

The Politics of COVID-19 in the U.S.



Jack Syage · 4 min read · Nov 24, 2020



Covid-19 continues its seasonable acceleration reaching exponential growth much like its first wave in March. The U.S. is showing a bimodal pandemic where states with least restrictions have uncontrollable outbreaks and those with most restrictions are far milder. Sadly, this bimodality correlates with gubernatorial politics.

The death toll in the U.S. now stands at greater than 250,000. Arguably the most widely accepted Covid-19 forecasting model is that from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington (<https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america?view=daily-deaths&tab=trend>). IHME forecasts that by March 1 the total U.S. death count will be 471,000 based on current government mandates for social interventions. If only mask mandates were universally implemented that number goes down to 406,000. *That is 65,000 future deaths could be avoided by governments and people rising above politics and selfishness and just mandating masks!*

Below is a death equivalent Table that if it does not shock people to reason then probably nothing will. This shows that the current daily Covid-19 death rate is equivalent to 8 plane crashes a day. Can you imagine if there really were 8 plane crashes a day? No one would ever fly on a plane! So why are we so cavalier and careless about Covid-19? Humans can be very irrational. Just to punctuate the atrocity of this pandemic, the daily death rate is equivalent to a Pearl Harbor every day and a half and a 9-11 about every two days.

Death Equivalents

	Per Day	Day Equivalent
<i>Covid-19</i>	1614	
<i>Plane crash</i>	200	8 per day
<i>Pearl Harbor</i>	2,403	1.5
<i>9-11</i>	2,977	1.8

Statistics as of 11/20/20

The Table below shows statistics for the top 12 hotbed states by number of new cases. Also shown for comparison is CA. And in case you are fuzzy on where in the country they are, just look at the map below and figure out which is the only state not on this table! In fact, a new infection happens faster than you can say Sturgis Dakota Motorcycle Rally! That's right that hedonistic, selfish event is responsible for 260,000 Covid-19 infections (as of 9/9/20) and counting (<https://khn.org/morning-breakout/sturgis-biker-rally-linked-to-260000-covid-cases/>). These 12 states account for 39,000 Covid-19 deaths. If we reasonably attribute half of these to the Sturgis rally then it begs the question: is a Covid-19 death a fair trade for every 20 bikers enjoying a week of drunken debauchery? Here's another one for you. News articles in the NY Times and LA Times reported on a Stanford study that stated that 18 Trump campaign "events are connected to 30,000 infections and 700 COVID-19 deaths ..."

Top 12 Hotbed States by Daily Per Capita Case Count

State	Daily Cases		Total Deaths		Weekly Deaths	
	per M	per M	per M	per M	per M	per M
North Dakota	1625	1102	142			
South Dakota	1297	878	176			
Wyoming	1365	304	55			
Nebraska	1196	480	72			
Wisconsin	1193	542	70			
Minnesota	1189	578	58			
Iowa	1161	694	65			
Montana	1153	565	80			
Utah	1018	246	24			
Kansas	959	484	53			
Illinois	940	944	69			
Indiana	942	779	53			
California	299	473	12			



Statistics as of 11/20/20.

In case you didn't notice the Dakota's are experiencing over 140 weekly deaths per million population. This is the highest death rate in the world. By comparison the worldwide average is 9 and CA is at 11 (more than 10x less deadly per capita). Yet South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem reiterated in a tweet last week, "We already know that lockdowns DON'T stop the spread of the virus." So, no mask mandates, no nothing, just 150 more caskets every week in a population less than a million.

If this all sounds too outrageous to ignore, then I can no longer maintain my moratorium on political commentary because this carnage is due to the Administrations pressure on states of certain political persuasions to turn a blind eye. The NY Times identified groups of states corresponding to control measures that were tightest, intermediate, and fewest (https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/18/us/covid-state-restrictions.html?campaign_id=154&emc=edit_cb_20201120&instance_id=24284&nl=coronavirus-briefing®i_id=119519801&segment_id=44995&te=1&user_id=946571b79386ac1020594361ac6960b3). The Table below stratifies these groups in terms of the governor's political affiliation. Only 7.6% of Republican governments have implemented tightest controls (vs. 33% Dems) and only 8.3% of Democratic governments have implemented fewest controls (vs. 62% for Reps!).

Governor Status vs. Covid-19 Restrictions

	Dem	Rep	% Rep
<i>Tightest</i>	8	2	20%
Intermediate	14	8	36%
<i>Fewest</i>	2	16	89%

COVID-19 Control Measures for U.S. States by Gubernatorial Party Affiliation (as of 11/20/20).

The NY Times also plotted these states for number of cases and deaths vs. degree of control measures and to no surprise it follows a diagonal line with fewest controls corresponding to greatest Covid-19 outbreaks and tightest controls to least. Since I am on a good rage now, I assert that these politicians (starting at the top) are treating American lives as pawns for their own self interests. This makes their actions or lack of them more hideous than the most vicious mass murderers in history. *Why do we Americans allow this to happen!*

For more Covid-19 analysis and commentary from Jack please click on:

Syage COVID-19 Assessment Home - Real-Time Statistical Model for COVID-19

I haven't done a Daily Rumblings in awhile so will start afresh with a new one. As a reminder these are for shorter...

syage-covid19-assessment.com

U.S. Higher Populous States		
	Total Deaths	Weekly Death Rate
	per M	per M
MI	879	43
TX	720	27
FL	833	20
LA	1341	23
AZ	883	20
NU	1882	12
NY	1732	10
CA	472	7

Covid-19

Pandemic

US Politics

Us Covid 19 Response

Covid 19 Death



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Jack is currently CEO of ImmunogenX. He is a Fellow of the American Physical Society, has published over 130 papers, and has over 30 U.S. patents.