

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti Briefing | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good evening, Los Angeles, and thank you again for joining us at City Hall. We are lucky to call Los Angeles home. It's a city of doers and dreamers, innovators who will innovation on the streets and the places of LA almost every day. Many of our brightest and most creative minds are right here at our local universities. And one of them, the University of Southern California, I am proud to have represented here tonight by its president, Dr. Carol Folt, A friend, already a great Angeleno, as we discussed tonight how we are helping fight on during this pandemic, a way that we can bring together the resources of this great city to ensure that we have the data that we need, the suggestions and policies that we require and the programs to make sure that this day is one of the worst and every day moving forward is a better and better day.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We also have Dr. Paul Simon, who is Chief Science Officer at the extraordinary Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. He works very closely with our office here in the city, and he is an adjunct professor in the Department of Epidemiology at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. We are also joined by a Trojan, Dr. Neeraj Sood, who is the Vice-Dean for Research at USC's Sol Price School of Public Policy. These are two incredible leaders and two incredible doctors who can speak to the medical efforts that we are undertaking right now. And they are going to be available also for the press to answer some of your questions you may have here today. And I want to thank all three of them for joining us here tonight.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And let me also give a shout out to our incredible team at the city's Department of Information Technology and Channel 35, who ensures that this broadcast through all of the channels of our local stations gets there. We couldn't do without the camera operators, the editors, everybody who has made this possible. Thank you for making sure Angelenos can hear the most important news they need to know. Before we hear from Dr. Folt and from our panelists, I would like to first discuss, as I always do, the latest data that came in here today, data that you need to know to understand this crisis moving forward. So let's start.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Today there were 472 new confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in the County of Los Angeles, bringing our total number of cases to 10,496, a four percent increase since yesterday. For comparison, the past seven days had seen an average daily increase of 437 new cases. In the city, there were 245 new cases today, bringing the total to 4,707, a 5.5 percent increase since yesterday. And most tragically, of course, we learned today of 42 new deaths. This is 42 new Angelenos who lost their lives because of COVID-19. It brings the total to 402, a 12 percent increase since yesterday, and unfortunately, the highest number of deaths that we have had to face.

MAYOR GARCETTI: The past seven days has seen an average daily increase of 29 new deaths. The doubling rate of our deaths has slowed a bit, with deaths doubling every six days now, but the last two days show that the number of deaths are not slowing. These are now our worst two days back-to-back. As I always say, and as Dr. Ferrer often says too, these are not numbers, these are people. These are no statistics, these are stories and our lives. People that we know, people who we love. I have spoken with husbands who have lost their wives. I have

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talked to girlfriends who have lost their loved ones, parents who no longer have a child and children who no longer have a parent.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Across the county and our general emergency hospitals, though we continue to build capacity to save lives, there are now 1,553 beds available, including 1,309 acute care beds and 244 ICU beds, and an inventory of 996 available ventilators. We are looking to continue to keep folks healthy, safe and out of those hospital beds. And testing we know is a vital tool in that, so let me next turn to our testing. I am proud to say we now have 30 testing locations across the city and the county. Three more county sites opened today at the Forum, Bellflower Civic Center, and the San Gabriel Valley Airport. And we now have the capacity to test 10,700 people a day. And by the end of the day, we will have tested approximately 56,000 people here through those centers. On top of that, probably about 30,000 more have been tested through our providers. So more than 85,000 tests to date in LA County. Testing is critical. But I want to remind you that it depends on you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: If you have symptoms, please get a test. Don't wait until somebody says, "Go." If you are feeling those symptoms, do it today because we don't want unused test kits at the end of each day due to folks thinking that mild symptoms are not problem. We need to know not just for you, to make sure that it doesn't get worse, but we need to know if you are positive so we can contact people you have come in to contact with. You may have a very mild case of it, but getting that test ensures us we know that you are for sure positive, and Public Health can then trace and track the people you have come into contact with and quarantine them.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Simply put testing saves lives. So go today because anyone with symptoms in LA County can get a free test and you can go to coronavirus.lacity.org/testing to sign up for a test right now. We know that some of the worst days of this crisis are still ahead but there are encouraging signs that the swift action we've all taken is flattening the curve. So folks are now asking, "What comes next? How can get more of our lives and our economy back on track, and how can we be prepared for future waves potentially of COVID-19?" You see, one of the biggest tragedies of this crisis is that we simply don't know when we will be able to come back together again, to see each other, hold each other, smile in three dimensions at each other, getting back to when we can be back in a classroom or out on date night at a bar or restaurant, catch a game at Dodger Stadium or Staples Center.

MAYOR GARCETTI: This will require a lot of steps in the days ahead. And getting back to some of those things will take longer than others and we will always be guided by the health professionals, the public health professionals in the steps that we take. Nobody was looking forward more to an LA NBA champion or World Series winner than me. But let's be clear. Right now there are no small gatherings. And getting back to medium and large gatherings will take time. But day-to-day snapshots or estimates are less important than the work that we can do to make sure we are back in stadiums, in arenas, bars and restaurants, back seeing our loved ones who are seniors sooner than later. And while we don't know what any date will be today, we do know that the more we do now, the sooner those dates will come. So while we have been reacting to this crisis by saving lives today, we are also simultaneously thinking about what we

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need to do for tomorrow to reopen up Los Angeles, to get back to school, to get back to work, to get back in the public spaces and what we need to be able to do that safely.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yesterday, Governor Newsom, along with his counterparts in Oregon and Washington, unveiled thoughtful and necessary goals that are required to reopen the economy. These steps zero in on testing, preventing infection among high-risk groups, hospital capacity and the ability to handle surges, the availability of therapeutics, medicine, vaccines, adoption of physical distancing measures in businesses and schools, and the ability to kind to snap back to reinstitute safer at home measures when necessary. We need these clear guidelines in place to restore a sense of normalcy and prepare for a second and even potentially third wave of COVID-19.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Consistent with Governor Newsom's approach, I want to take a second tonight and share with you five pillars of our strategy that we are considering here, in talking to leaders across the county about in order to return to good health and to more prosperity in Los Angeles. First is testing. So we all know, but it is a critical requirement that we have widespread testing for everyone with COVID-19 symptoms and for also asymptomatic people with significant risk of transmission. There should be strong national standards for the quality and the reliability of tests and federal support to guarantee supplies are affordable and available at the local level.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Now remember, when we are talking about testing, we are really talking about two different kinds of tests. First, virology tests, which are the ones that are conducted usually with a nasal or a mouth swab to detect the presence of the SARS 2 novel coronavirus that can confirm whether somebody may be infectious with COVID-19, whether they have symptoms or not. This helps us track and trace and isolate people, as well as their contacts so they can be quarantined. And in the second type of tests are serology or blood tests that draw of blood from a finger prick or syringe to detect the presence of antibodies that have been produced in reaction to the presence of the novel coronavirus.

MAYOR GARCETTI: These antibodies can tell us who has had this coronavirus or COVID-19, and assess the potential immunity or track and trace people they have come in contact with because we did not know that they were sick. These blood tests are the easiest way to see how many people have had the presence of the novel coronavirus but do not, I repeat, do not necessarily, as Dr. Ferrer has said many times, speak to someone's infectiousness, virology, the swab tests, if you will, are better, they are a point in time test. Serology is really a historical test. And serology tests still have a way to go to be produced en mass and with close to 100 percent liability.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But we know that they will be critical in the steps ahead. We will need the strong system of testing before LA will be safe to reopen. Second, real time surveillance is needed for us to be able to detect and prevent new outbreaks. We need to link test results to a surveillance network. So COVID-19 can be tracked in real time. We can quickly detect new hot spots, maybe quicker than a human eye can see them. For instance, an outbreak in a neighborhood or senior care facility. so we can quickly go to the third pillar, immediately

respond to new cases with even more aggressive approach than we have today. This is about building a greater ability to quickly isolate cases, trace and communicate with contacts and quarantine non-immune individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Doing this means some workers will need to be trained for urgently needed new jobs, to supplement the incredible work being done by our public health professionals we have seen in San Francisco, librarians, medical students get enlisted, one estimate is that 300,000 Americans, many out of work who could potentially have new jobs like they are doing in Boston right now, can help make sure we track and trace more quickly and more extensively.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Fourth is the question of hospital capacity. This pandemic has laid bare our hospital bed shortage. We should not have scramble like this, and here in Los Angeles, in California, luckily the actions we have taken and the great work by our hospitals to expand that capacity has let us keep up with the increasing demand of patients in our hospitals. But we need a national push to grow the capacity and ICUs, emergency rooms and supplies like PPE now before the next wave hits.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And then fifth, the last piece, is ongoing research and development. Our country and certainly this region has a remarkable history of being innovators. It's how I started my speech tonight, and we know that top scientists with federally backed research can help develop treatments in universities like USC and UCLA here and throughout the country. We need to make sure that treatments and vaccines and cures to terrible diseases in the past, that brilliance is put here as it is being done for COVID-19. And we need the CDC and others to support standardized data collection and to closely collaborate with states, universities and labs to effectively develop treatments, not based on theories, but on actual clinical trials.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And then to share that information with doctors and nurses on the front lines. These five principles are the principles guiding us here in Los Angeles, as we will make those decisions about how and when we can begin to get back to work and back to school, back to fun, back to the life that we had before all of this. But together with the key measures our governor outlined and that we are exploring, namely, how do we keep protecting those high-risk members of our society, even as we open up parts of it, are going to be very important in the days ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So let me return to blood testing because I asked Dr. Folt. Her colleagues here today to speak a little bit about this in a moment. We know that blood testing is critical in looking at immunity, helping identify Americans who might be able to serve in work places or classrooms and roles that may otherwise create significant risk of transmission in the days ahead. The existing tests are still not good enough and not widespread enough. We need a better ability to measure antibodies and understand and test results translate into action, how test results might translate into actual immunity. And blood tests might give us critical information like who might have plasma, that can have guide our research and protect more people and save more patients.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: And we know that our progress depends on powerful partnerships between government and the private sector. And so tonight we are very proud to highlight a partnership between the County Department of Public Health, my office, USC and Lieberman Research Worldwide in Century City, as well as collaborators in UCLA and Stanford to address serology and the tests that will measure antibodies no blood, tests that will help us move from crisis to recovery and to see how many people in fact are infected or have been infected with this novel coronavirus. This partnership will accelerate research and development and help us answer questions that are key to what you want to hear. When, mayor, are we going to get back to normal? So to say a few words, I'd like to turn it over now to a great leader. As I mentioned, she has been a leader not only in education, in higher education, but here already in Los Angeles. Somebody who has been extraordinary in everything from the environment to ensuring that her workers have the dignity that they need and the resources that you need in this crisis. I want to thank you, Dr. Folt, and I ask you to say a few words. Madam President.

DR. CAROL FOLT: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for your leadership and for your partnership. Even know Los Angeles is practicing social distancing, collaborations like this are bringing us much closer and we are learning how to do it on warp speed. So it is really important for us. This study is led by USC Price professor Neeraj Sood, and this antibody study will provide critical information for us and for the rest of the world on how to come back this pandemic and find a pathway to potential end of this crisis. It is a unique partnership between USC and the Los Angeles County Public Health Department. And it shows how much can be achieved when we work together.

DR. CAROL FOLT: Since last weekend and just over the next few weeks, Professor Sood and his team are already testing a representative number of people across Los Angeles County to determine what proportion of Angelenos have been infected with COVID-19. And I wanted to have a special thanks to the Keck USC Medical student, Peggy Ebner, because she jumped ride in with a number of her fellow medical students to volunteer to assist Dr. Sood in performing these tests at sites around Los Angeles. The data that they are gathering will absolutely help us better understand just how contagious and deadly the virus is, so that our hospitals, our public officials and the public can plan accordingly.

DR. CAROL FOLT: The study will help us identify people who can also donate their plasma to fuel new treatments for COVID-19. In the future, Dr. Sood and his collaborators hope to make antibody testing available to every Angeleno. And this would be so helpful, it will help ease anxiety for people who are worried about contracting the virus. And it will also be an important fundamental step towards restarting our economy. And I just want to thank everyone who has been working on this amazing collaborative effort, Dr. Sood and his team, including his collaborators at Stanford and UCLA, Mayor Garcetti and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, LA City Councilmember-Elect, Kevin de León and US Schwarzenegger Institute. Since the crisis began, USC has been so proud to be on the front lines with healthcare workers at Keck Medicine, of USC at the LA County and other hospitals to support our neighbors in this difficult time and to partner on vitally important studies and initiatives like this. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you so much, President Folt, and thank you for everything that USC is doing in our incredible academic community across Los Angeles. We have had so many, not only offers of help, but people that are working on our most vulnerable folks and financial assistance, economists who are looking at our current unemployment, who are suggesting policies to move forward and we look forward to those robust partnerships growing even more in the days ahead. And as I reminded folks who are from the media, the two doctors that are here are available for questions at the end, too. So they are not just here to sit and to smile but I hope that you will ask them some interesting questions that we can dig in a little further on some of these medical issues.

MAYOR GARCETTI: With that, let me share a couple of last updates as well on our ongoing work to provide relief the folks because while we look at the medical aspects and the public health aspects of this, we know folks are suffering out there in Los Angeles. All of our work is focused on saving lives, but we know that seniors have been particularly hard hit by this crisis. Every day under normal circumstances, our Department of Aging provides meals to our low-income older aging, sorry, older adults across the city. And many seniors who receive those meals, usually at our community centers and senior centers obviously couldn't go anymore to those places. And while they can have these conversations with their friends and some of the great memories that they have through our usual program, we have continued through our safer-at-home directive to feed those 5,000 seniors across this city.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And this pandemic is disproportionately causing stress to the population, pushing more seniors into food insecurity, and our office has heard from so many people who relied on the service who are now struggling to secure food on a regular basis. These are our grandparents and parents, these are our friends and neighbors. As I mentioned prior to this crisis we were feeding about 5,000 seniors a meal a day. And tonight I am proud to announce a new initiative that we've already started with help from the Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles to bridge the gap for these seniors and others.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And this is our emergency senior meals response. This initiative will double the number of meals that seniors already enrolled receive in the Department's program and to get this, we will formalize a partnership with an amazing LA entity, Everytable, which is going to make this food, but we are also excited to say we are going to double the number, more than double the number of seniors that we will serve. 7,000-plus additional seniors, meaning that 12,000-plus seniors will now be a part of this program. Thank you also to Access Services, our service providers, Access Services, which traditionally provide transportation for people with disabilities, are stepping up to deliver these meals along with our traditional service providers as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So whether it's St. Barnabas or Watts Labor Community Action Committee, folks at home can make sure that they are safe from COVID-19 and at the same time make sure that that doesn't come at the cost of receiving food. And so we will now be sending ten meals a week to more than 12,000 homebound seniors, and there's really only two requirements for this. It is really easy. Does not matter what zip code you're in in the City of Los Angeles, there is two requirements. You have to be 60 or over and live in the City of LA.

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That is it. So if you are interested in joining, and thanks again to our providers Everytable, Access Paratransit and more, please call starting tomorrow between 9:00 and 5:00, 2132635226. If you need meals and you are 60 or over in the City of Los Angeles, call 213263-5226 beginning at 9:00 o'clock tomorrow.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And stay tuned for more because we have been talking to the governor in the state to see how we can expand food security even more for our seniors. And we hope to have some exciting announcements in the days ahead. These are just the first steps that we are taking to expand our capacity and to meet the needs of our senior population. But I am committed to making sure that Angelenos of every age and at every stage of their life have the resources they need to take care of their basic needs. That includes financial well-being. Today it is April 15th. This would usually be a stressful day called Tax Day. But this year I want to remind you that the deadline to file your taxes has been moved to July 15th to provide more flexibility and time as Americans confront a new financial reality.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We've heard from the Angelenos who are worried that a later tax day will mean that they won't receive their stimulus money from the federal government. Don't worry. The two are not related, you will still receive your stimulus check. And here is what you should know. First, if you are eligible for those funds from the federal government, even if you have not filed your taxes yet for 2019, The IRS will make a calculation based on your 2018 filing and send it with the information on file. And second, if you don't ordinarily file federal income taxes because your annual incomes is below the requirement, you can still file a simple return for this year and make sure that you get the money that your household qualifies for, up to \$1,200 per adult and \$500 per child. You are entitled to this money.

MAYOR GARCETTI: All of us who have paid taxes over the years, this is our money coming back from Washington at the time of need. And we have partners here to help you. At Free Tax Prep LA, to make sure that they can answer your questions on this or anything else. So go to lamayor.org/freetaxprep and tools and information are there available for you as well as people who can follow up. Delivering economic relief is part of our responsibility to all Angelenos. And I believe nobody should be left behind. This includes nearly 700,000 DACA recipients across the United States whose fate hangs in the balance at the Supreme Court. And the more than 82,000 of those DACA recipients who call the LA area home.

MAYOR GARCETTI: As the grandson of an immigrant who came over the border, fleeing war, his mother carrying him in her arms as a baby, I shudder to think about what would happen if they were separated, or if this country hadn't given him the opportunity to join the US Army, become a citizen. I literally would not be here today as your mayor. But in the midst of a pandemic, we can't let anyone's fear about immigration policies or anything else, let them be afraid to seek medical care. And we can't afford to have healthcare workers fearful to show up to work. People who clean the hospitals, people who serve in the hospitals, people who are making sure that our markets work and our warehouses are functioning.

MAYOR GARCETTI: That is why this week I led a group of 52 mayors from across the country sending a letter to the Department of Homeland Security, urging them to keep

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protections in place and to automatically renew any DACA employment authorization documents that expire this year. From day one, state and local leaders have led the response to COVID-19 and that is not just the case here at home, it is the case around the world. And as I've mentioned, throughout this I have convened Zoom meeting and participated in Zoom meetings with mayors across the country, the 13 mayors of the most populous cities up and down the state. And today I had my second call with dozens of mayors from around the world. The mayor of London, the mayor of Melbourne, the mayor of Milan, the mayor of Curitiba and Guadalajara and many others who are comparing notes about what they are doing to open up their economies and to think about the future.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We had a presentation from Singapore to learn about their public health system and the things that they are doing. And we heard from folks who are battling the economic duress that everybody is experiencing in their cities. This effort is absolutely critical because none of us stand alone. Not as in our neighborhoods or across our city. Not in our state or our country nor in this world. If there is one thing I have learned from this it's that we need to be even more tightly connected. This virus reminded us of how tightly connected we are across the world. It is now time for us to make sure that the answers and solutions come from that same shared network as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We will get through this. And when the time comes to move into the recovery face, we have to address the core inequities that allowed this crisis to hit some Angelenos harder than others. The state focused on what we can do to protect our health, to get people back to work and accelerate our action to address things like the climate crisis and other public health emergencies we have, from homelessness to a warming globe. But we are reminded that we are in this together. Every night that you invite me into your home, it's a reminder that we are part of one city, a city of angels, a city that will soar again, a city that has the brilliance and the courage and the grit to not only get through this, but to see a better day. My commitment to you is to fight and to work every single day for that to make sure that your city government continues to function to meet your needs around COVID-19 and to rebuild this great city. And to look back and say, "While this was one of the toughest chapters, it was one of the strongest and greatest chapters that this city has ever seen." So as I always say, let's keep it up and stay safe, stay healthy and stay at home. Strength and love to each one of you in Los Angeles. President Folt, myself and the doctors would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I'll take the first question.

OPERATOR: Thank you, and the first question comes from Jory Rand from ABC 7, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hold on, one second before he asks the question. I am going to actually ask the two doctors to introduce themselves because I know I can see them, but there you might not be able to. So Dr. Simon and Dr. Sood, would you just briefly introduce yourselves and then we will take your question, Jory.

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DR. PAUL SIMON: Sure, hello, I am Dr. Paul Simon with Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

DR. NEERAJ SOOD: Hi, I am Professor Neeraj Sood from the University of Southern California, and I am co-leading the study with Dr. Paul Simon from L.A. County Public Health.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you both. Go ahead, Jory, sorry about that.

OPERATOR: I'm sorry. Jory must have disconnected. We'll now go to the line of Elex Michaelson from Fox 11 News. Go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We'll get back to him, don't worry. Go ahead, Elex.

ELEX MICHAELSON: Hi, Mayor. And as a Trojan, I love the USC theme tonight, so fight on to all the Trojans in the house, including our President Sood. So, like most Trojans, we want to go see football games this fall at USC, like most Laker fans, we want to go to Staples Center and to see them or the Clippers win the title this year. We want to see the Dodgers win the World Series. There is a lot of speculation about what's going to happen on that front. So can you level with us and how realistic is it that we are going to be able to go to sports games this fall, to concerts people want to go see, such important source of revenue for people this fall? And to that point, if we can't, what do you think about sports without a crowd? And one last follow-up on that point, looking back, knowing what we know now, would having the LA Marathon when we did, was that a mistake?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure, so, on that last one, no, we talked to Public Health and because runners are spaced out and people took that, it did not look like it was. It was one of the last actually great things we had before we had cases come here, and we've not traced a cluster of cases back to the marathon at all. Second, you raise a great point, and as I said, you know, I know it made some news, something that I said in response to a question from one of our general managers where I said, "It was going to be difficult to image this year going back to large, the largest gatherings we have, that became suddenly any concerts and any sporting events in any way." All I know is while we don't know the date when those things will return, I know that they will be sooner the more that we take these actions.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And not just of physical distancing, but getting a testing regime up from our federal government, from making sure that we have not only the virology tests but the serology tests, that we develop rules of the road for schools and for workplaces to get people back, that we figure out whether things like immunity passports will work, that we make sure that we keep our most vulnerable safe. And I certainly would love to see some sports games and concerts later this year, whether that means that those are athletes paying by themselves. President Folt and I were just talking about this before the press conference because that's the recommendation of our Public Health professionals that allow us to see it on TV, or whether that can be potentially in person. But I think we're a long way off from huge gatherings. We are not as long away from medium size gatherings, and we are still today not at a place of even small gatherings. So these are steps that we would have to take, I will always level with people to let

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them know that things aren't coming quickly and we can't reopen things simply because our hearts say that we want to. I will always listen to the doctors; I will always listen to Public Health. I don't know if Dr. Simon wants to add anything to that or Dr. Folt, but I'm happy to have them. Dr. Simon?

DR. PAUL SIMON: Sure, I am happy to comment. I think the important point is we can't predict the future. I think we have to take it week by week; we use the best available data, the best available information on how we distance and what the impacts of those interventions are. I think if we do scale back, it will be in a very gradual and strategic way. We certainly don't want to endanger folks, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you. All right, I'll take the next question.

OPERATOR: Thank you, and that goes to the line of Jory Rand from ABC 7.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sorry about that, Jory, welcome back.

JORY RAND: Appreciate it. Can you guys hear me okay?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yeah, we can hear you great.

JORY RAND: Okay. Fantastic. This is a little bit of piggybacking on the last question, but there are people who want to see society and business open now. A vast majority of Americans say they are fine with safer-at-home orders but there are some people out there who are contacting us and I am sure you saw what happened in Michigan today where groups shut down parts of the capital city in protest of stay-at-home orders there. So maybe people here aren't going that far, but can you speak to that question of why some of those nonessential businesses can't reopen now if they implement the safe practices of using masks and physical distancing and limiting numbers inside, combined with the testing? And what do you say to those who just say if people want to go outside and risk their own health, why not just go ahead and let them? Thank you.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure, and I'm sure Dr. Simon might want to add to this because I heard Dr. Ferrer talk about this. This isn't just about your life; this is about other people's lives too. This is about people who you know and love, who you care about. A half of our households have somebody over 65 or the preexisting medical vulnerability. So we know that this is something that isn't just about whether you'll take a risk on yourself, but your actions could wind up spreading and killing others. And that's why it's absolutely critical that we listen to Public Health advice and professionals, not for us to just go on our own instincts here.

MAYOR GARCETTI: That said, I will always continue pushing strongly on what we need to do if there are measures we can take that get us there sooner, I am not going to be passive about those things, I am going to ask Washington for that help, I am going to ask Sacramento for that help, I am going to talk to mayors around the world about what those best practices are because I don't want one more day to go by than it has to, that we stay at home and that our livelihoods are

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in danger the way they are. But we all know that if we let this be a medical disaster, that that is the worst thing for our economy, it's the worst thing for our lives, and that's the only thing we can never restore, a lost life. Dr. Simon, is it anything you want to add to that?

DR. PAUL SIMON: What I'd just say we're relatively early into the pandemic. We're still seeing death, the numbers of people dying, going up. We've seen a leveling of reported cases of COVID, that's a good sign. I really want to command the general public. They've been incredibly responsive and we understand it's a hardship. I know people are suffering, there are surely economic consequences, but also the psychological consequences and we understand that and we are with you. We want to try to open things up as quickly as possible but we have to be very cautious.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you, I'll take the next question. Thanks.

OPERATOR: Thank you, and that comes from the line of Mary Beth McDade from KTLA Channel 5 News.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Mary Beth.

OPERATOR: Please, go ahead.

MARY BETH McDADE: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Well, you do sound better today.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you.

MARY BETH McDADE: I hope you are feeling better today.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Feeling great, feeling strong.

MARY BETH McDADE: Also, a couple of different things, just wanted to find out, it seems that testing is just so key as far as getting things reopen. I am wondering, I'm hearing you say we are now up to 10,700 tests that we can do daily. Is there a number that we need to see? How many tests do we need to be able to do per day in order to reopen the economy? Second question also, I know we were just talking about the study for the antibodies, what have you, at USC, wondering when can we expect some of those results from that study? And then lastly, I know City Councilman Joe Buscaino is using some funds, and he is using them towards restaurants to make meals for the homeless, and so he's helping give some business to restaurants, also helping out the homeless in need. Just listening to your initiative as far as helping up these seniors, why not expand that across the city where some funds can go to these restaurants, have them make meals for the homeless and seniors?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So let me star at that. I think probably Dr. Sood can speak to the study and the timeline. By the way, I want to thank Joe Buscaino, Paul Krekorian, Marqueece Harris-Dawson, so many folks, and I think elected officials across the county who have stepped up to help support local restaurant. We've done that through the mayor's office as well. And like

I said, hold tight for just a couple of more days because we are finalizing some negotiations with FEMA and the state. Something that would be good news for folks who need meals and good news for our restaurants, as well as our hospitality workers, many of them who are out at work right now, but can't announce tonight. But we have been absolutely doing that, I think Joe's program isn't just for the homeless, but for families that are facing food insecurity and making sure they get restaurant delivered meals. And it's been a real model and Paul Krekorian is really playing a strong role in leading overall our city's response to helping that happen. And looking at those workers that are out of work right now, whether they're hotel and restaurant workers, whether they're taxi drivers, we think that next couple of days we'll have--I've given you enough clues, but something good to announce that will expand what we talked about for seniors even further.

MAYOR GARCETTI: The first question let me take, and then I'll hand the second one to Dr. Sood. Look, the tests and the number of tests don't lead to reopening. There isn't a magical number of tests that lead the reopening, for instance, there is many more tests in New York City, they have the most probably per capita of any city that we were coming close. But those tests are showing many more positive cases. To put it in perspective, as many cases as we have in LA County, it's the number of deaths that New York City has had. It's devastating there. I was in communication with Mayor de Blasio today and we talked and it just, you know, my heart goes out to that city and to him, and to Governor Cuomo and everybody who is dealing with that. So I think Dr. Simon and Dr. Ferrer would the first to say, "It is not the number of tests, tests can inform, but that won't lead to the opening." It is the number of cases and then the protections that we have. And one of the protections that we may have is knowing what is the incidence of cases out there, which is exactly what the study is, so I hope I've cued that up for you. Dr. Sood, why don't you take it from there?

DR. NEERAJ SOOD: Yes. So what we finally do in the study is try--to try to measure the true extent of COVID infection in the population. So we not only want to understand how many symptomatic cases there are, those are the ones that are typically reported to LA County Public Health. But in partnership with LA Public Health, we want to also track the asymptomatic cases or the mild cases with mild symptoms that were never reported. So the true goal of the study is to really understand the extent of the infection today and also to trace it over time so that we have questions about when is the economy going to open. To really answer that question in a scientific way, we need to track what's happening to this epidemic. Are the numbers of cases rising over time? Are the falling over time? When will the number of cases start to kind of going down? So that's what we are trying to do with the study.

DR. NEERAJ SOOD: And there was a question about, you know, when are we going to see the results? Well, as soon as possible. I know the numbers from the study are vital for guiding Public Health decisions and Public Policy decisions, and therefore it's important to really vet those results, make sure other scientists look at them before we start making decisions based on those results. And that's the process we are undergoing right now, we've completed the data collection, but we are analyzing the data and sharing it with other scientists and making sure the conclusions we are drawing from the data are accurate before we start making decisions based on them.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you so much, Dr. Sood. Now, I want to thank Dr. Folt because when I heard about this from Dr. Simon, and I think originally it was going to be funded to do once a month. I called Dr. Folt, I said, "This is something we need to fund more often." She stepped up and I want to thank USC and the USC community for agreeing to do that so that this is something every couple of weeks now that we can get these data because for decision-makers like me, knowing those percentages are going to be critically important. And one last thing I'll add that I think I talked about two nights ago, was there is one projection that was shared with me recently that said that if we keep on where we are today, this is about managing our hospital capacity, right? We don't ever want there to be somebody sick who needs to get to an UCI or use a ventilator who can't. And so far we've been able to keep that flow going. But if we keep with what we are doing, about 30% of people was one rough estimate, would have contracted this by August 1st in Los Angeles County. Now, we'll be able to see whether that projection is actually accurate as we begin to have these blood tests?

MAYOR GARCETTI: This projection also said, "If we stopped and opened up the economy right now, 95% of us, that's 9.5 million people would have COVID-19 before August or by August 1st. Needless to say, that would be a disaster and overwhelming for our medical system. It would cause deaths unnecessarily, it would be extreme suffering. We could tighten things up even more than what we have today, sometimes people ask, "Why aren't you doing more?" And that would lead to only about 5% in this projection of people having been COVID-19-positive by August 1st. What that would mean is it's probably slower to reopen up the economy because 95% of us would still be vulnerable to a second spike. So this about balancing that and this information is going to be absolutely critical for us making these decisions. I hope that's all helpful. We'll take the next question, thanks.

OPERATOR: Thank you and that comes from the line of Lesley Marin CBS KCAL, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, how are you, Lesley?

LESLEY MARIN: Hi, Mayor. Just wanted to talk about the Angeleno cards that you talked about. We know that the--what they have had some issues with people just trying to log on, maybe too many people trying to get that. Can you tell me if you plan to extend that deadline?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So the deadline will stay the same, that's through tomorrow. We did initially have such an overwhelming response which speaks to just the need out there for folks to make their most basic needs met. And I was very glad to see the Governor, by the way, announce another charitable undertaking to give cash assistance, including to undocumented Californians and others, that they are seeking to raise, which would also be about \$100 million throughout the state. I think they raised 5 million so far, and they are going to continue forward. All of these things are credibly helpful, I know they've been gone in the Bay Area as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But we have had--we had 133,299 applications yesterday, 159,052 today, that's a total of 292,351 applications. We want to make clear it's going to be one per

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household, if there's more than the cards available, that will be done at random so it will be done in a fair way. And people shouldn't be worried if they haven't gotten through yet, whether it's on the phone or the Internet side, that will stay open through tomorrow at 4:30 and that's when we will close it. It's already more than there is money, that's why I want people to continue giving, to help Angelenos, whether you can give a million dollars and you're listening and call us, or whether it's somebody who can give \$5. And you log onto mayor'sfundla.org and give to the Angeleno Fund. We are not going to stop just after that first round, but we'll start that money being given out as early as the beginning part of next week. And it just speaks at the need.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And I hope that our federal government is listening too because while we get the checks that many people who are taxpayers will get, folks who haven't paid taxes in traditional way or too low in the poverty line to receive that, and others who are hard-workers and pay taxes but are undocumented also deserve to make sure their families are fed. So that is something that will stay, we are not going to extend that for this round. But I hope if we can replenish that and raise another 10 million, we'll do it again and again and again. Thank you, next question.

OPERATOR: And that comes from the line of Robert Kovacik from NBC, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Rob.

ROBERT KOVACIK: Mayor, how are you, sir?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Good! How are you doing?

ROBERT KOVACIK: A quick question for you and then I'd like to speak with the doctors if I may. Mayor, I didn't quite get an answer or maybe I didn't hear from being so far away, regarding large gatherings when it comes to sporting events, will you subscribe to whether it's high school teams or professional teams playing despite not having an audience? Would you subscribe and think that that would be an okay idea as we move forward?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Absolutely. Absolutely. If our Public Health professionals say that it's good and that we can, for instance, test everybody that's on a team and they say it's safe, absolutely. I think that's probably something that we will see before we see stadiums full.

ROBERT KOVACIK: Doctors, thank you very much for chatting with us. There seems to be a lot of belief among people that we have spoken to at NBC 4 that there is going to be a reluctance overall for people to begin a new normal until there actually is a vaccine. And we know that that could be a year, a year and half as the earliest. Correct? With that said, is there a way that you can see people trying to go ahead with their lives as these restrictions are lifted? And what would you recommend to them, especially in light of the fact that Mayor Garcetti himself has warned us that we can expect to go back inside at least one more time, perhaps two more times, due the coronavirus?

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DR. NEERAJ SOOD: So, I think one thing is COVID-19 is still a new disease, and we are still trying to understand, you know, what it would do. So I don't think--we don't know for sure that we would need a vaccine to get back to normal. There is a likelihood that we might be able to get back to normal much earlier than that, but we still don't know how much time that will take, whether that might happen in month or that might happen in two months. And that is why we need the science to track the epidemic, to figure out how many people are getting infected, how are the number of infections changing over time? Do we start seeing the number of infections go down over time, and as we start seeing infections go down, we know then that's a safe time to try to reenter or restart the economy. So I think we have to do this in a scientific way but hopefully we don't have to wait for a vaccine for 18 months, I think there is a good chance that this may happen earlier than that.

DR. PAUL SIMON: So, let me just add one more thing. I think we need to distinguish between the antibody test and the PCR test and they complement each other. But I think very importantly, we have to expand access to the PCR test and be very quick about testing folks who have symptoms and if identified with the infection, isolating them, identifying their contacts, quarantining them. I think Dr. Frieden, the former Director of the CDC, described it as putting a box around the virus. If we can do that effectively, that then frees up other folks to have more freedom in terms of their movement.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you. We'll take the next question.

OPERATOR: Thank you, and that comes from the line of Claudia Peschiutta from KNX News Radio. Please, go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Claudia.

CLAUDIA PESCHIUTTA: Hi. There is now an outbreak, we know of at least one outbreak on Skid Row, six people at the Union Rescue Mission, including one person died. And advocates for homeless people keeping calling on you to commandeer hotel rooms and/or are quickly moved to get people off the streets. So I am wondering, given evidence of this outbreak, if there's any thought of doing that at this point?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure, I think that was, if I am not mistaken, something from 10 days ago. It was an employee, it's not somebody who is experiencing homelessness but who lived there at the mission and that area where they lived in a kind of a dorm setting, everybody was quarantined there. I hadn't heard about the death, if that is the case. My heart breaks for not only the mission that has been providing so much help over the years, but who has been at the frontline of this. I know they're trying to set up their own testing facility, but we have been waiting and we have started testing, as I mentioned, last week, handing out tests to the doctors and the clinics that serve our unhoused Angelenos.

MAYOR GARCETTI: It's been a very high priority since January for me that we have this plan in place. In terms of commandeering, I would just say, look, we still have to pay for things and so we have to make sure that we have the money from the state and federal government through

our county for these hotel and motel rooms. But I put such a priority on this that we put kind of a czar from the city side in charge of this just in terms of calling more hotels, calling more motels offering not only just to have hotels rooms now, but potentially to purchase those hotels and motels so that people after this is done don't hit the streets again.

MAYOR GARCETTI: I've been working very closely with Judge Carter. We put out over 300 sanitation stations, over 50 of those on Skid Row, they were being serviced once a week, now they are being service daily. Over 50 port-a-potties there alone, and other things for sanitation and we'll be rolling out later this week and hold till the end of the week until we can announce it kind of formally. But the sort of testing we need that will get quicker results on the street for folks. One last thing is all of the folks from LAHSA and our service agencies have moved from general educational outreach to now really trying to find cases among unsheltered Angelenos. They've been doing that now for a number of days, actually, since last week. And the folks who have come in, nearly a 1,000 into our new congregate shelters at our rec centers also have access to nurses, to testing and quick resolution because people will come down with COVID-19 even in those congregate settings but they're much safer there than on the streets.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Lastly, the hotel rooms right now, we don't have them filled, so we need to expand them and fill them, and I would implore everybody who is working in that homeless services space, and I know what amazing work they are doing from LAHSA, from the county and others, to continue getting people more quickly into those rooms. So it's not about commandeering more rooms, it's not like there's a list of 2,000 people and we only have a 1,000 rooms. It's the opposite, there's right now, its 1,765 rooms that have been booked, 841 of those are in the city for asymptomatic people, so these are folks who don't have a home, don't have COVID-19 symptoms, but we need to get them inside. And the tier two housing, which is hotel and motel rooms for people who do have symptoms right now, there is 900 of those, 512 in the city and 153 of those are currently occupied. So the capacity is kept up but I share their concerns. We can't get too many rooms too quickly. My goal and what I heard the county and the state talk about was 15,000, and that's what we need to keep gunning for and I certainly keep will continue to. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you, and that comes from the line of Melanie Mason from the Los Angeles Times, please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Melanie.

MELANIE MASON: Hi, two quick questions with regards to the antibody study. The first, Mr. Mayor, what exactly is the city's role with the study? Are you anticipating contributing financial resources, more manpower? And secondly, to either you or Dr. Simon, obviously this test is for research purposes. This is a random sample but there are people who are seeking out this test for their own personal information. And I am wondering if the city or the country has looked into ramping up the availability for residents to be able to obtain the antibody test, obviously interest is quite high in finding out this confirmation.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: So, let me answer the first and a little bit of the second and toss it over to Dr. Simon. We need more clarity, though we've had some good initial conversation with FEMA about whether the serology tests will be also reimbursable. For folks who don't know, this every night that I talk about these tests, including tests for people who don't live in the city of Los Angeles, we are fronting that money and we are only getting reimbursed 75% of that. So 25% of every test, and they are not cheap, but this is about saving lives. We've just dug into our city funds and I've said, "I don't care, I know that we're going to have financial difficulties in the year ahead, but we have to save lives and bend this curve."

MAYOR GARCETTI: So we've been spending that money. We need to get answers about serology and it's my hope the federal government will help it not only expand, but through employers and folks who don't have employers who can pay, making it free with a 100% reimbursement for local counties and cities that are willing to do these tests, that we will have the resources to do that. In terms of the test, there was something that Dr. Simon was talking to me about, I've talked to the number of people that we're doing these and I said, "Tell me what the details are. Can I help get you those resources?"

MAYOR GARCETTI: I made a pitch, I think, two weeks ago on camera for anybody who wanted to pay for this, so it wouldn't be just once a month. And then I called Dr. Folt mentioned that this was happening at her great university and said, "Can we work together to find donors?" She said, "We've got this covered." So I didn't play more of a role than just kind of pushing people along, but I am really proud that this is not something that will be done, you know, every four weeks, but now half or twice as often, excuse me. And I want to thank you again for that, Dr. Folt. Dr. Simon, why don't I toss it over to you or Neeraj, do you want to take that one?

DR. PAUL SIMON: I'll just talk briefly about the scaling up and the population. I'll let Dr. Sood talk about the study, but I'd say an imperfect test works fine in a research study because in the analysis you can sort of account for that inaccuracy. But when you are dealing with an individual patient, you have to be right. And so I am very concerned that the quality of the tests out there right now are highly variable, very little oversight. At this point, we are looking to the federal government to give us some guidance on which are the very best tests, and I think once we do have confidence that these tests can deliver results to patients and others that are accurate, we see much value in trying to expand the testing.

DR. NEERAJ SOOD: I can just say that, you know, ever since word got out that I am involved in this study, my email is filled with requests from Los Angelenos saying they want to participate in this study or they just want to know, they want to peek inside their immune system and they want to know whether or not they have these antibodies. And there is a lot of anxiety around COVID and I feel that once we have validated tests, it is really important to provide access to these tests to every Los Angeleno so that, you know, every Angeleno so that they know what's going on inside their body, they know how much protection they have from a potential reinfection from COVID. So I think this is important both for using anxiety as well as eventually reopening the economy.

DR. NEERAJ DOOS: We want people who are potentially immune from this or at least have significant protection from COVID-19. And as the mayor said, you want to do the PCR test at the same time to make sure they don't have the ability to infect others. So, if we can identify a population that doesn't infect others or has a low risk of infecting others because their PCR test was negative, and with the valid antibody test, we can identify a population that also is potentially immune. These are the individuals who can actually be in the front line, take care of the elderly, take care of people in ICUs and restart our economy. So that is the long-run hope for what we achieve, hope to achieve with this study and beyond.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you, doctors. And just to that question, the point that Dr. Simon made, there are so many of those tests out there. We keep hearing about the reliability, I believe only three of them have been approved for diagnostic use in the United States, nine of them for diagnostic use around the world, 24 for surveillance and research only, not for diagnostic reasons. And there're eleven that are under development. There's a website at Johns Hopkins that is monitoring all the serology tests where I got those numbers. But we want to make sure that they are reliable, we want to make sure they're available, we want to make sure that they are affordable and we need to have them quick. That's what we are all gunning for. Next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And that comes from Dennis Freeman from News For Us Online. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hey, Dennis.

DENNIS FREEDMAN: Good afternoon, Mayor. I have two questions for you. The first question is, in regards to social distancing, what is the city's approach when it comes to the two major summer holidays that's coming up, Memorial Day and the 4th of July holiday, and the second question is, what is the city's approach? What has been the city's approach as far as testing the homeless?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you. So in terms of social distancing or physical distancing, as I sometimes refer to it, it's too early to say for Memorial Day or the 4th July. We're trying to get to May 15th which is when the county and city's safer-at-home order is extended to. And we're going to be talking closely to Public Health the entire way and those of us like Supervisor Barger, myself, the 87 other mayors of other cities in LA County, are in constant communication about, okay, is it time to take any baby steps either forward or backward? So I wish I could answer that but it is too early to say for those, both those occasions.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of the testing individuals who are experiencing homelessness, so we've had a number of tests already go through. I think the number is where we had over 230 tests that we have done. I think the number is, I'll try to get you the exact numbers, but the ones that come back have been over 95 percent negative. Only about 5 percent positive cases that we've been able to isolate and use those and track them, excuse me. The county has at Dockweiler Beach trailers that are used for isolation, though I think the preference these days is the hotel rooms that are so-called tier 2 rooms for folks that aren't just experiencing

homelessness. It may be Angelenos that don't have a place to quarantine or self-isolate. They are going into those hotel and motel rooms.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And our plan is to do more rapid street testing as we get that equipment and those tests. In the meantime, we've given out hundreds more tests to providers. Doctors who work all the time with people who are experiencing homelessness from Venice to Skid Rows, to San Fernando Valley, South Los Angeles, and remember, the walk-up centers we're opening. We have now two of them. It doesn't matter if you don't have a car, obviously. You can come to that and even the drive-thru centers, we've had some people walk up to. So we are making sure that anybody who is experiencing homelessness knows they deserve a test. It's free, you can get it, and if necessary we can even arrange for transportation to one of the drive-thru sites.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, I'll get you more numbers of the overall. The county has also confirmed a number of positives cases. I believe it's 24 positives cases of people who are experiencing homelessness now, and it shows us, as I've said each day, just statistically, this was something started and was found first with people who were housed, and has gone to the street. I know a lot of time people think that people experiencing homelessness are the ones that bring public health issues to us, but it's been vice versa, we've brought it to the street, those of us that are housed, and I think we owe everybody who is on the street the same protections we're affording those of us who are indoors and have a place to go home. Thank you. Go the next question, please.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And that comes from David Zahnizer from the Los Angeles Times. Go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi Dave.

DAVID ZAHNIZER: Hi.

MAYOR GARCETTI: How are you?

DAVID ZAHNIZER: The last month you told us that crime was down 23 percent in large part because there's a lot of people staying inside, behaving themselves, and I'm wondering, given those kinds of numbers, does it make sense right now to scale back spending at the the LAPD, particularly given the city's financial problems, and if you are not planning any cuts at the LAPD, where are you going to find reductions given the police make up such a big piece of the budget?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, there will naturally be less overtime used, there will be savings when we don't have the resources that we need because people are staying at home and safer at home, but that's across the board. All departments, LAPD, and every other one of the 37 departments of the City of Los Angeles, I have been asked to find savings wherever they can to know that there's no new funding this year, to stop any new programs, to implement a hiring freeze right away. So those things apply to the police department, as well as to all of our other departments.

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And we'll have to figure that out as we go. I have to release a budget this coming week. I mean, talk about the most difficult timing.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In 2008, when we faced the great recession, we had to sit down, we had to cut programs, we had to reduce hours. I talked to those mayors internationally. I talked to the mayor of Vancouver where they already laid people off. Some cities are so dependent on sales tax or on hotel taxes, even more that we are, for instance, that they are going to see deeper cuts, fundamental services cut in cities across the country and across the world. We're going to try to protect as much of those core services as we can. The city will never stop functioning. We're going to pick up your trash, your lights, your water will be there. We're going to make sure that your 911 calls are answered, etcetera. But we will have to look at that and we'll have to sit down with our labor partners. We'll have to look at our services and what we think is absolutely critical in the year ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: But make no mistake. There will be big cuts. Thankfully, one last thing, we have doubled the reserve fund that we had before 2008. You don't get any credit for raising the reserve fund each year. I know, we've talked about it, and something I've been very proud of, our budget Chair Paul Krekorian in the City Council has been a zealot about this, and thanks to him and the other councilmembers in the work that we've done, we now have dollars that at least can soften that blow. It won't mean no cuts. It won't mean that we don't have service cutbacks and other things that we'll have to look at with shared sacrifice, but it does mean that we are in a much better place than we would have been had we stayed at a level that we were just few years ago. Thank you. Next question.

OPERATOR: Thank you. That comes from Steve Gregory of KFI News.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi Steve. You got a question for President Folt?

STEVE GREGORY: No, I'm sorry. It's going to be for you, Eric.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Doing such a good job, okay, no problem.

STEVE GREGORY: It's sort of touching on my colleague from the Times' question as well, budget cutbacks and savings that you're going to have to do along the way, but at what point, though, you know, essential employees, essential services, you've got the parks closed, you got the golf course closed, things of that nature. At what point will you have to start furloughing employees and do you expect any of the higher paid employees and staffers just take voluntary pay cuts?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, you know, the pay cuts have to be something that can't be just voluntary done. That has to be negotiated. Certainly if you look at the great recession 2008, furloughs were a critical part of balancing that budget. Right now everything is on the table in us putting together this budget in the next few days and finalizing that. So I don't have anything to announce on that yet, but I think that these are the things every city government around the country is facing right now. And I'll tell you one thing that will help us not have those cuts, and

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not have as deep furloughs or any other measures we might have to take, is if Congress, as it's been proposed by both Speaker Pelosi and Chuck Schumer, and it should not be a partisan issue, even though they are the ones who have pushed this, don't think just about federal government and businesses, but think about state and local government because we've been the ones on the front line. It's our firefighters who are putting their health on the line at our testing centers. It's our folks who are going out there from the Public Health agencies making sure that they track and trace this, and if we let our city governments and our county governments and our state governments go down some sort of financial hardship, we will see not only job loss, we'll see further blow to the economy.

MAYOR GARCETTI: These folks that are breadwinners for their families, and we want to try to protect all jobs, whether they're private, public, whether it's undocumented workers, folks that are citizens, people who are independent contractors or whether they work for a big company. If we don't put those all together and not leave any of those out, we'll certainly see a much tougher climb out of this in the days ahead. So I would urge every member of Congress. No matter what party you are, no matter which House, and our president, to make sure in this next round, and it's been proposed in what was put forward, that there been not just assistance to reimburse us for what we are doing with COVID-19, but direct fiscal assistance for our cities and counties. Thanks. Next question.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And our final question in English comes from the line of Jaclyn Cosgrove from The Los Angeles Times.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Jaclyn. How are you doing?

JACLYN COSGROVE: Hi, Mayor. Thank you so much for your time.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Of course.

JACLYN COSGROVE: I wanted to ask you about something you said earlier in the news conference. You said we have not traced a cluster back to the marathon. And I was curious about how we know that information? I didn't know if that was because of contact tracing is being done--

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes.

JACLYN COSGROVE: -- with people who test positive in Los Angeles. There are (unintelligible) exactly know because this is a topic that we've gotten quite a few reader questions about, and so just wanted to understand how we knew that there weren't any clusters associated with the marathon. Thank you so much.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Sure. That was something that I raised with our county officials early on and I was told that by one of the supervisors. I don't know if a county Public Health and Dr. Sood wants to say that, but we just, we always say in science, you don't know that something hasn't happened but we have no evidence of that happening. We've had nothing in terms of the

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tracing that I was told about that went back to that, but I do not know if you want to add anything more to add, Dr. Simon?

DR. PAUL SIMON: You can't prove a negative. We can only try to acknowledge a finding and we've not been aware of any clusters or outbreaks associated with the marathon.

MAYOR GARCETTI: And remember, that was before, I think, I'd have to look at the dates before any, there's any community spread. I think our first case of community spread came shortly after that. It was the same weekend as we had NBA games and other things so the marathon wasn't unique. There was still a lot of things that were happening but, as Dr. Simon said, we can never prove, disprove that negative. I'm sure people will still theorize about that but that wasn't the only thing that went on in the city, but it came just before we became the first big city in America to shut things down after Seattle on March 15th. Today, we shut down most of the city and four days later put the full safer-at-home order in place. Thanks for that, and I think we might have one Spanish questions as well. Next question.

OPERATOR: We do have a question for the Spanish at this time. And that comes from the line of Victor Cordero from Estrella TV. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi, Victor. Buenas tardes. Victor, are you there? Victor? All right.

OPERATOR: I don't know. I think we lost him. We can move to the line of Dinorah Pérez from Telemundo. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi Dinorah.

DINORAH PEREZ: Hi, Mayor. We got a call from a viewer telling us that she had seen many folks sunbathing in public in one of the local parks in Los Feliz. She said that there was many people gathering around with kids playing, and what would you tell those folks? Should they be wearing masks if they are biking, going for a run or just sitting in a grass area? And then also if you can comment in Spanish in regards to the public gatherings and the possibility of these being suspended until 2021. So I will ask it in Spanish as well. Una televidente nos llamó y nos dijo que había gente tomando sol en traje de baño en público, sentados en áreas verdes de parques, muchos sin máscaras. ¿Qué le diría usted sobre eso? ¿Y tienen que andar con máscaras si andan corriendo, andan en bicicleta, o simplemente sentados en los parques? Y también si puede comentarnos sobre los eventos públicos, si se van a ver suspendidos de aquí al próximo año.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Thank you. Let me start by just thanking again Dr. Folt, who has been here this whole time. I'm going to let her also, as I going into Spanish remarks in a second, get back to the important work that she is doing at USC and thank again both of our doctors for their exceptional work that they are doing to understand this, to track this and to save lives. I want to thank you both. So I'll answer both those questions in English, I'll go to Spanish, and then I'll give my Spanish remarks as well.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: So first of all, in English, our parks do remain open with the requirement, all of our, of course, facilities at them are closed, whether it's playgrounds, whether is our rec centers, no sports are allowed, you know, team sports or group sports, we don't even have our golf courses or our tennis courts open. But you're permitted to be in the park. I don't know what the spacing was, but if people felt that people were closer, not for a family unit or something than six feet, please do let us know because we have park staff monitoring that all the time, three times a day, actually, at all our parks, measuring the number of people reporting that back so that we can help our business ambassadors, our park rangers and our rec and parks folks, let people know about what safe distancing is.

MAYOR GARCETTI: In terms of wearing masks, the facial covering, the non-medical masks, no, it has not been the recommendation from Dr. Ferrer, from us that when you're biking by yourself, running by yourself or walking in your neighborhood by yourself or with the person you're cohabiting with, that you need to have that on. This is for when you go to interactions closer than six feet with people that you don't usually interact with. Whether that's an employee or other customers at a grocery store, whether that's somebody who's working on a construction site, whether you're a driver or rider in a taxi or rideshare at a hotel and the other places that the county and city orders specify.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So I know there's a lot of people who say, "Hey, I see all these people. They are not wearing their masks while they're jogging." It's important to remember, these masks can also carry germs. So don't use them day after day. Wash them each day. Don't put them down in strange spaces or places and wear them just where we are requiring them because that's where they're going to have the effect of not spreading this disease. And in terms of the public gatherings, I've already said in English, so I'll say that in Spanish. So I'll transition now to Spanish. Thank you again everybody who is tuned in in English, thank you, as always, to our interpreters as well, and let me answer both those questions.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Gracias Dinorah, por estas preguntas. Nuestros parques están abiertos. Este caso de este parque en Los Feliz, no sé los detalles, pero están abiertos pero nuestro equipo, los trabajadores del gobierno de Los Ángeles, nuestros asistentes en nuestras facilidades de recreación y parques cada día reportan los números de personas, y es importante también mantener la sana distancia en nuestros parques. Las facilidades no están abiertas, los gimnasios, todos los partidos y otras cosas que usualmente queremos y tenemos no están en estos parques ahora.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Y no es necesario tener una mascarilla adonde, cuando usted está en una bicicleta o corriendo, solamente cuando nosotros estamos en los espacios como supermercados, farmacias y otros lugares donde hay personas que no son parte de su familia. Es necesario para los trabajadores y la gente en este espacio tener sus mascarillas. La segunda pregunta fue de los eventos de deportes, de música. No sé el futuro, no sé el futuro, pero yo sé que nuestras acciones ahora pueden asistir y ayudar un día donde nosotros podemos regresar a una vida normal.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Espero que nosotros podamos estar en el Staples Center o en el estadio de Dodgers en el futuro o tal vez los jugadores estarán en estos espacios sin los espectadores,

pero nuestras acciones hoy, el futuro es el resultado de nuestras acciones hoy, y cuando nosotros pueden quedarse en casa, nosotros tenemos la oportunidad de regresar a estos espacios y no hay un experto que sabe la fecha dónde y cuándo nosotros podemos regresar a estos espacios, pero es importante regresar y recordar que las acciones de cada persona pueden salvar una vida y por la gente que trabaja en estos espacios, los trabajadores en nuestros estadios, en nuestros espacios para conciertos y música, yo quiero ver un día donde ustedes pueden regresar a sus trabajos, y es mi esperanza que juntos nosotros podamos obtener esta fecha este año con sus acciones. Pero si nosotros no continuaremos a parar el contagio de coronavirus el resultado será más semanas, más meses y tal vez un año más de este. Pero yo tengo la confianza de la comunidad. I think we have one more Spanish question. Una pregunta más en español. And then I'll give some words in Spanish.

OPERATOR: Thank you. And our final question in Spanish comes from Victor Cordero from Estrella TV. Please go ahead.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hola Victor. We got you, Victor?

VICTOR CORDERO: Mayor, can you hear me now? Can you hear me now?

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yeah, we can hear you. Go ahead. Por favor.

VICTOR CORDERO: Yeah. Thank you. I'm sorry. It was disconnected earlier. I want to ask you question in English and then I'll try do it in Spanish really quick. I know you said at the beginning of the month that if people weren't able to pay the rent because of the situation, you were going to be little flexible with them. Unfortunately some people are taking advantage according to one viewer. She called me and she said that she has a house with three units. Her dad is disabled, he can't talk. He is in bed most of the time, and one of the tenants came to her front house and laughed at her and said that she was going to leave anyway, so he is now planning to live for free for as long as the situation prevails. It might be a situation where she said/he said, but that's my job, I will investigate. My question to you, Mayor, is, what type of guarantees has these motor landlords, if you will, in this situation where somebody is just not going to pay rent and going to get away with it?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, hay derechos por los dueños y los inquilinos en Los Ángeles, y tenemos una prohibición de desalojos residenciales y comerciales en Los Ángeles durante esta crisis. Si usted puede pagar la renta, paga su renta. Es importante por su crédito, por su vida y por los departamentos y espacios porque los dueños necesitan pagar sus mortgages también.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Segundo, es importante también recordar que los derechos que un dueño tiene y un inquilino tiene están en nuestro Departamento de la Vivienda. El sitio de Internet es hcidla.LACity.org, y toda la información y tus derechos como dueño y es la responsabilidad de los inquilinos pagar, pero también por los inquilinos que tienen malos dueños es importante tener el apoyo de la ciudad para defender sus derechos. Es igual en los dos y espero que a nivel nacional tendremos dinero por los bancos con la condición, ayuda por los dueños de esos edificios con la condición de ayuda por los inquilinos porque los tres necesitan ayuda. Y con un

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programa, especialmente por los inquilinos y dueños no necesitamos tener esta lucha entre los dos, y es la responsabilidad de los dos para pagar sus rentas o mortgages y también es la responsabilidad del gobierno federal ayudar a la gente que no tiene dinero ahora. Pero toda información está en este sitio de Internet, hcidla.LACity.org. Gracias.

MAYOR GARCETTI: We have one more English question snuck in, Fox 11. Go ahead. Is there on more question for--

OPERATOR: Thank you, that comes from the line of Liz Habib, Fox 11.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Hi Liz. How're you doing? How are you holding up?

LIZ HABIB: You know, I've been great. Thanks for asking. I'm in my condo in Centur City and we've been doing ten o'clock every night. Everyone here has been cheering for all the rescue workers and all the hospital staff. It's been really nice. I heard you mention it yesterday.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yes. Thank you--

LIZ HABIB: Or two days ago, maybe. Listen, I was looking for the doctors today, so that's interesting and it's convenient they're here, but I heard you said something about the marathon, and I want to ask you a couple of questions about it because it comes up a lot, the marathon. You said no cases, you're not the only one, Dr. Ferrer that too, no case is connected with the marathon. So it was, I don't know, three days or four days before, the 4th of March, that an emergency was declared, a COVID emergency was declared in California and in Los Angeles County, and the marathon was run four days later. You say there are no cases, so I'm curious, and you said one more thing, this is what caught me, you said that people were spread out in the marathon, and Mayor, I think people would disagree with you. In the beginning of that--

MAYOR GARCETTI: That's sure.

LIZ HABIB: --marathon, they would say that they were so close to each other, they were like in pens before to they got to run up. They were crowded in pens. That's how they would describe it. So they were very close to each other. So I wondering if four days after the emergency was declared, why didn't the marathon cause a problem? Why didn't a big gathering like that cause a problem?

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, I'm not a doctor. I can't answer all that and I don't think that it's anybody's claim that there's no case of anybody who ran the marathon, but there was no cluster because they do trace back, where've you been, what've you done, and that's the sort of information that our incredible Public Health Department then can kind of mathematically chart and say, "Oh, here's five people who had never met, they don't live in the same area. What do they have in common? Oh, they were together at the marathon," and we have no evidence of that.

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MAYOR GARCETTI: We do have evidence of that with other folks. We can't share that information because it's private health information, but places that people were, parties that they were at, and I want to remind the people, the marathon was just one of many public events that still were going on. There was no place in America where they weren't yet with the exception, I believe, of Seattle. There were folks that were cancelling and the state of emergency wasn't yet that we believed that was, there were cases here. The state of emergency was the line up for incoming weeks, making sure we could get federal assistance for that. You declared that early to make sure.

MAYOR GARCETTI: So, I can only go with we've told. As I said, you can't and you'll never be able to disprove a negative but it seems pretty clear that is not where coronavirus spread. And I know some people fixate on the marathon more than the basketball games that were happening that weekend and other concerts and things like that, but we took a date, I'm proud that it was the earliest date outside the Seattle, of any big city, to stop banning or start banning, excuse me, all, everything from our bowling alleys, to our movie theaters, and if you remember back then, that was really tough to do. People were saying, "Are you crazy? What are doing? Are you out of control? What is this mayor doing?" And I'm really glad looking back because you look at the number of cases and now 9 days of single-digit increases. Tragic deaths, these last couple days I'll never minimize those, but I think LA can be very proud. We inspired the state to do the same thing and become the first state, so I think we've been making those rights decisions and I have to be honest, I've taken those decisions, whether it was that weekend or since always talking to our Public Health officials. I think that political leaders should more. Thanks, Liz. Okay. I'm going to say a few in Spanish now as well.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Muy buenas tardes, Los Ángeles, y gracias por venir esta noche a la alcaldía de la Ciudad de Los Ángeles, y hoy estoy aquí con tres personas que representan el espíritu innovador de Los Ángeles. Dra. Carol Folt, la presidenta de USC, Paul Simon del Departamento de Salud Pública del Condado y profesor de epidemiología en UCLA y Neeraj Sood, vice decano de investigación en USC. Todos son parte de sus esfuerzos innovadores para frenar el brote.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Primero, les comparto los últimos datos para Los Ángeles. Hoy hubieron 472 nuevos casos en el condado de Los Ángeles, llegando a un total de 10,496. En la ciudad tuvimos 245 nuevos casos, llegando a un total de 4,707, y trágicamente hoy fallecieron 42 personas más en el condado. Este es el número más grande durante esta crisis, llegando a un total de 402. Y para las familias hoy, especialmente de estas nuevas 42 familias, nuestros corazones, nuestras oraciones están contigo. Este es un tiempo muy difícil, y no tiene la oportunidad de estar con su mamá o su papá, con sus hijos, sus abuelos, y es parte de esta tragedia que no podemos estar con nuestras familias durante estos momentos trágicos.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Pero en nuestros hospitales tenemos 1,553 camas disponibles hoy. Entre ellas 244 están en las unidades de cuidados intensivos, y tenemos 992 respiradores disponibles. Y seguimos nuestro trabajo para ampliar el acceso a las pruebas de detección. Tenemos ahora 30 sitios para pruebas de detección en la ciudad y el condado. Un nuevo récord. Y hasta ahora hemos hecho pruebas a más de 55,000 personas en el Condado de Los Ángeles. Si tienes

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síntomas puedes hacer una cita inmediatamente para una prueba en la página coronavirus.lacity.org/testing.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Yo sé que todos están preguntando, ¿qué pasa después? ¿Cuándo podemos regresar a la vida normal o ir a ver un juego de basquetbol o fútbol? Ayer el gobernador Newsom anunció sus metas y requisitos para abrir nuestra economía de nuevo, y esta noche quisiera también compartir 6 factores que considero importantes para tener en cuenta aquí en Los Ángeles y por todo el país para poder regresar a una sociedad sana y próspera.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Primera, pruebas. El acceso a pruebas tiene que ser amplio para todos con o sin síntomas. Debemos tener pautas nacionales rigurosas para la calidad de las pruebas y el apoyo federal para obtenerlas. Segundo, vigilancia para identificar y evitar nuevos brotes. Esto se trata de integrar los resultados de las pruebas con una red de vigilancia para poder tomar acción inmediata en las zonas de propagación. Tercero, necesitamos una respuesta inmediata para nuevos casos. Esto significa poder aislar casos y poner a personas sin inmunidad en cuarentena y tenderemos que intentar quizás hasta 300,000 personas para implementar este trabajo en los Estados Unidos.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Cuarto, ampliar nuestra capacidad en hospitales a nivel local, tanto como a nivel nacional. Quinto, asegurar investigación continua para que nuestras universidades, laboratorios, agencias gubernamentales puedan colaborar de manera más fácil y compartir información rápidamente. Y de último, lo central es la capacidad de hacer pruebas de sangre para poder medir los anticuerpos y entender qué significan esos niveles para la inmunidad. Para lograr esto necesitaremos colaboración extensa entre todos los niveles del gobierno y el sector privado. Además, esta noche estoy orgulloso de anunciar un nuevo programa para ayudar a una de nuestras comunidades más vulnerables, nuestros abuelos y abuelas, personas de tercera edad.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Estamos colaborando con el Mayor's Fund de Los Ángeles y Everytable para brindarles comida sana para las personas mayores de bajos recursos quienes lo necesitan. Si les interesa participar en este programa, por favor llámanos al 213-263-5226, empezando mañana entre las 9:00 y las 5:00 para empezar el servicio la semana que viene. Hoy es el 15 de abril, mejor conocido como el Día de Impuestos, pero este año se ha extendido la fecha para el 15 de julio. Hemos oído que algunas se preocupan porque piensan que esta nueva fecha les retrasa el recibir su pago Federal Cares. No se preocupe. Lo recibirán aunque no hayan declarado sus impuestos. El IRS calcula cuánto recibirá basado en su declaración del 2018.

MAYOR GARCETTI: Además si no declara sus impuestos porque no gana suficiente, puedes declarar este año para recibir hasta 1,200 dólares por cada adulto en su hogar y 500 dólares para cada hijo. Esto es muy importante y este es su dinero. Ustedes se merecen este dinero. Visita LAmayor.org/freetaxprep para saber más sobre como nuestros socios pueden ayudarte a recibir este dinero. Esto incluye más de 82, 000 beneficiarios de DACA que viven en el área de Los Ángeles.

MAYOR GARCETTI: En esta pandemia todos deben sentirse seguros de buscar ayuda médica y no podemos tener trabajadores esenciales con miedo al ir al trabajo. Por eso también envié una

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carta al Departamento de Seguridad Nacional con 52 alcaldes pidiéndoles que mantengan protecciones para jóvenes DACA y que renueven su autorización para trabajar en los Estados Unidos. Como un nieto de un inmigrante es parte de mi alma y ellos merecen su estatus legal aquí en los Estados Unidos. También hoy anuncié el grupo global de alcaldes para recuperación COVID-19. Un grupo de alcaldes quienes se ocuparán de pensar en cómo acelerar el recuperamiento de una economía sostenible después de esta pandemia. Amigos quédense en buena salud y quédense protegidos y quédense en casa. Mucha fuerza y mucho amor. Gracias.