



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on March 25, 2020

Trump: “Our Country Wants To Go Back to Work... Our People Want To Go Back to Work.”

During a virtual town hall with Fox News Channel’s Bill Hemmer on March 24, President Trump said he would “love to have the country opened up and raring to go by Easter.” Easter is on is April 12 this year.

“Our country wants to go back to work. Again, the cure, this cure is worse than the problem. Again, many people, in my opinion more people, are going to die if we allow this to continue. We have to go back to work. Our people want to go back to work,” the president said.



Trump said a decision would be made on a new set of recommendations soon, to update his “15 Days to Slow the Spread guidelines” released on March 6. He said his coronavirus task force would consider ways to “allow local economies to *cautiously* resume their activity *at the appropriate time*” after the end of the 15-day period. (Emphasis added.)

Critics of the president’s statement were quick to ignore the rather prudent language found in the above statement, “cautiously resume their activity at the appropriate time,” and took his statement out of context to predict dire consequences if his recommendations were followed.

Hillary Clinton tweeted, “It’s incredible that this has to be said: Letting thousands of people needlessly suffer and die is wrong. It’s also not a recipe for rescuing the economy.”

The White House was careful to follow constitutional protocol in issuing these recommendations, the first of which was: “Listen to and follow the directions of your state and local authorities.”

The beauty of our federal system is that it reserves the power to deal with health crises (and most other crises) to the states, rather giving it to the federal government. Therefore, the governor of each state and mayor of each large city is free to take actions appropriate for the unique situation in each jurisdiction, rather than being restricted by a “one-size-fits-all” approach mandated by Washington.

A March 24 Reuters described the constitutional aspects of the fight to containing the COVID-19 virus:

Under the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, state governments have power to police citizens and regulate public welfare. In the country’s early years, it was up to state and local authorities to lead the response to the yellow fever epidemic, not the federal government.

The article cited Robert Chesney, a professor of national security law at the University of Texas, who said that the Trump administration can issue nationwide guidance, but it would be unconstitutional for the president to override stay-at-home orders from governors,

Trump never suggested that he would overrule local authorities, but said his coronavirus task force would consider ways to “allow local economies to cautiously resume their activity at the appropriate time.”



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The “appropriate time” may well be different in different areas. The people of Wyoming and Kansas may be ready to resume a semblance of normal activity by Easter, while those in California and New York may not. Trump’s words merely set an optimistic goal for places where it is deemed appropriate.

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Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.



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