

Why President  
Let Go of Goal  
Of Easter Reset

Numbers Cast Cloud on  
Reopening Nation

By PETER BAKER  
and MAGGIE HABERMAN

WASHINGTON — The numbers the health officials showed President Trump were overwhelming. With the peak of the coronavirus pandemic still weeks away, he was told, hundreds of thousands of Americans could face death if the country reopened too soon.

But there was another set of numbers that also helped persuade Mr. Trump to shift gears on Sunday and abandon his goal of restoring normal life by Easter. Political advisers described for him polling that showed that voters overwhelmingly preferred to keep containment measures in place over sending people back to work prematurely.

Those two realities — the dire threat to the country and the caution of the American public — proved decisive at a critical juncture in the response to the pandemic, his advisers said.

The first of those two realities, the deadly arc of the virus, has been known for weeks even if disregarded by the president when he set his Easter target. But the second of the two upended Mr. Trump’s assumptions about the politics of the situation and restrained, for a moment at least, his eagerness to get back to business as usual.

The president’s reversal may prove to be an important pivot point in the effort to curb the pandemic, one that in the view of public health officials averted a greater catastrophe. Mr. Trump’s abrupt change of heart reflected a volatile president who has veered from one message to another, at points equating the virus to ordinary flu that will “miraculously” go away and at others declaring it an all-out war endangering the country.

His move came as additional governors took action to stop the spread of the virus. With new orders on Monday from the governors of Arizona, Maryland and Virginia, as well as the mayor of the District of Columbia, more than half of the 50 states and three out of four Americans are or will soon be under the directive to remain at home.

They took that action as the number of cases in New York climbed past 66,500 and the number of deaths surpassed 1,200, by far the most of any state. Layoffs continued apace, with Macy’s announcing it would furlough a “majority” of its 125,000 workers. Gap said it would do the same for 80,000 store employees in the United States and Canada.

In the past two days, Mr. Trump has dispensed with the assertion

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TRACKING AN OUTBREAK

**MORE HELP** Lawmakers are eyeing a fourth package to bolster the U.S. economy. PAGE A12

**DETROIT** Poverty and a weakened public health system are driving up cases in the city. PAGE A9

**EARLY RELEASE** To curb the spread behind bars, thousands of inmates have been freed. PAGE A9



RELIEF ARRIVES The hospital ship U.S.N.S. Comfort coming into New York on Monday. Page A13.

Nowhere to Turn but the Subway, and Its Risks

By CHRISTINA GOLDBAUM  
and LINDSEY ROGERS COOK

As the coronavirus pandemic has all but shut down New York City, its subway — an emblem of urban overcrowding — has become almost unrecognizable, with overall ridership down 87 percent.

But even as officials crack down on gatherings in New York, removing hoops from basketball courts and sending the police to

Many Have No Option  
to Shelter at Home

break up parties, subway stations in poorer neighborhoods are still bustling, as if almost nothing has changed.

It is a striking turnabout for a system that has long been the

great equalizer, a space where hourly workers jostled alongside financial executives. Now the subway has become more of a symbol of the city’s inequality, amplifying the divide between those with the means to safely shelter at home and those who must continue braving public transit to preserve meager livelihoods.

“This virus is very dangerous. I don’t want to get sick, I don’t want

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COMMUNITY CARE The owner of a restaurant in North London accepting a tip Sunday while on a delivery round. The restaurant has been providing free meals for residents over the age of 70.

Democrats Wage Uphill Battle on Digital Front

By JIM RUTENBERG  
and MATTHEW ROSENBERG

The deceptively edited video that purported to show Joseph R. Biden Jr. endorsing President Trump’s re-election bounced relentlessly around the internet, falsely painting the former vice president as too confused to know

what office he was running for or whom he was vying to run against.

The doctored video didn’t originate with one of the extremist sites that traded in left-bashing disinformation. It was posted on Twitter by Mr. Trump’s own social media director. From there, it collected shares, retweets and likes from the social media accounts of

the president, his eldest son and the multitudinous conservative influencers and websites that carry his message to voters’ palms hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second.

The video, based on a speech Mr. Biden gave earlier this month, registered five million views in a day before his campaign re-

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Trump to Deal Final Blow to Car Pollution Goals

By CORAL DAVENPORT

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration is expected to announce on Tuesday its final rule to rollback Obama-era automobile fuel efficiency standards, relaxing efforts to limit climate-warming tailpipe pollution and virtually undoing the government’s biggest

effort to combat climate change.

The new rule, written by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Transportation, would allow cars on American roads to emit nearly a billion tons more carbon dioxide over the lifetime of the vehicles than they would have under the Obama standards, and hundreds of millions of tons more than will

be emitted under standards being enacted in Europe and Asia.

Administration officials raced to complete the auto rule by this spring, even as the White House was consumed with responding to the coronavirus pandemic. President Trump is expected to extol the rule, which will stand as one of the most consequential regula-

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Eastern European workers who harvest crops from Spain to Sweden can’t enter, raising concern for food stocks. PAGE B1

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The company and a partner had strategized for days when the White House said G.M. was wasting time. PAGE B1

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With little fanfare, Harry and Meghan transferred control of their brand to advisers in Los Angeles. PAGE A18

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The Tokyo Games made the new start date official, allowing athletes and sponsors a chance to regroup. PAGE B8

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The coronavirus pandemic is giving elite athletes a break from the usual drug-testing regimens. The cheaters may see this as an opportunity. PAGE B8

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Philip W. Anderson, who deepened science’s understanding of magnetism and superconductivity, was 96. PAGE A24



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The virus has altered relations among the masses, the elites and the celebrities who liaise between them. PAGE C1

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Wesley Morris decides to visit 1995, when the pandemic-related film starring Dustin Hoffman was a hit. PAGE C1

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