

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2020

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good evening, Los Angeles. For more than a month now you've had me inside your homes. As each night, I've updated you on the work that we are doing to fight for the soul of this city, the collective march forward, but each one of us and our neighborhoods and our families and our communities are undertaking to save lives, to not only have this moment of retrenching so that we can be safe, but looking forward to how we will reopen and one day reimagine the city. I want to thank you for all that you are doing as always. The lifeblood of this city doesn't flow through places like city hall or a hall of administration. It flows through our neighborhoods and through our people. And by that measure, Los Angeles is an incredibly strong city.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I shared last night the state of our city. And while I did say that we are strong and remain ready to fight this crisis, I said we are also at home and we are bent, we are grieving, but we are not broken. That we have the ability to reimagine a moment in which we will once again rise and fly in this city of angels. We will get through this together, my friends, and we will get through because of our spirit. So let me turn to today's data and update you on information you need to know today.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Today the county reported 1,491 new cases in Los Angeles County. That brings the total confirmed COVID-19 positive cases to 13,816, a 12 percent increase since yesterday, but that is by far the largest number we have seen, more than double our previous peak of 711 new cases on April 4th. But it's important to note that that was probably because of backlog of cases and new laboratory that came online and a lot of results that came in one day, not necessarily a single day surge, but just a reporting surge of today.

MAYOR GARCETTI: For comparison, in the past seven days we have seen an average daily increase of 654 new cases, still a large number, and one that we should expect to keep seeing in the days ahead. In the City of Los Angeles those cases were 716 new cases today, bringing the total to 6,224, a nearly 13 percent increase since yesterday. And today many of you followed the antibody test conducted by USC and LA County that we have been involved with. I brought the doctors last week to this briefing, Dr. Simon and Sood, they shared the first results of the first wave of antibody studies to see what the prevalence of COVID-19 in the general population was, by testing for the antibodies that we generate in reaction to COVID-19.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And it showed that the rate of COVID-19 infections far exceeds the number of confirmed cases, something that we knew but now we are starting to get data for. It also points towards that only a small percentage of adults in the county have antibodies to COVID-19. The number they came up with in the initial study was that 4.1 percent of the adult population in LA County from this sample, but it was a representative sample, are COVID-19 positive or have been COVID-19-positive. That would mean that are mortality rate, which we've been measuring at about 4.5 percent would be much lower. It would mean many more people have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. But it would also mean that still more than 95 percent of us, if this study is representative, still do not have that, do not have any potential immunity and are still vulnerable to being able to catch this disease and die from it.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: Today we learned of 17 new deaths countywide, which brings our total to 617 deaths. And each night it is simple to just say numbers and forget with a steady drumbeat that these are human lives of our loved ones. But we must never know those connections and how important these people have been to us, no matter who they are, whether it's a friend or family member, a colleague or somebody who lives in our neighborhood. We mourn with you, all families who tonight have lost a loved one.

MAYOR GARCETTI: This was a three percent increase in deaths since yesterday. And for comparison the past seven days, we are seeing an average daily increase of 43 new deaths. So deaths are doubling every seven days. This weekend we learned that in America COVID-19 is now the leading cause of death in United States. The virus has killed more 1,800 Americans almost every day since April 7th. That's ahead of heart disease, that's ahead of cancer, and we all know people who have died of heart disease and of cancer.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So let's do everything that we can to stop COVID-19 in its tracks before we see even more loved ones taken by this deadly disease. The death toll would be far worse were it not for the heroic work that we're seeing from our doctors, our nurses, our janitorial and support staff at our hospitals. We are doing everything to ensure that they have the resources they need and are not met by a crushing and dangerous surge in patients. Thank you for protecting them as they protect us. So good news again across our county and in our general emergency hospitals, yesterday we had 1,573 beds available, including 1,301 for acute care and 272 intensive care unit beds, an inventory of 1,040 available ventilators.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We're looking to keep Angelenos healthy, though, to stay safe and out of those hospital beds. And testing helps us to just that. So let me update you on testing. Now in 33 testing locations across the county, three locations open today, including one at the Good Samaritan Hospital where I was born in Westlake. And today we have the capacity to test 12,000 people a day. It's a remarkable statistic and one of the leading ones in the country. And by the end of today we will have tested through these centers approximately 80,000 people, at private labs and our public labs as well. We have now tested more than 100,000 people in Los Angeles County.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Each day we are conducting more than a third of all tests that are done across the state, and each day we have the capacity to test twice as many people. We are offering same- or next-day appointments to remind everybody who has any symptoms. So get tested, coronavirus.lacity.org/testing. For families, remember, each family member, if you have symptoms, should fill out your own appointment but get a test today, and help us know who is out there who is positive, as we saw from our serology tests many more people have that, so even if it's mild symptoms and you think you got this, please take a test. It helps us and it helps to protect all of your loved ones as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Each night of this briefing I have shared that this crisis has been so hard, not just on the lost lives, but also on the lost livelihoods. And everybody in Los Angeles can feel that. COVID-19's devastating economic impact extends also to our city's budget, which I released today. Our budget year is kind of different than the calendar year. It starts July 1st and

ends on June 30th. And this time of the year by our city charter I released a budget to plan for those 12 months that start on July 1st. I usually say that budgets are a statement of our values. But as I shared last night, this is also a document of our pain. Hard times are ahead, harder than what we saw in 2008. Revenues are down across the board, transient occupancy tax, a fancy way to say hotel tax, sales tax, parking tax, utility users tax, will all be hit especially hard.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And there will be cuts. Los Angeles reacted swiftly to COVID-19. And that quick response also extended to our budget. I immediately implemented a hiring freeze, stopped any new programs in any of our departments, and now that hiring freeze will be extended into this next fiscal year. And I directed department has to make some tough decisions about the hard but necessary cuts ahead. And over the course of the next fiscal year, most of our civilian employees, myself and my staff included, will incorporate a reduced work schedule resulting in a ten percent reduction in pay.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Even as I declared, though, a state of fiscal emergency, we will not compromise on those things that you depend on government delivering. We will not compromise on a response to COVID-19 not one fewer test, not one fewer worker helping those who are unhoused get indoors, not one fewer paramedic getting you to the hospital when you need to be delivered. We will not compromise in our fights to make sure that this extends to everyone, whether it is folks that are living in Skid Row through emergency shelters and bridge home, transitional housing, Project Roomkey, hotel and motel rooms, all while we expand health and hygiene on our streets. And we will not compromise our commitment to your public safety through our police officers and firefighters who are on the frontline during this crisis.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And we can keep doing what we can to ensure that we make it easier for those folks who are more hard-hit by this, so that folks can make rent and businesses can stay afloat or reopen in the days ahead. Let me be clear. Back to basic investments that keep our neighborhoods safe, that keep our streets clean, that keep our families housed, that keep our children and our seniors federal, these are not open for compromise or cut. Coming into this crisis too, I want to thank our city council and my team for the work that we did for seven years to build up a reserve fund. As I said last night, you win no words for it, you get no headlines, but we built up a reserve fund that is twice as strong today as the city was before the 2008 great recession.

MAYOR GARCETTI: That means that while we have to make cuts everywhere, no program will be completely cut. But all programs will receive some cuts. The proposed budget I put forward anticipates that the economic impacts of COVID-19 continue into not just this year, but future years and it is imperative that we do not dip into existing reserves to avoid greater sacrifices in the future. And it also points out what I said last night that our federal government needs to step up and help our states and help our cities just as they've help big corporations.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Our city, like so many others across the country in worse positions, need that federal support, not just to cover costs, but shortfalls so cities don't default on debt, so workers can keep their jobs, so that infrastructure can continue to be built, so that our recovery comes back stronger and swifter than it otherwise would. And I am grateful to our federal

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partners for agreeing to cover some of the costs that we are incurring in COVID-19. We can bill some of those back and get some of the money that we are fronting for things like testing and shelters.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But now Congress must pass what was put forward by Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader Schumer to put \$150 billion for states and local government. And this is not a partisan issue. In red and blue and purple states and cities, we are all suffering. And I've had very good hopeful conversations with the speaker and our congressional delegation as we work to loosen restrictions on emergency funds. I hope it can be part of this package that is being negotiated now, but no later than the next big package. We need to make sure those dollars flow. And members of Congress who are still holding out and taking our states and cities and holding them in hostage, don't let America states and cities die. Step up and bail out America as you are bailing out American corporations too.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Working together, we can get through this crisis. That is the spirit that we have engaged since the beginning of this. And there are so many people behind me and beside me and in front of me. And so many of those people are you, watching tonight. You know your leadership within your own family or maybe your school community. Maybe it is your neighborhood or your workplace. But you are stepping up as leaders, not passive and powerless, but strong, active and powerful in this crisis. LA County needs your help, and one of the places that has guided our philanthropic work and other work is making sure we look at those who need help the most.

MAYOR GARCETTI: LA County is home to more than a million individuals living with disabilities, and this crisis has shined a bright light on the significant needs of this community. 26 percent of folks living with disabilities in our county also live in poverty. And more than 40 percent live in households that are food-insecure. It's a staggering number. So while this pandemic has strained all of us, our neighbors with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and we need to meet their needs now. And help in on the way. I am very pleased to announce a new partnership with Fox to provide free meals to individuals with disabilities across our city. We all know the historic Fox lot and the history in building our city and Century City up, but thanks to what was then out-of-work folks that used to provide meals to hardworking, blue-collar workers in our film and television industry. We're putting them back to work, thanks to Fox. And delivering 2,000 meals, five days a week for the next month, to serve folks who are facing new barriers accessing food during this emergency period.

MAYOR GARCETTI: The Fox Food Service Team will prepare meals on the Fox lot on the West Side and delivered them to a hub at one of our public library branches within drivers from our Access Services, will pick them up and bring them directly to people who need them. And to ensure we are reaching the right individuals and families, our department on disability has partnered with the California Department of Rehabilitation and 20 community-based organizations that already serve individuals living with disabilities across LA to identify people who will benefit the most. In the weeks and months to come, the city will continue to build on this with more meals, more grocery delivery services as part of our larger effort to make sure that we address food insecurity among people who are living with disabilities.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: And so, thank you to the great team at Fox here in LA. I saw some awesome photos of everybody from the studio chefs and workers, all the way the CEO Lachlan Murdoch, coming together to load those meals up and to get them to people in need. And we are so grateful to everyone in this city. And in the city family, especially, who stepped up. Including Steven Simon and his team at the Department on Disability and City Librarian John Szabo for opening a vital space to this effort. Thank you to you and your teams. When we talk about our budget, we are focused on the basics of city government that we depend on in a crisis like this and every other day. It's how we keep the lights on, the water flowing, the streets clean and everyone safe.

MAYOR GARCETTI: When we talk about delivering meals to folks with disabilities, we are focused on the basics service to the most vulnerable. And when we talk about what is happening in Los Angeles right now, we see how this crisis is bringing out the most basic features of our common humanity, our generosity, our compassion, our willingness to lend a hand, to not see the differences between us, but to find a common ground. We see this in Susan Sanders and Andrew Whitmer in Valley Glen, who have gone door to door to find out what people need and then organize volunteers to pick up medicine, food and other necessities for seniors and those who cannot leave their homes. Thank you, Andrew and Susan.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We see it in efforts of Chicas Mom Inc. a non-profit in the Northeast San Fernando Valley that has been handing out meals to the vulnerable and started delivering meals to residents and doctors at the Olive View Hospital in Sylmar on Good Friday, and they promise to keep it going every week. Thank you. We see in LAPD Officer Esteban Sifuentes, who has collected box loads of apples and oranges and bananas, juice boxes and fruit cups for seniors living in the Imperial Courts Public Housing Development. And we are seeing it in the Coalition of the Peace Chapel Church, the Rebuild California Alliance and the Community Health Councils in South LA who set out to provide food for a few people in their neighborhood for two weeks, but thanks to donations and support from the communities, they are now providing 250 meals each night to fill the gap for families in deepest need.

MAYOR GARCETTI: These aren't isolated incidents, they're a reflection of the city. These are the examples of extraordinary kindness that are sweeping across LA. Reminders that every small act, actually makes a big difference. These stories show what it means to lead with LA love. And I want to thank you all for being a part of this recovery. So I am going to keep tonight brief and answer questions. But as I always say, stay healthy, stay safe and stay at home. Love and strength, Los Angeles. With that I am happy to answer questions. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Our first question comes from the line of Claudia Peschiutta with KNX News Radio. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Claudia.

CLAUDIA PESCHIUTTA: Hi. I am a couple of questions.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure.

CLAUDIA PESCHIUTTA: So with the furloughs being faced by thousands of city workers, I am wondering if those who are reassigned to certain essential positions, say, like working at one of the emergency shelters at a rec center, if they would be exempted from that. The second question is, you know, given efforts to ramp up testing, if we'll start seeing testing of asymptomatic residents and staffers at nursing homes given the high number of deaths that we are seeing in these facilities. Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you, Claudia. As I said early on in these briefings, I was very concerned about nursing homes. I know that LA County Public Health had a team just on that at the beginning, and I talked to Dr. Barbara Ferrer, who is here this morning, and we talked about this because we want to help her in any way that we can. We stood up these strike teams that have gone already into nursing homes to help people when they've contacted us and announced that website that folks can go to to sign folks up. I know a lot of family members went there, but we need to have somebody at your loved ones' senior home facilities sign up for it because we need their permission to go in there.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But already we have gone to, you know, over a dozen places and we need to really go all of them because this is the place with the most vulnerable and the highest number of deaths nationally. We saw it from Seattle in the beginning, so I do want to want to see us more tests in there. I talked with my team about it, I hope in the next couple of days we are going to develop a plan together with the county and see how we can get more tests into our nursing homes. But it also lay something out. The reason why it's spreading is not just that there are seniors and people living close together, it's that we have a lot of folks in some senior homes that are not paid well. Folks who don't want to pay overtime, allow people to only have one shift. So it requires a lot of these workers are in two or three different places. And that can lead to spread when workers go between one and another place.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So I hope coming out of this smarter and stronger, we can also look at making sure that those workers are well-represented, that they are paid for their work. And that they are protected as well, so they don't become among the most vulnerable. As well, of course, as the loved ones of ours that they care for. So absolutely, in terms of ramping up testing to folks without symptoms, not yet, that is not yet the recommendation from County Public Health. If we have enough capacity, we may look at that and we may look at it in a way that can take a sample. So we can see a sample of the blood tests like I just announced the USC study did, and also compare that to a sample of the virology test. So we can see not only who has had it, but who does have it in a random sampling. Because you need to know not just who has had it and maybe is no longer infectious, but how many people are infectious in any given time.

MAYOR GARCETTI: For me, doing that is as critical the decisions about opening up, even more critical than the blood test. So when people are talking nationally, we can't open up until we have more tests, they're right but many of them are saying it in the wrong way. It's not more blood tests, because right now it's not the recommendation from many public health officials I have talked to, take a blood test and show that you're immune and go to work. It's more to know

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what level of infection do you have right now today, and that will come from random sampling of virology tests. We may be getting close there, but again, we want everybody with symptoms to get tested first, and if we build that capacity, absolutely.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of essential positions and whether they'll be furloughed, that is something that we are open to making sure if they are critical positions that they would be able to work all ten days of a pay period instead of nine. Yes, absolutely. Thanks, Claudia. Next question.

OPERATOR: Next question comes from the line of Mary Beth McDade. Please go ahead. With KTLA Channel 5.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Mary Beth.

MARY BETH MCDADE: Great. Thanks. Hi, Mr. Mayor. Yes, a couple of things, wondering, based on that USC County study that you were referencing with the antibodies, wondering what then is the mortality rate? I know you said it's much lower than the 4 point-something that was originally thought. So what is the mortality rate now? And with it being so low, how will this impact starting to ease restrictions and reopening the economy? And then, just lastly, I know you said you didn't want to be using the reserve fund that you have built up, I guess I just don't understand why not use it? I mean, wouldn't a world pandemic be the perfect time to use that reserve fund?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Let me be clear, I meant further, we have already taken it from what was about 7 or 8 percent reserve fund down to what it was right now, about 3.45 percent. But you need to have a basic amount before suddenly your debt and everything that you have costs you even more. You know, whether you could spend \$50 million dollars more and get downgraded and that can cost you a 100 million. So we're balancing those two things, I meant just no further. Absolutely, it is precisely because we have that reserve fund that we are dipping into it, and the hundreds of millions, already 70 million that we put forward to get the testing done and others things. So we will use that, but we can't go down to zero on the reserve fund before. You really risk the city kind of toppling into an area that would cost much more than even the money that you're spending.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of the county, I'm not kind of calculate that rate. I'm going to wait for the USC folks who said they want some time because we need to wait a couple more weeks to take the moment in time when we are calculating the number of people who were carrying COVID-19-related antibodies, to seeing the number of deaths that can come in that three- of four-week period. So you can't take the snapshot of deaths today. So it'll be higher than if you calculate it today but lower than the 4 or 5 percent.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But let me be clear, even with a lower death rate, so we'll what happens. I don't think that New York or Los Angeles, other places are going to be radically different. In New York, there's been as many deaths, more deaths per capital as we have cases. So if we relax too much and just say, "Oh, this disease doesn't kill," look at the evidence. In a city like

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New York and other places, where we've seen it skyrocket, we can't be complacent. So I think all of us are looking that the ways we widen that aperture slowly.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I talked with Dr. Ferrer about that. I think that's something in coming weeks she'll begin to see in very small ways moving forward. But if we relaxed everything, we would see 95 percent infection by August 1st, according to one projection. That would mean 950,000 people, and even if you had a low death rate, that is thousands and thousands of deaths. So, we have to be very clear about making sure that we listen to our public health professionals about how and when we open that up, and I want to reassure everybody watching, this is what we are expending so much time on right now, talking to those experts, waiting for those moments, and that will be guided by County Public Health, not by kind of a political feeling, not by a protest, not by folks saying, "Hey, we have to stay in," or other people saying, "We should all go out." It really should be done looking at that evidence and that advice, and that's my promise to the people of LA, that medicine and facts will guide us. Thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: And next question comes from line of David Zahnizer with Los Angeles Times.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, how are you doing?

DAVID ZAHNIZER: Hey, how are you?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good, Dave.

DAVID ZAHNIZER: So, we've been hearing a lot about the hit to the city budget from diminished tax revenues, but another big challenge in the coming budget year, the series of employees' pay raises at city hall. You know, police officers on track. You get about two raises totaling about 4.75 percent. Firefighters are due to get the same in July. Civilian city unions are scheduled to receive two 2 percent raises. So I'm wondering, have you gone to these unions and asked them to postpone those pay increases until a year when there's not a global health crisis, and if you aren't, are there things you are trying to renegotiate in these employee salary contracts?

MAYOR GARCETTI: No, right we've had to balance the budget short of that. So furloughs, which are actually deeper and provide much more savings, once you take out of the general fund, the amount that those raises are, it still wouldn't be enough, even if those raises didn't happen to balance our budget. So doing the furloughs is something that allow us to actually have even more savings this year, and so that's why we had to go to something more extreme. I do look forward to sitting down and continuing, as people know, those are things that have to be negotiated and mutually agreed upon and I wouldn't take anything of the table.

MAYOR GARCETTI: If our unions come to us and say, "Hey, we'd rather do this than that," we are absolutely open. But, you know, the heroic work that's being done by our city workforce on the frontlines, we want to be sensitive to what their rights are in the negotiations and ensure that we have enough to balance the budget. Even if we gave away those raises to our civilian workforce, it would not be enough. And the folks that are out there on the front lines who are

not being furloughed are only those most essential people. So again, we'll sit down, talk to anybody. And as I said, my priority is to rebuild that the reserve fund back up so that we don't lose even more money and then right after that, after our COVID-19 expenses in the reserve fund is to see if we can reduce those furloughs, but that will really depend on whether our federal government steps up and allow us to move forward.

MAYOR GARCETTI: If they step up and help us, not just us, but every city in America, and every state in America, then we can keep people employed. We can keep them spending on main street, we can keep them supporting their families. And you know that, to me, is the most critical thing. If we have to see that and it gets worst and we see revenues go down further, there may be further cuts and there may be even deeper things that we have to do with our city services and our workforce. But I'm hopeful that that won't happen. Thanks, Dave. Next question.

OPERATOR: Next we'll go to the line of Lee Roth of Fox News. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Lee.

LEE ROTH: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Good evening, you just noted that you can talk with your county counterparts about slowly loosening some restrictions. I'm curious, what do the result of today's serology survey mean towards that partial target reopening, which so many what? When you get hundreds of thousands of people who've apparently been positive but didn't need to go to the hospital, speak to an imminent move forward on loosening restrictions or perhaps just the opposite, to the number or others in the survey suggest to you that this loosening isn't quite imminent.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yeah. I think it suggests that 95 percent of us are still vulnerable. More than 95 percent, and so any moves that we make we'll have to make very carefully. We're not going to have people back in their workplaces, sitting next to each other, people hanging out on the beach, playing basketball. This is not going to happen in the coming days or weeks, but I do believe as that as we've seen, there are ways that we can carefully design some small openings of that aperture. But I won't be dreaming that up. I don't have secret negotiations with the county. I just check in every single day with Barbara Ferrer, with my colleagues. I look at places around the world and the country, and we look that how we can best do that while protecting lives.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We're entering a new phase of this. It's going to be kind of tough. Some I want to take a moment here for everybody listening to explain this. You know, we've done very well. I was really proud to see that five percent or less in the serology tests. It means, what you have done has worked, and as I've said every single night, if it is working, it would save lives, and that literally means thousands of people are no dead, who otherwise would be. I don't even know how to put a price on that. I don't even know how to quantify that. Thank you like you have been lifesavers, but the irony is those cities that do well and adopt these things early on still have a more vulnerable population.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: Now, don't get me wrong. In New York, where we've seen ten times, more than ten times as many deaths per capital, they're still very vulnerable because probably nowhere close to a majority of their city has been exposed to this. So they could do this all over again or two or threefold. So for every city everywhere, just because you've had more people exposed, it doesn't mean, yahoo, let's all go to work now because we know what that risk is. We've witnessed that, we've seen that in places that are getting refrigerator trucks to deal with the bodies, in emergency rooms where people are deciding who has to live and who has to die, these are excruciating things that we don't want to pat ourselves on the back, only a month or two later to say, "Dang, we should have kept this still pretty tight."

MAYOR GARCETTI: That's said, we're not going to stay in this condition forever. What we need to do is manage the infections that will happen and make sure they're always lower than our hospital capacity, because that's what will sometimes double the number of deaths. If people can't get into hospital rooms, if there aren't enough ventilators, if we don't have the PPE, if our health workers are getting sick, our firefighters, our police officers are getting infected or even dying as we've seen tragically in New York where first responders have died in numbers way above anything that we could imagine here.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So I know is a tough space to contain. People want clear answers. Say, Mayor, tell me what the date is. It's not about a date, it's about building our capacity and trying some steps forward. I'm committed to following that county advice, and I do think that as Dr. Ferrer has talked about in her briefings, there will be some of those in coming weeks where maybe there's some more retail that opens up, maybe there's some distancing, maybe people can go back to the barber, maybe can do things, just a few of those things, and get some of our businesses moving, but it won't be an opening of the floodgates overnight, and people who are demanding that are playing with all of our lives.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So folks who are saying, "Open up the country, open up the city," the worst thing we could do would be to lift those floodgates up only to watch all of our friends and neighbors die. So we'll balance those two things, contain this, and we'll be committed to building up whatever it is, and I've said what those five principles are: make sure there's enough testing, make sure there's the contact tracing so we can track and trace the folks and their contacts. Make sure that we have that quarantining that goes on, protect our vulnerable populations who may need to stay indoors longer, keep doing research and development of the medicines and ultimately the vaccine, and make sure that we're caring for each other. Those things will determine all of those decisions. Thanks Lee. Next question.

OPERATOR: Next we go to the line Steve Gregory with KFI News. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Steve.

STEVE GREGORY: Hey Eric. Good evening. Listen, a couple of things. The effort to stop evictions for people in the city and the county, does that extend to storage facilities and storage sheds? That's something that has been coming from with some of our listeners because that sort of part and parcel to an extension of someone's home. Also with respect to saving money, has

there been any more discussions about those higher pay people within the city taking a pay cut voluntary or otherwise, and what about discretionary funds on the council side? Has there been any discussion that you're aware of about rerouting some of the discretionary funds from each of the councilmembers? And, finally, if you're going to start loosening restrictions, when do you think we can anticipate going back to in-person press conferences? Thank, Eric.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure. I don't know yet. I'll have to take that advice on in-person press conference though I'll very much look forward to the day that I can look you all in the eye, and I want to thank all the members of the press who have just done an incredible job reporting on this, who show up every night, who ask the great questions, the tough questions, and everybody who broadcasts this. It means the world to Los Angeles so that we can have this conversation between the people and their elected representatives.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of the council discretionary dollars, those by definition are with the council, but I've been amazed to see them step up and use that to keep restaurants alive, and to serve food in places like Marqueece Harris-Dawson's district and Joe Buscaino's district to see folks like councilmember Mitch O'Farrell and others look at taking the discretionary dollars to help with rent. Every councilmember is doing that work and I want to thank them. So I don't think they're squirrelling it away. They are actually putting it out there and spending it on the neediest that we have.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of folks who earn more or less in the city, everybody is represented, so you have to go through each one those unions. I've tried to lead by example, I hope that others will to, but I know that everybody will get that haircut, and that means folks who earn more will be contributing more back and folks who earn less will be contributing less because that's the only fair way to do it. Lastly, eviction to storage facilities, I don't believe that is covered by the order, is that correct? And I'll look into that but I do not believe it applies to storage facilities, it's to your primary residence right now. Yes, I've got a nod saying yes, that's correct, from my crack staff. All right, next question, please.

OPERATOR: The next question comes from the line Ben Oreskes with LA Times. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Ben.

BEN ORESKES: Hi, Mayor. Thank you for doing this. Just quickly on the rec centers. We haven't talked about them in a couple of days. About 20 are open, do you plan to open more and if so, how many? We have seen in other cities outbreaks, large outbreaks which have been very concerning. Do you think that we should be opening more of them?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, let's be clear about different outbreaks because it's easy to throw them all together. We've seen outbreaks in hotels. We've seen outbreaks in existing shelters, some of them don't have proper spacing, and this was always based on the advice from our County Public Health saying, "Yes, it's better to have folks indoors, properly spaced with nurses

there, with temperature checks every day, with food, with trailers to isolate and rooms available than it is to have them out on the streets.”

MAYOR GARCETTI: And it is working exactly how we hoped it would, and I've always said too, that doesn't mean that we will never have cases but we haven't yet had large scale outbreaks in the city-run shelters. That said too, we do plan on expanding more. We have another one, I think, opening tonight or tomorrow and three more this week. So that'll add four more and get us to about a thousand beds. At the same time, we are moving with the hotel and motel rooms. I've never seen this as an either/or, talking to folks that are in these shelters. So many of them are grateful to have a nurse right there, to have temperature taken, to have PPE around them, to have a bed, to have the ability to, if they do get sick, immediately be able to have help and to have food.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Other folks, that might not appeal to them, but I think the fact that they are 97 percent filled, speaks to the need that was out there in the street long before COVID-19 and now. So I think we'll continue as long as it's the advice of LA County Public Health to keep those going. As I mentioned last week, we started opening up the trailers starting in Woodland Hills with the first 14 of the hundreds of trailers that are also available to folks who are experiencing homelessness, I'm proud of that. And then let me give you the latest statistics of the Project Roomkey, tier one housing which is for folks no yet infected, the 700 rooms with 748 guests are occupied in city and county.

MAYOR GARCETTI: There're 1,914 rooms secured in the county, and 912 of those already operational, and 990 of those rooms are in the city with 472 operational. In our tier two, which is for folks who are already sick, 279 rooms are occupied in the city and county, and 900 units are secured, of which 512 are in the city. And I think that might be even a day old because I saw some numbers just before coming in here that showed over 50 percent filled in both of those. We can't get those fast enough. I'm proud, like I said on Friday, that we're about to sign with a bunch of other ones, and those will go hand in hand with the shelters that we have available.

MAYOR GARCETTI: After those three that will open at the rec and parks facilities, we have others that are on the list that we can. We'll look at what the pace of hotels and motels is, if those aren't moving fast enough, we may open more. Thanks, Ben. What one other thing on homelessness, we did move out folks, as folks might have seen on Skid Rows, with Skid Row testing, we stood up a testing facility there today. I think there was 166 tests, if I'm not mistaken. Obviously we have to wait for those results to comeback in the next day or two. That's on top of the hundreds of tests that we've given to homelessness medical providers who already work with people experiencing homelessness, so that's really starting to crank, and I want to thank the Los Angeles Fire Department, who stood that up in Skid Row. It was amazing, it was a steady stream of people, and that's going to protect people who are the most vulnerable on the streets.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And I think the latest number was 48 people experiencing homelessness have tested positive in the County of Los Angeles. To put that in perspective, we have, it's a similar number of people who are homeless a little bit less in just LA City than we have the

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number of employees, and the number of employees that have tested positive for the City of Los Angeles it's now 164. So, shows that that infection rate is even lower than among our city employees, many of whom are on the line and we hope all of the get well soon. Next question. Thank you.

OPERATOR: Next, we go to the line of Elizabeth Chou with LA Daily News. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Liz.

ELIZABETH CHOU: Hi, Mayor. So, I wanted to ask your opinion on this idea that all this doom and gloom about the budget is a bit overblown, not in the sense that taking some of these measures are not necessary, but in a sense that the reason that we have all this unemployment and have business closed is more of a intentional move rather than a long time developing or some real collapse in the economic situation? I was wondering how you feel about that view.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I've heard some good theories over the years, but nothing can be further than the truth. This is about saving lives. No one of us invented COVID-19. Nobody look at the deaths around the world or the cases that are here or the deaths that are in our backyard, nobody told County Public Health to recommend to us that we should do these moves to make sure that our lives were safe. This is only in reaction to what we have seen. It is real. Those numbers don't lie. If people think it's different, I certainly didn't tell people singlehandedly that 95 percent of them should stop flying, that 95 percent of our hotel rooms shouldn't be booked. That's people protecting their lives and that's the reality of our receipts.

MAYOR GARCETTI: People understand this. People feel this in their own household. We didn't create this to hurt people's households, and we certainly didn't do this to hurt our own city budget. There's nothing I care more about than the services that we provide. I've dedicated my life to that, and every single dollar I could ever find, I know what the impact is on the streets of LA. We will safeguard them, protect them. But we also will never BS the public. If we say that this money isn't there, it's because it's not there, and you deserve that truth.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We'll manage those cuts and at the same time say we are proud that we have a reserve fund that we are drawing from to make those cuts less severe, to make sure we're not laying off employees. I think I mentioned I'd spoke to the mayor of Vancouver. They've already laid off city employees. Think about what that would mean to the economy here locally, let alone to the city services that we depend on. So I'm hoping that we'll come back, and I guess the one hopeful thing I'd say to people who are worried about that or to you with the question, is this is a snapshot today. A budget isn't a fixed number for an entire year. I said that earlier. I say we're proposing furloughs. We're going to need to implement them. That doesn't mean that if federal government steps up and/or the economy comes back that we wouldn't immediately restore those services and those people because the people of Los Angeles depend on them, let alone those city employees need to feed their families.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So this is a snapshot today and this will be the most dynamic budget year in our history. It could get better, it also could, Liz, get worst and we are going to have to then

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look at that and make those cuts. But we will look at it every week and we'll think about that again. We have a two-month plan of our expenditures for COVID-19 costs, and we have a yearlong plan for the expenses around things like homelessness and COVID-19. But those numbers are absolutely real, it's the brutal reality, but it's also one that I am confident we will march through together. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Next, we go to the line of Dakota Smith with the LA Times, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Dakota.

DAKOTA SMITH: Hi, good evening, Mayor. In terms of the furloughs, could you explain and let me make sure I have this correct, are you imposing furloughs as opposed to negotiating them? And if so, what powers do you have to do that, to impose furloughs?

MAYOR GARCETTI: The city, I am sorry.

DAKOTA SMITH: And secondly, on the budget that you released today, does your budget assume a complete reopening in a specific month in the next year, in the next fiscal year?

MAYOR GARCETTI: No, I think this budget will be open all the time, it's not a formal reopening, but we are going to be, as I said, looking at it week by week. It will be that dynamic based on what state and federal assistance there is, whether people are traveling, what receipts we get in. It won't--we won't even need to think about a formal reopening. We're going to be looking at this much more dynamically and every day, every week, every month throughout the year. Furloughs are in our power. We imposed them in 2009, after the 2008 crash, that was something we needed to do. We do need to sit down and speak with our labor partners about them, but that's one area where we don't need the approval.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But like I said, I'm open to anything on the table, but we need to save those dollars now, we can't have less money in our budget than we need to spend on protecting people, on ensuring that they are fed, on making sure that we continue forward with critical services. So that's something we had to do. Then it is in the city charter power, and it's something that we are not asking for, we're imposing. But I don't want to be, by the way, cavalier about that. I know what that sacrifice is like for city employees. It's shared by us and it's shared by everybody in the city, and I remain hopeful that throughout this year if it gets better, it doesn't have to be the entire year. But if it doesn't get better, that will be how we partially balance this budget. Next question, please. Thanks.

OPERATOR: Next we go to line of Michael Blood with Associated Press. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Michael.

MICHAEL BLOOD: Hello, Mayor. You've described a very grim economic outlook for the coming year, but your budget projects that city revenues will increase by about 2 percent. I am wondering if you could discuss why such severe budget steps are needed, including thousands of

furloughs and virtually across the board budget cuts when you'll have more money next year than this year.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So remember, the money that comes in is mostly been collected during this year for us to spend in this coming year, so most of that came before COVID-19. We don't know for sure, that's a projection, and it could obviously get worse. But we are budgeting with what we think is a semi-optimistic look at our revenues but a realistic one as well. That comes from all sorts of things. Our commitment to fight homelessness means that we put more and more money into that, that's a commitment that we have. When we look at just the cost of living increases that come, that is something that happens every single year. So in other words, the expenses that we have brought on by COVID-19, brought on by normal inflation, and brought on by the areas where we're expanding and making sure that our core services around the things that people need are there, that's what drives that we have more than 2 percent cost and we have only increase of 2 percent, so that's where our cuts come from.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And I know that's tough for folks to kind of wrap their head around, but it's like a household, you can have 2 percent more come into your household, but that doesn't mean that it keeps up with your costs. And for all of us, we've I think, done a very good job of not only keeping up with costs, but putting money into reserves, but part of the way we're balancing that is by taking from those reserves that had built up over time. So I know there was a more in-depth phone conversation with our CAO and my Deputy Chief of Staff, Matt Szabo earlier today, and we're happy to follow-on on some of the nitty-gritty as to why, but that's not unique to Los Angeles, that's every single city that we see out there.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And we are expecting, by the way, there's some revenues that actually go up at the same time other ones go down. Los Angeles is always better insulated than some places that are looking at 20 and 40 percent cuts of the revenue because they depend on one source like income tax or sales tax and when the stock market is down, that hits income taxes. When something like this hits, that hits sales tax, but we have a balancing of a lot of different resources that helps us be healthier than most. Thanks, Michael, next question, please.

OPERATION: Our last two questions will be in Spanish with the line of Dinorah Perez with Telemundo. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Dinorah.

DINORAH PEREZ: Hi, Mayor. I'm interested in asking you in regards to the furlough and the furlough cuts, will be saving money for the state, but how much money are you estimating that is needed from the federal government to help Los Angeles? And then also, if we do have more than one shelter in place order in the future, you had mentioned the possibility of two or even three, can there be more furlough cuts in the future until we actually see a vaccine?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So the furlough order that we have in place, it saves us, how much is about? Hundred and forty, hundred and forty million from our general fund because, remember, not everybody is furloughed. There are some people who are critical city services, who we can't

afford to furlough. We need them to answer 911 calls, to pick up the trash. But there're, you know, fewer than you think, fewer departments than you think: police, fire, sanitation, and some critical employees and others. So it's a hundred and forty million.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We aren't balancing the budget today on the expectation of more furloughs. And I think as you begin to do that, that begins to take away so many city services that we have to ask whether the city can function. A lot of that will also depend on what is open. If County Public Health says, "Go ahead and open libraries," that is going to be a lot of librarians back at work, doing things, and making sure that they can serve the public. Our rec and parks facilities are going to be open, is our zoo going to be reopen? All of those different employees in different departments, it'll depend on that, but we are not planning as of today, and like I said, each one of these is a snapshot on any further furloughs. And the first half was, I think, on shelter and place?

OPERATOR: Talking about (unintelligible) 230 million last month (unintelligible).

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sorry. We lost \$230 million in revenues over the last month due to COVID-19. So that's what we put as the projections of how much money we have lost during this period of time.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So también en español yo quiero decir. Estos cortes son una pintura del presupuesto ahora, pero espero con la ayuda del gobierno federal, necesitamos ahora cerca de 300 millones de dólares del gobierno federal para prevenir más cortes, para ayudar a nuestros trabajadores en la ciudad de Los Ángeles. Y yo estoy luchando muy duro obtener estos fondos por esa proposición del presupuesto de Speaker Pelosi y senador Schumer es 150 mil de millones de dólares para nuestros estados y nuestras ciudades. Y nuestras ciudades son el corazón de la comunidad, del país, y necesitamos a tener esta ayuda. No solamente por los bancos grandes, las corporaciones, pero también por la gente en nuestras ciudades, especialmente porque nuestros trabajadores están luchando en las líneas frentes de esta lucha, los bomberos, los médicos, los hospital--las personas en nuestros hospitales. Merecemos estos fondos porque estamos el grupo de trabajadores que están salvando las vidas de americanos.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In English, I forgot to add that too. We probably need at least that much money, \$270 million from the federal government just to replenish what was lost this past month. But what was put on the table was 150 billion for all the states and cities combined. If that came in, I am not sure what LA City's portion would be, but it'd go a large way to restoring critical services that people depend on to making sure that people weren't furloughed, that people don't, you know, lose their jobs, to make sure that we actually can keep our economy going and that the services that people deserve with their tax dollars come back to the cities where they live. Thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: Our last question from online would be from Victor Cordero with Estrella Channel 62. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hola, Víctor.

VICTOR CORDERO: Alcalde, ¿qué tal? Muy buenas tardes.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Buenas tardes.

VICTOR CORDERO: I am going to ask you in English and then I'll try to do it really quick in Spanish. I am sorry to be persistent, I am going to ask you something and I want to see if you can help me a little bit with the little more specific question. I know is kind of hard but it's my job. Every time I go out on the streets I see more and more people trying to take advantage of the no-rent situation, not paying rent. And now, with Friday, Congresswoman Ilhan Omar proposed the idea of not paying rent or the mortgages on the houses and for one or two or three months or for as long as this lasts, and then at the end just forget about it and just keep on going. My question to you, what kind of protection there that are for the small people, the small individuals who has one or two houses or veterans in this case, who happen to have a house or two and they're renting and that is the only income that they have? I am going to ask you in Spanish really quick.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Por supuesto.

VICTOR CORDERO: Alcalde, gracias y perdone que sea tan persistente pero es mi trabajo. Le he preguntado un par de veces y me gustaría a ver si hay una respuesta un poco más concisa en cuanto al hecho de que mucha gente tal vez no puede pagar la renta por la situación se entiende. Sin embargo, ¿qué hacemos con estas personas que tienen una o dos casas o los veteranos, por ejemplo, que tienen una o dos casas y su único ingreso son las rentas? ¿Qué servicios se puede ofrecer? ¿Qué protección hay para ellos? Sobre todo cuando la página de Internet que usted ha dado, the web page that you have supplied, sometimes people tell me that it is not working, it is not helping, a veces no les ayuda.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So thank you, Victor, for the question and I'll answer English and in Spanish and then I'll give my remarks with this evening in Spanish. So it's a really, really good point you bring up. If we don't have relief for both renters and for those kinds of small landlords out there simultaneously, we'll add the poverty in multiple ways and the system will collapse. I always say if you can pay rent, pay your rent. If you can pay some of your rent, pay some of your rent. But anybody who can't pay any of the rent, they will not be evicted, but it's one of the reasons that I--and they will have 12 months to pay that back. But it's one of the reasons I called on and I support, whether it's representative of Omar's legislation of anything out there, I said in my State of the City Address, the federal government should give direct cash assistance to help both renters and mortgage holders to have assistance in having a couple of months or however long this lasts, assistance.

MAYOR GARCETTI: If we're giving money to banks, we should give--one of the conditions is that they let mortgage holders have a month or two of relief, that that has to be passed on to renters as well. Because people don't have jobs, they can't pay the rent, they don't have the savings. So it is, I think, something that hopefully will be a movement that continuous to grow, I 100 percent supported. We have the strongest, you know, rent protections in the country, but do

I think they are strong enough? Of course not. But would it be fair just to say, “Everybody don't pay your rent”? And as you said, mom and pops lose their house, lose their mortgage, the banks claim that from them when these are veterans, working-class folks, immigrants and that's all they have? I am absolutely sympathetic to both of those classes of folks who are working class who don't have much money.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Éste es muy importante, y gracias por esta pregunta porque necesitamos ayuda por los inquilinos y los dueños. Es importante a tener asistencia fiscal del gobierno federal, y yo apoyo la legislación de congresista Omar y otras que quieren atraer recursos directamente, no solamente a las corporaciones grandes, a los bancos, pero una condición de esta asistencia, por ejemplo los bancos, debe ser asistencia a los dueños y una condición de la asistencia de estos dueños es asistencia por nuestros inquilinos. Estamos juntos, y la relación entre un inquilino y un dueño es crítica, y muchas veces hay veteranos, hay inmigrantes, personas que dependen en esta renta. Viceversa, hay mucha gente que no tienen trabajos y necesitamos un hogar. Tenemos la ley más generosa en los Estados Unidos, 10 meses para pagar su renta, un desalojo en evicciones pero hay un desalojo, no hay desalojos en la ciudad, pero también necesitamos a tener ayuda por los dos lados porque sin esto, este sistema no trabaja. Gracias por esta pregunta. Thank you to everybody who has tuned in tonight, whom will be turning out maybe as I speak Spanish. Thank you for your strength, I'll see you tomorrow. Keep with it, we will get through this.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Muy buenas tardes, Los Ángeles, gracias por venir a la alcaldía. Anoche les presenté mi discurso sobre el estado de nuestra ciudad. Hoy estamos cansados y tristes, pero este desafío no ha logrado quebrar nuestro espíritu. Saldremos adelante y estaremos juntos otra vez. Ahora, les comparto los datos de hoy. Hoy hubieron 1,491 nuevos casos en el condado de Los Ángeles, llegando a un total de 13,816 casos de COVID-19. Es un nuevo récord. En la ciudad tuvimos 716 nuevos casos, llegando a un total de 6,224. Hoy fallecieron 17 personas más en el condado, llegando a un total de 617, y tuvimos más de 80 fallecieron en sábado, un récord nuevo también.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Lo siento a las familias por su sufrimiento y somos contigo, estamos contigo, nuestros corazones, nuestras oraciones, nuestros sentimientos. Este virus ha matado a más de 1,800 americanos cada día, es la mayor causa de muerte en nuestra nación, por eso estamos haciendo todo lo posible para apoyar a nuestros hospitales. Y en buenas noticias, nuestros hospitales tenemos 1,572 camas disponibles, entre ellas 272 están en unidades de cuidados intensivos y tenemos 1,040 respiradores disponibles. Hoy abrimos tres sitios nuevos para hacer pruebas, y ahora tenemos 33 sitios en la ciudad y el condado, incluyendo un sitio Hospital de Good Samaritan, el lugar de mi nacimiento.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Tenemos capacidad de hacer pruebas para 12,000 personas al día y al final del día hoy hemos hecho pruebas a más de 80,000 personas en estos sitios con los otros laboratorios y hospitales más de 100,000 personas han recibido una prueba. Si tiene síntomas, puede hacer una cita para una prueba en la página coronavirus.lacity.org/testing y por favor, tome una prueba. Si tú tienes síntomas no severos, aún es importante a tener una prueba, a proteger su familia y las personas en su hogar y en su vecindario. Cada noche he hablado sobre

el gran impacto que ha tenido esta crisis y cómo ha destruido vidas y subsistencia para todos. En un instante ha desaparecido el crecimiento económico, reemplazado por el miedo y la incertidumbre.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Igualmente esta crisis ha tenido un impacto en nuestro presupuesto municipal, tanto en las inversiones, como en los servicios que podemos ofrecer de ahora en adelante. Desde que empezó esta crisis, nuestros ingresos ya han bajado, y la estimación de los ingresos para el año entrante ha bajado por más de 230 millones de dólares. Esto significa que tendremos que tomar decisiones muy difíciles. Los Ángeles tomó acción inmediata contra la pandemia, y esta acción tuvo un impacto en nuestro presupuesto. Le he dirigido a los departamentos a cortar lo más posible, y en el año que viene, la fuerza laboral municipal implementará un horario de trabajo reducido con un corte salarial de 10 por ciento.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sin embargo, les prometo que no vamos a comprometer las cosas que son más importantes en esta ciudad como los servicios públicos esenciales y nuestra seguridad pública. Esto lo podemos hacer porque hemos ahorrado para establecer una fundación financiera estable. Este presupuesto anticipa que los impactos económicos de esta pandemia continuarán durante los años que vienen, y es necesario preservar los fondos de reserva que tenemos. Pero aún necesitamos el apoyo del gobierno federal, no sólo para apoyarnos económicamente, sino para también ayudarnos en mantener empleos y brindar servicios críticos a la gente de Los Ángeles.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Estoy agradecido a nuestros socios en el gobierno federal por aprobar la remuneración de ciertos gastos relacionados a esta crisis. Y ahora nuestro Congreso debe aprobar la propuesta para proporcionar 150 mil millones de dólares para presupuestos estatales y locales en el próximo paquete de estímulo económico. Por favor, necesitamos su ayuda y la gente de América vive en nuestros estados y ciudades. Necesitamos su ayuda inmediatamente. Hoy también estoy orgulloso de anunciar una nueva colaboración con la cooperación Fox para proporcionar comidas gratis para personas discapacitadas en nuestra ciudad. Esta iniciativa entregará 2,000 comidas cinco días a la semana durante el mes entrante para personas con obstáculos al acceso a la alimentación en esta crisis. Gracias a todos por su generosidad y amor para continuar en la lucha contra el coronavirus. Entonces, quédense en buena salud, quédense protegidos, quédense en casa. Mucha fuerza y mucho amor, Los Ángeles, hasta mañana. Thank you all, have a good evening.