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Governor Ron DeSantis held a press conference in the Governor's Conference Room this afternoon, April 15th.

Governor Ron DeSantis:

- Testing
 - Ramp up in testing in the last three weeks
 - Positive test results are starting to show a down/plateau effect
 - Seeing a reduction
- Hospitalizations
 - Majority have been 65 or higher
 - A number over 85
 - Main reason to slow the spread was to allow the hospitals to handle the spike
 - Our main focus was to ensure that the hospitals had the capacity
 - 14.9 hospitalizations per 100,000 population
 - 3.8 ICU hospitalizations per 100,000 population (similar to California)
 - Flattening the curve is important recognizing that we'll have the same number of hospitalizations but it just spreads out
- Next steps
 - Now that we are seeing the trends, we have to think about what the next phase looks like
 - We still don't know everything, but it is prudent to think about and plan how we can get society functioning
 - Will create a taskforce, hope to have names out by the end of the week
 - Tapping into elected office, business and education to determine the most prudent ways to go forward
 - Will look at small business, tourism, agriculture, conventions, education
 - Specifically look at testing that can be done quickly and what capacity we can do
 - Want to get the best ideas we can for that
 - Too much focus on what will the President or Governor will do, but there will be a strong focus on what people will feel about things
 - Important to recognize what
- \$173 million CARES Act money
 - Commissioner Corcoran will turn a plan around in days
 - Can be used for PreK-Higher Education
- Displaced workers
 - Through no fault of their own, they have been displaced
 - Disappointed in the initial roll-out in the plan
 - Additional 100 servers
 - 1000 people taking calls, will be 2000 soon

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- Did a call for 2000 state employees, 1000 of the 2000 already placed
- FedEx now mailing free, 10's of thousands have been received through this channel
- Through the PEGA (alternative website) we have received 500,000 claims
- An all hands-on deck approach is what is needed, what people want to see is the money being turned around
- Normally it takes three weeks, but that is too long particularly under these circumstances
- Not a time to get bogged down in red tape
- DMS Secretary Satter is taking over the response at DEO, he has stepped up in many ways
- Director Lawson will oversee all non-Covid functions at DEO
- It is unacceptable for me to not even be able to get numbers on claims paid
- Spoke to Congressman Brian Mast and other congressional offices about ways to get their assistance
- **Testing**
 - Over 211,000 tests
 - One in every 85 Floridians in Southeast Florida
 - Getting Abbott testing machines to the hospitals early was crucial
 - Still looking at Phase 2 with a drastic need for testing
- **Travel**
 - Screened 20,085 travelers by plane or car coming in from the hot spots in New York and New Orleans
 - One of the things I want the taskforce to look at is making sure that travel into the state does not continue to bring the virus in, that's why I want the airlines involved in the look ahead
- **For Latest Texting Updates**
 - **For Covid-19 text FLCOVID19 to 888777**

Press Questions

- **Sec. Satter's Role**
 - For example if there are business opportunities with recruiting entities, that will be Director Lawson's role. Secretary Satter's role will be to get the approval moving quicker and to be able to get information on numbers. The response has not been sufficient in that regard.
- **Director Lawson's Future**
 - Secretary Satter was involved in the technical roles.
- **Surgeon General's Comment About Distancing Until Vaccine**
 - Have not heard his exact comment, but we need to think about all things that are factors moving forward

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- Vince McMannon's Role in Supporting President
 - They didn't support me, there's no issue. I talked to Lisa Kennedy about NASCAR and others, but to me we need new sports content.
- Testing
 - Concern from the legislative black caucus about testing in underserved community. We did testing in public housing with Shands in Jacksonville, we're looking at how we can do this in South Florida. Because some people do not have cars, it is important to reach them where they are at.
- Unemployment amount
 - Can't waive the law about limit on unemployment compensation, but I am thinking about ways we can do this and hope it is not a long-term issue.
- Schools
 - We need to be safe, we are listening to all stakeholders including local superintendents to get a pulse on what is happening, but I have not made a decision on extending the virtual learning.
- Pensacola Long-Term Care Team
 - Strike teams are more proactive, our BESS Team from DOH will respond to the outbreak. We are not letting our foot off the gas with assisted living in phase 2. It will be important to think about employees who may travel and monitoring prevention efforts as much as possible.