact them, of course. But they can withstand that. And they have a model built more towards that.

I think the university system, some of the private colleges, are looking forward to bringing the students back. They understand they just have a model that is more conducive to having students on-campus.

There's obviously a certain amount of programs that will be done either partially or fully online within those institutions, to be sure. But there's also a lot of the hands-on stuff that just has to be done, in terms of getting your degree or your certification.

So, every university's going to be different. I've talked to the private ones and the publics. I think they're all working together, not just within the State but across the country. All the universities are trying to answer these questions. How do you do sports? How do you do food service? How do you manage dorm living, all those sorts of things?

The CDC has provided some guidance and some background there around both how to manage those aspects, as well as the testing that you may want to incorporate, and how to use that testing to make better decisions. And we're looking at all of that. They have a great group that they've put together at the Department of Education, as well as within the university system.

So, we really haven't seen it pan out yet. I think in the next couple weeks, we will have those draft documents, will take a little more of an advanced form. We will have better comments and feedback, and hopefully get something out pretty soon here.

One thing I've asked them to do is to move quickly. I think they've had a lot of time. They've done their surveys. They've gotten a lot of input. But now, it's really time to put pen to paper and give whether it's a parent of a 3rd grader that wants to go back to public school, or a parent of someone in the university system, whether they're here in New Hampshire or out-of-state, because those two pathways may have different guidance attached to them, depending on where that out-of-stater is coming from.

How do you handle international? Are we going to let the international students come back in? There's a lot of folks out there that say that might be a line where we just have to say no for this coming year. But you got to let people know that sooner than later. You can't wait until late-August or September to let them know. So they're working hard. And I think we will have some more definitive answers on what those guidance documents will look like in the next couple weeks. My hope is shortly after the 4th of July.

Governor, I know you have guided data. But do you feel like, by making this decision by June 29th to have some reopening, that this Order will create not a normal but at least a viable summer tourism season for most of these attractions that, if they couldn't open until mid-July or late-July, would some of them open, given...

Governor Sununu:

I don't even know if I'd use the word "viable", just short of viable, probably, survivable, honestly. I mean, I feel terrible for these organizations. I really do. I talked to Chris at Canobie Lake Park. And I talked to a few of the other guys up north. And they're just trying to survive. They really are.

But allowing them to open on the 29th, and luckily the data leads to that conclusion. We've been managing our numbers well-under 5% for weeks now, consistently, without any significant surge. So that gives us, I think, a lot of confidence that, given even a couple more weeks, we're going to be in pretty good shape.

And I don't mean to be a broken record. But I tell you. I think July and August, our numbers are going to look pretty darn good. And I think September/October, we need to kind of build it into our DNA that we have to be prepared for the fact that numbers could spike. And we're going to be right on top of it. We got to be right on top of testing capability, PPE, all those things on the backend.

But, to your point about having a viable or survivable summer for some of these, I think they can. I think a lot of them can, not all of them. But, a lot of them can. And that's what we're trying to do, because we go back to that also bigger underlying argument of the public health aspects of high unemployment, the negative public health aspects of not having a job, whether you talk about the mental health aspects, the anxiety.

You just know those determinants of health are very negative in down economies. And so, that's a variable that we absolutely have to consider. How the spread of COVID, that's obviously the preeminent factor that goes into play. But we do look at all these other aspects, as well. And we try to walk that line. We really try to walk the line.

I try to be crystal clear about as many things as I possibly can, and as transparent as much as we possibly can. And on this one, we really are walking that fence on managing our healthcare system with a pandemic, as well as allowing that economy to flex open.

It's not easy. It's not all one or all of the other. And I know I'm at that situation where I make a decision and half the people are very upset at one thing, and half the people are upset at another. I get it. It's fine. But I really think we're doing right by the businesses and right by the people of the State, when it comes to public health. Do we have some on the phone?

Kathy McCormack with Associated Press:

Hi, thank you. I believe that, as of today, New Hampshire nonprofits can start applying for grants for the \$60 million allocated from the Federal CARES Act last month. Do you foresee a time when more aid will be offered to nonprofits, which have taken a big hit?

Governor Sununu:

Yes, very much so; so a great point. The Nonprofit Fund, the \$60 million we allocated specifically for nonprofits, those Applications are available today which is great. That money should go out very shortly, and is being managed by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and the CDFA, and the Charitable Trust.

So, I can't promise anything. But I can tell you with a lot of confident, I fully anticipate putting more money into that fund. We could do another round on private business. We could do another round on nonprofits. We could do another round on hospitals. To the point that was made earlier that there is still some money left over, and there could be some unexpended funds towards the end of the year that we reallocate into these systems, as well.

One of the challenges we've had is we're creating new systems to do these grant processes, to do these Applications. So we're building it as we go. If we want to come back and do it a second time, I think everyone understands we will be able to do it kind of using the same system. And it'll be a lot more efficient, a lot faster. And so, we will be able to get these funds out.

And I think looking to the additional need in the nonprofit community, I'm already anticipating it. It'll likely be there. I mean, we're creating a fund for homeless shelters. We may need more money there. We're creating funds for housing relief. We may need more money there.

But we're going to get those things underway now and have a little bit in reserve. We don't want to spend down all the dollars, because, then, if there is a big need on the backend, we're going to really short ourselves, so to say. But we want to get the vast majority of this money allocated and spent. Obviously a big thanks to the Legislative Advisory Board for bringing a lot of these ideas to us. Yeah, so I

apologize for the longer answer there. Yes, absolutely, we want to do more for the nonprofits, as they expend down their funds.

Paul Hayes with The Caledonian-Record:

I just wondered if there was any sort of comprehensive effort being taken to look at the number or percentage of kids who have not kept up with schoolwork with remote learning. Anything, I don't know, a database or just some sort of effort to look at not only the number who have fallen behind, but the number who will need additional services, not only this summer but moving forward.

Governor Sununu:

Yeah, so we've always talked about the idea that remote learning has worked very, very well, better here in New Hampshire than almost anywhere else. But there's still a lot of kids that are potentially falling through the cracks that got some sense of learning, but maybe obviously not the fullest extent.

It was never anticipated that just picking up what happens in the classroom and putting it onto the kitchen table was going to give you a one-to-one comparison and a one-to-one result. But we did want to make sure that those children did have an opportunity for their education to continue. And I think a lot of districts did it very, very well.

The question's really about how do we assess that? How do we assess how many kids have potentially fallen through the cracks, where those additional services may be? I can tell you we are assessing it.

Some of our initial results look specifically with kids with IEPs and special education needs. That's probably one of the biggest gaps in the system where we fully anticipated a lot of kids to get those services, and they just weren't delivered for a variety of reasons. At the local level, I created an Emergency Order about a week or two weeks ago that really compelled a lot of the districts to fulfill on those special education needs, to do those assessments, and then get the information back to us.

We do have a lot of education funding available through the CARES Act, a lot of money, \$35 million, an additional fund, on top of the extra spending we're already doing in the budget which we are going to live up to our obligation on. Another \$35 million from the Federal Government is going to come to the local districts. I have another \$8 million or \$9 million at the Governor's discretion to help with additional programs, filling in the gaps, things that might not be traditional education needs.

And then, you add all the money, the \$30 million, \$35 million that's going to the university system through the State at the CARES Act level, as well as the Federal funding that's come in. So there's a lot of money out there to handle these issues.

I guess, if anything, this is one of those areas where the money is good, but it doesn't make everything go away. You have to implement those dollars and operationalize those dollars for those kids, not for the systems, not so much even for the schools, but for the kids, because they're the ones that are falling through the cracks. They're the ones that weren't getting the fullest educational opportunity that we had hoped for through the last three months.

And they're the ones that we have to be for, not even in September, but in our summer programs. We have guidance for our summer programs coming out. We're going to let those programs move forward, because they have to. That'll allow us another time to assess those needs.

But I don't mean to sound like a cliché, but it really is all about those kids, and understanding what the impacts of remote learning were on a one-on-one basis. And that's why we need all the teachers and districts to really work with us very closely, so that we can get that data back and allow those funds to go exactly where they need to be. It's not just about the money. It's about turning those dollars into something that is real and tangible for those kids that fell through the cracks.

Donna Jordan with the Colebrook Chronicle:

Yes, thank you. Good afternoon. I have two real quick questions for the Governor and one question for Commissioner Shibinette, if I could, please. Governor, will you share with us at some point the results of your testing that you took on Sunday? And secondly, how do you feel about 4th of July activities and parades? For example, parades are large-scale activities that are outdoors. Everyone's gathered together. You can't force them to be 6-feet apart or wear masks. And for Commissioner Shibinette, with the schoolyear basically ended at this stage and businesses reopening, clearly thoughts are turning to what does the fall public schoolyear look like? Vermont has already announced that they are reopening for the fall with guidelines. Each year, in order for children to be signed up to enter public school for the first time, school districts have to be provided with proof of immunization in order for those kids to enter school, against diphtheria, measles, hepatitis, rubella, all kinds of infectious diseases that can and have caused pandemics. Your mission on your website says it is to reduce or eliminate all vaccine-preventable disease. So, how can you square this with everyone going into a public school system in the fall and keeping them safe with COVID, knowing we have a current pandemic? How is it okay to not be immunized against COVID, before entering school, while all these other immunizations are required? Thank you.

Governor Sununu:

So, I'll answer the first part of your questions, obviously. And then, I'll ask the Commissioner to come up. I don't have the results of my test yet, to be honest. So, I took it on Sunday. I hope to get it today. I'm waiting with bated breath. But, I still feel great, though, in case you're wondering.

And the other question revolves around 4th of July. So, it's true. We can't force people to wear masks, even areas that try to do mandated mask orders. It's all about the enforcement of something like that.

But, again, we keep that elevated message of keeping 6 feet and physical distancing, wearing your masks in public where that physical distancing can't be maintained, and hopefully wearing your mask in public even when it can. I mean, there's no harm in doing so.

And so, those activities, or parades, I think most of the parades have been cancelled. I think most of the 4th of July fireworks are going to be postponed, I think, over to Labor Day. We've heard a lot of folks postponing them to Labor Day. I think that's a smart move, frankly, gives them a little more time and flexibility to plan. And hopefully, the numbers can continue to go down in a little more confidence, as people might come out. But, again, it's really about reminding folks the importance of that distancing perspective.

I'll turn it over to the Commissioner on the immunization other than to say there is no vaccine for COVID. I'll just, from my point of view, and then I'll turn it to the Commissioner on the public health perspective.

If the idea is that we're not going to let kids go back to school until there's a COVID vaccine, we're hopeful, but there may never be a COVID vaccine that really works for everyone. I mean, I think everyone

is very hopeful that we're going to get there. I feel very confident that a COVID vaccine is on its way, hopefully in early-2021.

But what if there isn't? So, at some point, you got to create that guidance and move forward in a productive way. And I think I speak for not just the vast majority of parents out there, but the vast majority of communities out there, where people do want to see their kids get back to school. They understand there may be additional guidance. They understand there may be limitations.

Certain activities might not be able to commence. Certain sports might have limitations, or assemblies and things of that nature. There's going to be a lot of restrictions, potentially, in the school year. But it is so important, not just from an education standpoint, but from a socialization standpoint, a mental health standpoint, an ability to get our workforce back.

There's so many factors, I think, that go into play in making sure that our kids go back to school knowing that we're hopeful a vaccine is on the forefront. But we just never know. That's half of my answer, half as a Governor and half as a dad there. I'll turn it over to the Commissioner.

Commissioner Shibinette:

So, I echo everything the Governor just said. It really is a risk-benefit analysis that both the State has to do and every individual has to do. So, we recommend every year that kids get flu vaccines, too. And there are always huge groups of people that don't get their flu vaccines. So I'm hoping that when there is a safe, reliable COVID vaccine available, that we're going to remember back to this moment. And we're all going to unite, as a State, and get that vaccine.

What I can say is that, for parents that have children that have underlying conditions that put them at-risk for negative consequences, or negative health outcomes, that's another level that we need to really evaluate. And the parent and the family needs to evaluate whether that risk-benefit analysis really puts that child back into the school system. And is there a way to homeschool or do remote learning, if there is a significant risk to that child?

So I think every family has to have that risk-benefit analysis. But, as a State, we could be six months' out from the vaccine. We could be a year out from the vaccine. And we just need to put safeguards in place so that we can move forward.

Paula Tracy with InDepth:

Yes, good afternoon, Governor. I have a question about nursing home visits. Are they going to be part of any of these open-up plans? And then, another question I have about Scott Mason. Yesterday, at the Executive Council, you nominated Scott Mason to lead the Fish and Game Department. Can you tell us a little bit about what qualifies him to operate such an important and complex department?

Governor Sununu:

Sure, so first on the nursing home visits, I think our hope is to have some guidance out hopefully by next week. I think it's safe to say, not just nursing home also but adult daycare, which is very, very important program that's out there. We're working with a lot of the adult daycare facilities to get guidance for them so that they can commence in a safe way. It's so important, I think, from a socialization standpoint, for allowing for individuals to get back to work that have been home taking care of loved ones through the COVID pandemic, because those adult daycare services have not been available.

But, I don't mean to tell Charlie's story. But Governor Baker tells a great story and I'll really leave it to him. But in terms of Massachusetts really been getting aggressive and, I think, doing the right thing, putting some guidance together, and Charlie going to see his dad and just that personal connection that it's so important to have with a loved one that is in those facilities.

The social aspect of it, just putting your eyes on that loved one, getting a better understanding of what's been happening over the past few months through this distancing, it really, really is important from a mental-health aspect, from a family aspect. And I know the Commissioner and her team, and Dr. Chan are working very hard in getting some guidance together.

It will be restrictive, to be sure. And it's not necessarily going to work for everyone. But at least the start of that process forward to allow some of these visitations to happen with loved ones in long-term care is going to be very, very important.

Scott Mason, Scott is frankly an incredible guy. Scott has worked in a variety of areas. He's a farmer from the North Country. Let me just tell you this. If one of the biggest challenges of any department in the State is being able to manage individuals, being able to manage budgets, being able to make tough decisions, and I don't know any farmer that has survived for 20 years in this State and doesn't know how to make tough decisions and live tight, and work within a budget.

He knows his numbers. He's graduated from UNH. He's on the UNH Board of Trustees. He's been involved in a variety of community endeavors, not just in the North Country, but very involved with things down here in Concord, as well.

He's a great outspoken voice. And I just think he just has not just the right temperament but the right background to come in. He understands. He has great connectivity with folks, whether it's through the recreational aspects that are managed through Fish and Game in the North Country. Being a farmer and being connected to a lot of those private nonprofit and private advocacy organizations that he's connected with in one way or the other, he's simply just been part of that community for so long.

And I know the Fish and Game Commission went through kind of a two-tiered process of interviews of a variety of candidates that put their name up to be the Director of Fish and Game. And at the end of the day, he was one of the top candidates.

They gave me a list of a few. I asked for a few candidates to be brought before me. He was one of the top ones. I talked to him and interviewed him. And I thought, man, this is the guy. And if the Fish and Game Commission, he went through their kind of first filter, I thought he is going to represent that department and do a great job. I have no job it'll be a 5-0 vote. I would be shocked if it wasn't a 5-0 vote through the Executive Council, given his background and experience. But I've been surprised before.

Harrison Thorp with Rochester Voice:

Yeah, good afternoon, everybody. I just want to talk a little bit about HB-1166 and the Amendment, (2020) 1349, which I've been trying to dig through a little bit. And it looks like an expansion of unemployment insurance by \$100 a week in instances in which it appears someone can claim they're afraid to go back to work because of putting themselves in harm's way of COVID-19, do that without any kind of certification. And it looks pretty overwhelmingly expansive that could really hit New Hampshire businesses hard. Can you comment on that? And one other quick thing I think I misunderstood. Is the groups of 10, is that going away and to be replaced? Or it is going away? So there's no group limit?

Governor Sununu:

No, there'll be no group limit. Getting back to your question on that Bill, I apologize. I don't know the number. People always ask me about House Bills. There's thousands of them. And I don't know them by number. So I apologize for that, other than to say I haven't looked at that Bill, in particular.

I am not looking to make an expansions. I mean, we already have a pretty good unemployment benefit here in New Hampshire. We've expanded it as part of COVID-19. Most of those expansions are going to stay in place, at least, for at least the indefinite future, to be sure.

So I don't know the details of that Bill. I can tell you we're not looking to make any long-term changes to our unemployment benefits. We have a great unemployment system. Prior to COVID, we had an incredibly healthy trust fund. We had the lowest poverty rate in the country. We had the lowest unemployment rate in the country. We hit 2.4% right before COVID hit. We had some of the strongest business growth in January and February of 2020, before we just got socked with COVID. And it really hurt the economy. So, those are all factors that definitely come into play. So I'm not looking to make any long-term changes, other than the expanded benefits that we've provided through the pandemic. Great. Anything else? Yes, sir, Tony?

So, taking up the surprised vote for a moment, you seemed stung by..

Governor Sununu:

Surprised vote? Oh, at the Council? Yeah, sure.

Yeah, were you surprised by the rejection of Ryan Terrell for the State Board by Democrats and Executive Council? He was the second African-American nominee that we've had in the past few months that's kind of had trouble getting through Eddie Edwards, which is the first. Both of them offered a diverse experience -- life experience, job experience, personal belief experience, etc. Terrell says that he believes that the Democrats that voted against him were racist, and suggesting he isn't qualified, suggesting he'd run for School Board or something. You talk a lot about diversity. What can you do, as Governor, to combat certain members of the Council saying that some of the people you've put forth need not apply?

Governor Sununu:

I think the comments that were made by the Executive Council yesterday against Ryan were terrible, absolutely deplorable. I don't know whether they knew what they were saying or not, but there's no place for it. And I think their comments speak for themselves. And it's just a shame, because Ryan is exactly what the Board of Education needs.

Any time we have the opportunity to bring somebody with private experience, an entrepreneur that thinks a little bit outside the box, that isn't part of the institutions of education, or those institutions of whatever the Board may be, it could be any Board. It could be the Board of Psychiatrists, or the Board of Optometry, could be the Board of Education.

Any time someone wants to step up and say, I'm willing to serve and bring that outside perspective, that is a homerun for the State of New Hampshire. And to reject that is such a loss for the State.

I simply hope that the Council -- I guess I keep hoping, although this keeps happening -- that the Council learns from their previous mistakes. They don't seem to get it. I called Ryan yesterday. I said I was shocked, and I'm so sorry. I never meant to put him through that.

Any time someone gets shot down at the Council, even though it's clearly not their fault, it's clearly nothing they did. It's the Council's fault, not theirs. It's the Council really that should be the one apologizing, if anything, to Ryan.

I apologized. But I apologized to him. I said, I don't want to put you through that. That's never a good thing. That's terrible for an individual to have to go through. And then, someone with his background and what he could have offered, I'll speak a little more specifically.

Ryan's an individual whose high school was -- or I should say his grade school was wiped out by Hurricane Katrina, wiped out, off the face of the earth. And he had to go to a charter school for his middle school years. He came up to New Hampshire.

He's a business guy. He's an efficiency expert. He's an entrepreneur. He understands numbers. He knows how to look at data. He's done a great job with that. I think one of the comments was he's lived in a variety of communities, as if that's a bad thing, as if, unless you have 2 acres and a white picket fence, and a house with a mortgage, you can't serve, or something like that. So what if you're transient in other communities? So you have some experience. You've seen the good and the bad around the State.

And again, this isn't just for Ryan and the Board of Education. It's for anybody who wants to serve. Step up and serve. Why would we limit that? And it's happened a couple of times. Eddie Edwards, Eddie's an African-American. He's been nominated for a position. He hasn't even had the courtesy of a public hearing for 13 weeks or something. They won't even have a conversation with him. That's not right. That's not right.

And so, I'm not going to opine on the whys. That's really a question for the Councilors. But I will opine on the wrongness of it. It's just wrong. It's not fair. It's an unfair process. And they keep bringing up politics.

I served on that Council for six years. We didn't ask political questions. I got to be honest. I've never asked Ryan what political party he's from. I don't ask those questions, not of Judges, not of Board Members. It's not about that, never has been, and never should be.

They've changed that paradigm on the Council. The three Democrats on the Council -- Councilor Pignatelli, Councilor Volinsky, and Councilor Cryans -- should be ashamed of those votes. They did it to what could have been one of the great Supreme Court Justices in our State with Gordon MacDonald. They did it Ryan yesterday. There have been others.

I think it's just a shame. It's really a shame, because we're different than that. The Executive Council's one of the only ones in the country. It's very unique system. The public can come and participate in those meetings every other week.

It's just an amazing process and one we should be proud of. It's not one of the highlight, not really the golden times for the Executive Council right now. And I think they have to do a lot of soul searching about what they're about, what constituent service is about. I can't explain the whys of what they did yesterday. But I think we all know -- not me. It's pretty clear to everyone in this State what they did was wrong.

Can I just follow up real quick? One of the Councilors used the word "tokenism". That you nominated him, he wrote his letter a week before George Floyd situation, when did you talk to him in the timeline of how long was that in the process of you getting to talk to him, and him getting to be recommended? You have a vacancy. Can you talk about that?

Governor Sununu:

Well, I can't. I got to be honest. I don't know the timeline, exactly. I can tell you he was nominated before George Floyd, had nothing to do with George Floyd. He got nominated because he's a great individual that was going to bring to the Board of Education exactly what I think the Board of Education needs. He was from the district, the Nashua area, Councilor Pignatelli's district. So, that's what the nomination was really about. And he's just a great individual. No, it was well-before the George Floyd stuff. I don't know the exact days that we might have done the nomination, exactly.

Do you have any statements, just curious, how road races are going to look?

Governor Sununu:

Like running races, yeah; so, great question. And I'm not going to answer the question fully, because I don't want to get things wrong. And I know my staff is looking at me going, oh my, gosh. He's going to talk about the specifics of a guidance document.

Running races are basically going to be handled where we want to make sure everyone can keep 6 feet of distance, like especially around the start area. We want to minimize the congestion before and after a race. If there's food done, sometimes you do a charitable race and there's food and all that. But we want to make sure it's more of a grab-and-go situation, so there's not a lot of milling around.

It's really commonsense stuff to avoid the crowds in a situation where you typically might have a crowd. So we're asking folks. They might have to make a bigger start line, right, so to say, or send some of the larger running races off in different groups, right? You're going to go off at 9:00 and you might go off at 9:15. And this group of 50 might go off at 9:20. We're asking them to use a lot of common sense, frankly.

So, I mean, that's basically how they'll operate. But it's really about making sure that you're sending them off in waves, if they have to go off in waves, and that whatever starting area you have has enough room for that 6 feet of social distancing. Obviously asking people to wear masks in a race probably isn't going to work. So we just want them to take extra precautions there.

And running races, those road races are important, because there's so many charities that have road races and 5Ks. That's usually the ones that I run. And believe it or not, I have run 5Ks. I know it doesn't seem like it lately. But maybe I'll start losing my COVID weight, as the 5Ks pick up.

But they really are important for a lot of the nonprofits that are out there, same with charitable gaming. That's one of the reasons why charitable gaming's a tough one. We have these charitable gaming rooms. But so many nonprofits rely on the funds from those charitable gaming activities.

We really tried to push ourselves. There's a lot of guidance and a lot of stipulations, and a lot of restrictions. But they can commence and provide that opportunity, not just for those operators but obviously for the nonprofits that benefit from them.

And just one clarifying one, sorry; with the lapse of Stay-at-Home, the impact to unemployment with the State, now that will end essentially the ability to stay home for fear of the virus transmission.

Governor Sununu:

That's right. We put a lot of flexibility in the New Hampshire unemployment benefits and eligibility, if you will, through the State of Emergency and the Stay-at-Home Order. And then, you have the \$600 on the Federal side.

The \$600 doesn't get affected. That is in place until July 31st. And the only reason I highlight that is I heard on the radio someone say, that's going to go away. It's not. The \$600 doesn't go away until July 31st. We have no impact on that.

The one area that does get impacted with the Stay-at-Home Order is the idea that individuals, if your job is available, you need to go to your job. You need to take the job. You can't just claim unemployment benefits for staying at home simply because I feel I need to shelter in place.

There's a very small population that that applies to, 500, 600, 700 people, we think. So, those jobs are available. They're open. Again, there's guidance around all of those industries now to help maintain the safety of individuals, especially the employees. And if that guidance is followed, we feel very confident that people can return to work safely.

So there's a small population where the flexibility will expire, if you will, on Monday. The other eligibility flexibilities that we've put into place are still in effect at both the State and the Federal level. I hope that clarifies it a little bit. What else? What else we go?

Okay. Look, I know it went 4:15. Once again, I appreciate everyone's time. Good money coming out of the CARES Act, good flexibility and opportunity for individuals. And again, it's just, I think, a good sign that we are moving forward.

Summer's here. We're taking the right steps, taking them carefully, taking them slowly. But we are making the right steps and really flexing things open. And we're going to continue to do so as long as the data keeps giving us good numbers. And so far, it has. It really, really has.

And that's a testament to the people in New Hampshire. You guys keep doing a great job. Let's keep our physical distancing, the 6 feet when we can, where a mask where you can, especially if that physical distancing is impossible. It is so important. And we want to keep that elevated message.

We're moving into the Safer-At-Home Advisory, come Monday. But there still is an elevated message. And we want people to be very cognizant. COVID's out there and we have to be careful of our self, our loved ones, our coworkers, whatever it might be. With that, I don't think we have anything scheduled for tomorrow. So if we don't see you before then, have a great weekend, everybody. And we will be back next week. Thank you.