



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on May 13, 2020

## Rand Paul Responds to Fauci: “We’re Destroying Our Country.”

Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) told reporters following a Senate hearing on Tuesday with White House coronavirus task force advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci, “People are hurting and we’re destroying our country. We’ve got to open up business, we got to let people vote, and we’re not going to live in a perfect world without infectious disease, we’re still going to have it, but we got to open the economy and that’s the number one message I have.”



Paul’s remarks amplified the message that he delivered directly to Fauci earlier during the hearing, questioning Fauci’s contention that we might not be able to reopen the nation’s schools in the fall. Paul noted that relatively few children are dying from Covid-19. “Shouldn’t we at least be discussing what the mortality of children is?” Paul asked Fauci.

Before he was elected to the Senate in 2010, Paul was an ophthalmologist, and is the son of former Texas Congressman Ron Paul, a medical doctor. Senator Paul tested positive for the virus in late March, but developed no symptoms.

Paul explained to Fauci that the number of patients under 18 years of age “approaches zero” in New York, where state officials say that 12 children have died. Paul added that it was “really ridiculous” to suggest that schools continue to be closed.

Fauci, however, retorted, “I think we better be careful that we’re not cavalier, in thinking that children are completely immune to the deleterious effects.”

The exchange between Paul and Fauci illustrates the divide in public opinion on how best to react to the coronavirus. Fauci’s position is much akin to arguing that public policy and economic decisions should be driven by not doing anything that might cause even one death. Under that reasoning, speed limits for motor vehicles should be set at about five miles per hour to make sure nobody dies in automobile accidents. Or perhaps we should cease to use electricity, because, after all, people have been killed by electricity.

The original justification for shutting down the economy was that the number of individuals sickened by Covid-19 could overwhelm the healthcare system, and the infection curve therefore needed to be bent downward. As the weeks have passed, and it has become apparent that hospitals and clinics are not being overwhelmed — in fact, hospitals are furloughing and laying off employees, for lack of patients — the narrative has shifted to the argument that reopening of the economy “too soon” could lead to a spike in deaths.

But Senator Paul told Fauci that he did not believe there would be a surge in cases if schools reopened, contradicting many public-health “experts,” including Fauci. “The history of this, when we look back, will be of wrong prediction after wrong prediction after wrong prediction.” Early predictions were that the United States would experience over two million deaths from the virus. With deaths far less than



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100,000 in the country, that is clearly not the case.

“As much as I respect you Dr. Fauci, I don’t think you’re the end-all, I don’t think you’re the one person that gets to make the decision,” Paul told Fauci. “We can listen to your advice. But there are people on the other side saying there won’t be a surge and we can safely open the economy.”

Fauci protested, “I never made myself out to be the end-all. I’m a scientist, a physician, and a public health official. I give advice according to the best scientific evidence.”

Insofar as the economic consequences of his advice, it was Fauci who seemed to be the one being “cavalier.” He said, “I don’t give advice about economic things, I don’t give advice about anything other than public health.”

Fauci then challenged Paul’s assertions about predictions. “You used the word we should be ‘humble’ about what we don’t know. I think that falls under the fact that we don’t know everything about this virus, and we really had better be very careful, particularly when it comes to children.”

“You’re right in the numbers, that children in general do much, much better than adults and the elderly and particularly those with underlying conditions,” Fauci admitted, “but I am very careful, and hopefully humble, in knowing that I don’t know everything about this disease. And that’s why I’m reserved in making broad predictions.”

Paul later assured Fox News’ Martha MacCallum on *The Story* that he thinks Fauci is offering his honest opinion: “I don’t question Dr. Fauci’s motives. I think he’s a good person, I think he wants what’s best for the country, but he’s an extremely cautious person.”

Paul added, “I don’t think any of these experts are omniscient. I think they have a basis of knowledge, but when you prognosticate about the future or advocate for things dramatic and drastic, like closing all the schools, you should look at all the information. We have to take with a grain of salt these experts and their prognostication. The future is very uncertain but turning down and closing the entire economy has been devastating and that is a fact.”

Regardless of Fauci’s motivation, it is also a fact that the virus and the economic impact of the stay-at-home orders have been seized upon by Democrats and their allies in the media as a way to hurt President Trump’s reelection chances, and the reelection chances of congressional Republicans. Before the outbreak of the pandemic, the economy was surging, with the lowest unemployment rates in half a century. Now, with government-imposed shutdowns — shutdowns that Fauci and many Democrats want to continue indefinitely — the number of jobless is the highest it has been since the Great Depression.

Some businesses have closed permanently.

As Senator Paul told MacCallum, there is more to the “decision-making process” than just public-health concerns, as important as those are. “I think we make that [public health concerns] part of our decision-making process. But we need to have competition among the experts.”

If the economy collapses, public health would be adversely affected. Already, there has been a surge in the number of suicides in the country, for example. Poverty is known to cause adverse health effects. And, besides the effect on the election in November, if the economy deteriorates any further, or does not improve soon, we could see social unrest that America has never experienced before — especially with much of the media such as CNN, MSNBC, and the power-hungry Democratic Party throwing gasoline on the fire on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, not all Republicans understand — or care about — the consequences of the shutdowns



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on the country's economic well-being. For example, Representative Liz Cheney (R-Wyo.), the daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, took issue with Paul's measured challenge to Fauci. "Dr. Fauci is one of the finest public servants we have ever had. He is not a partisan. His only interest is in saving lives. We need his expertise and his judgment to defeat this virus. All Americans should be thanking him. Every day."

Of course, Representative Cheney comes from a very wealthy family, and her income continues unabated. In contrast, those millions of Americans who have received pink slips during this time might prefer to thank Senator Rand Paul's courage in challenging policies that are, in the senator's words, "destroying the country."



*Photo: AP Images*

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