

Remarks by President Trump at the Operation Warp Speed Vaccine Summit

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Remarks

Healthcare

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THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Please. (Applause).
Thank you very much. Appreciate it very much.

I'm honored to welcome doctors, scientists, industry executives, and state and local leaders to our historic Operation Warp Speed Vaccine Summit. It's been some journey for all of us. It's been an incredible success.

We're grateful to be joined by Vice President Mike Pence, who has done an absolutely incredible job on the Coronavirus Task Force. Mike, thank you. Stand up, Mike. (Applause.) Great job.

We're here to discuss a monumental national achievement. From the instant the coronavirus invaded our shores, we raced into action to develop a safe and effective vaccine at breakneck speed. It would normally take five years, six years, seven years, or even more. In order to achieve this goal, we harnessed the full power of government, the genius of American scientists, and the might of American industry to save millions and millions of lives all over the world. We're just days away from authorization from the FDA, and we're pushing them hard, at which point we will immediately begin mass distribution.

Before Operation Warp Speed, the typical timeframe for development and approval, as you know, could be infinity. And we were very, very happy that we were able to get things done at a level that nobody has ever seen before. The gold standard vaccine has been done in less than nine months.

On behalf of the entire nation, I want to thank everyone here today who has been involved in this extraordinary American initiative. I also want to recognize members of my administration who have worked tirelessly in this effort:

Alex Azar. Please, Alex. Where's Alex? Thank you, Alex. Great job. (Applause.)

Moncef Slaoui. Where are you, Moncef? Thank you very much. Great job. (Applause.)

A man who's now going to be very important, General Gus Perna. I have no doubt about it, right? (Applause.) Logistics.

Jared Kushner. He's worked so hard. Where's Jared? Jared, wherever you may be. Thank you. Thank you, Jared. (Applause.)

Dr. Deborah Birx. Deborah? Thank you very much, Deborah. (Applause.)

Admiral Brett Giroir. Where is Brett? (Applause.) Great job you've been doing, Brett.

Surgeon General Jerome Adams. (Applause.) Jerome, thank you very much. Terrific.

Dr. Robert Redfield. (Applause.) Robert, thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Administrator Seema Verma. Seema? Thank you. (Applause.)

Dr. Peter Marks. Peter? Where's Peter? Thank you. (Applause.)

Paul Mango, Adam Boehler, and Brad Smith — thank you very much. Great job. (Applause.) Thank you all very much. Incredible job. And many others, also. Many, many others.

We're also grateful to be joined by Governors Greg Abbott. Where's Greg? (Applause.)

Bill Lee. Bill? (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Bill. Ron DeSantis. Ron? (Applause.) Thank you, Ron. Thank you. Thank you very much. Great job, Ron. And John Bel Edwards. John Bel. Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you, John Bel. Thank you very much.

As well as Senator John Barrasso, who is a fantastic doctor, also, by the way, I have to say. (Applause.) When we — when I need info on that subject, I call up John. Thank you, John, very much.

Senator Steve Daines. Congratulations on a great win. Great win. (Applause.) That was easier than you thought, it turned out, right? It was a little easier than you thought. Great going. We're proud of you.

Congressman Greg Walden. Greg, thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you very much.

And Congressman Brad Wenstrup. Thank you, Brad. (Applause.) Great job. And many, many others.

My administration provided a total of \$14 billion to accelerate vaccine development and to manufacture all of the top candidates in advance — long in advance.

As a result of this unprecedented investment, we are exceedingly proud that both Pfizer and Moderna have announced that their vaccines are approximately 95 percent effective, which is a number that nobody expected to be able to get to, far exceeding anything that really we — that anybody thought. We went out and we said, “What do you think a maximum would be?” And I think doctors — we all came up to the conclusion that something like that would be really incredible.

And we have other candidates looking right now. We have some big ones that we’re going to be announcing very soon. We have some companies — great, great companies out there you all know about: Johnson & Johnson and — and others. And they’re all coming in, and they’re coming in very quickly. We expect to have some news on that very shortly. And we have worked very well with the companies, but if for any reason we have any problems, we will be instituting the Defense Production Act, and we will make sure that we don’t have any problems for very long. We’ve instituted it before.

Two additional companies, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson — as you know, the Johnson & Johnson is a one-dose, one-shot vaccine, so we’re going to see how that works. That would be very helpful if that all came out, and I think it probably will. Also, they’re showing tremendous — tremendous promise, all of them. Tremendous prob- —

We’re — we’re very hopeful that the FDA will authorize the Pfizer vaccine within days. We got to get it moving. And Moderna vaccine almost immediately thereafter. Large numbers of tests and samples have been done, so hopefully that’ll go very quickly.

If authorized, tens of millions of vaccine doses will be available this month. And we’ll get it distributed very quickly. We have that all set. And hundreds of millions more will quickly follow.

Every American who wants the vaccine will be able to get the vaccine. And we think by spring we’re going to be in a position that nobody would have believed possible just a few months ago. (Applause.) Yeah. Amazing. Really amazing. They say it’s — they say it’s somewhat of a miracle, and I think that’s true.

The plan we put forward prioritizes the elderly and patients with underlying conditions, as well as healthcare workers and first responders.

The ultimate decision rests with the governors of the various states — and I hope the governors make wise decisions — who will decide where the vaccines will go in their state and who will get them first. We urge the governors to put America’s seniors first, and also, I think those who work with seniors, which obviously you’re going to have to do that. I think they have to go together. And doctors, nurses, first responders, et cetera.

This will quickly and dramatically reduce deaths and hospitalizations. And within a short period of time, I think we want to get back to normal. A very standard phrase. We want to just get back to normal, get back to where we were a little more than nine months ago. We were doing incredibly. And in many respects, we’re still doing incredibly with our stock markets and everything else, which are hitting all new highs.

We've already finalized a partnership with Walgreens and CVS, whose executives join us today. Thank you very much for being here. Thank you very much. We appreciate it very much. (Applause.) And they will deliver vaccines directly to nursing homes as soon as the states request that they do so.

Later today, General Gus Perna will outline the detailed plan to rapidly distribute the vaccine to every state, territory, and tribe. States have designated over 50,000 sites that will receive the vaccine. We've worked very closely with the states. Actually, we've had very good relationships with the governors — I almost think all of the governors — at least in those conference calls that are somewhat secret, other than sometimes on occasion, Mike, the press will break in, which is fine too. (Laughter.)

It's amazing how you leave those rooms and about 10 seconds later — there wasn't even time for a leak — they were on the call. (Laughter.) But that's all right. So you assume that. You always assume that. But they'll be going through pharmacies, hospitals, healthcare providers.

Through our partnership with FedEx, UPS, and McKesson, we'll ship doses from warehouses directly to the designated sites. And we're thrilled to be joined by representatives of those, really, great American companies. Those companies have worked with us, and they've been incredible to work with. And I want to thank you all for being here. Please, thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you very much.

As I've stated all along — and I guess as you saw pretty vividly. I heard about the — I heard about what they — we're going to show prior to my coming. You saw that very few people thought that this was possible. Of course, they'll be saying now, "We always told you it was so." But we have them saying a little bit different.

But it has been incredible. And it will end the pandemic. It will end the pandemic. And we're working with other nations. As you see actually by looking at your screen today, we're working very closely with other nations also to get the vaccines out to other nations. And that's very important. We work with the world. We're working with the world. We have great companies, and we're working with the world.

In just a few minutes, I'll sign an executive order to ensure that the United States government prioritizes the getting out of the vaccine to American citizens before sending it to other nations.

Now, if necessary, I told you, we'll invoke the Defense Production Act, but we don't think it will be necessary. If it is — it's a very powerful act, as you know, because we've used it very, very successfully.

While we begin to swiftly deploy the vaccine, we'll continue to expand the availability of groundbreaking therapies. Since April, advances in treatments have already helped reduce the mortality rate by 85 percent. Think of that: 85 percent. (Applause.) It's an

incredible number.

I've delivered on my solemn promise to make the antibody treatments — they're brilliant; they're highly successful — available to every American, and we're doing that free of cost — totally free of cost. So we're making them available, and they're available now. And if somebody gets sick, it works, where they go and they get treatment if that's what the doctors are prescribing. And it's been incredible, the success.

And when you hear 85 percent, that's some number. To me, that's a number that goes along with anything else, including the vaccines, when you think about it. As well as we've done with the vaccines, when you hear "85 percent," people — people find that one hard to believe. But you look at the stats, and you see what's happening.

And you look at other countries; they're having tremendous difficulties in Europe — tremendous. Beyond — relatively beyond what we're having. They're having them all over the world.

But this will vanquish the — the problem, this horrible scourge — as I call it, the "China virus," because that's where it came from.

The virus has really been looked at and studied all over the world, and our scientists, our industrial and economic mobilization has been like nobody else in the world could have done. And it's very important that we share that with others and other nations.

I've worked and invoked the Defense Production Act over 100 times to manufacture essential supplies in the United States. Despite the grim projections from the media eight months ago, where they said this was impossible — they actually said — and you saw that a little bit, but I could give you two hours' worth of it. But they said it will never happen; you could never do it; it was a pipe dream. But we — we did something that nobody thought was possible.

And we also did it where no American who has needed a ventilator has been denied a ventilator. When we — when this first came out, we weren't equipped for that. Nobody was equipped for that. And we're now making ventilators. And we have all we need in this country, but we're sending them to countries all over the world. We're making thousands and thousands of ventilators a month.

The United States has also created the largest, most advanced, and most innovative testing program in the world by far. We've conducted over 200 million tests. Think of that: 200 million tests — more than all of the European Union combined. It's not even close.

Just 10 months ago, none of these innovations even existed. The tremendous progress that we've made is a testament to what our nation is capable of. When America is faced with a challenge, we come through — and we always come through — to overcome every hardship and surmount every obstacle. And I think you'll be seeing that over the next few months; the numbers should skyrocket downward.

We are the most exceptional nation in the history of the world. Today, we're on the verge of another American medical miracle. And that's what people are saying. People that aren't necessarily big fans of Donald Trump are saying, "Whether you like him or not, this is one of the greatest miracles in the history of modern-day medicine" or any other medicine — any other age of medicine.

American companies were the first to produce a verifiably safe and effective vaccine. Together, we will defeat the virus, and we will soon end the pandemic, and we will save millions and millions of lives, both in our country and all over the world. And we've already started.

Thank you again to every person here today and for the incredible achievements that you've done. You're going to be very proud of this day, and you're going to be very proud of this period of time because nobody thought this was possible. Nobody thought it was even remotely possible to do what we've done in a period of less than nine months — something that — just not even thinkable.

And we took a lot of heat when we said this is our goal, and we, frankly, weren't even quite using the numbers that we used. We far exceeded what we thought. If we would have said "sometime next year," I think most people would have said, "That would be great. That would be a miracle." But we did it long before sometime next year.

So now I want to ask several leaders who have been crucial in this effort to join me on stage as I sign the executive order to ensure that American citizens have first priority to receive American vaccines. And then we're going to be working with other countries all over the world, and I think we'll be able to start doing that almost immediately also, because we have millions of doses coming in.

So thank you very much. Thank you. It's a great honor. (Applause.)

(The executive order is signed.)

So, let's see here. I guess we have to do our Vice President, right? (Applause.)

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you. (Applause.)

Any questions, please? (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you all. (Applause.) Any questions, please? A question?

Yes, please.

Q Mr. President, it's clearly a success, this vaccine. I'm wondering, though, what your message is to the American people, given all of the increasing cases right now, about what they should do over Christmas and the hardship that they're all facing as this virus

does get worse.

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah, well, CDC puts out their guidelines, and they're very important guidelines, but I think this: I think that the vaccine was our goal. That was number one because that was the way — that was the way it ends. Plus, you do have an immunity. You develop immunity over a period of time, and I hear we're close to 15 percent. I'm hearing that, and that is terrific. That's a very powerful vaccine in itself. And just tremendous progress has been made.

One of the reasons we do show so many — and I say this, and I've been saying it for a long time — so many cases is because of the fact that we have 200 million tests. And you take — I think India is actually in second place with just a fraction of that number. So we're many times greater than the second country, and India has 1.4 billion people where — our testing program has been incredible.

And we actually are also coming out with new tests very shortly that will make the process even easier, and you won't need doctors necessarily to do the test. So we have some incredible tests coming out in a very short period of time.

Yeah, please.

Q Mr. President, some of these scientific officials here in this room have encouraged Americans not to travel this holiday season, not to go to large gatherings. Across the street, you've been holding holiday parties with hundreds of people, many not wearing masks. Why are you modeling a different behavior to the American people than what your scientists tell?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they're Christmas parties, and frankly, we've reduced the number very substantially, as you know. And I see a lot of people at the parties wearing masks. I mean, I would say that I look out at the audience at those parties, and we have a lot of people wearing masks, and I think that's a good thing.

Yeah, please. Over here. Go ahead.

Q The next administration will be the one, ultimately, that implements a lot of the distribution of this vaccine and will oversee much of the future of the way Operation Warp Speed goes forward. Why not include members of the Biden transition team as part of this summit that you're hosting today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're going to have to see who the next administration is — because we won in those swing states, and there was terrible things that went on. So we're going to have to see who the next administration is. But whichever the next administration is will really benefit by what we've been able to do with this incredible science, the doctors — all of the people that came up — the lab technicians. The work — the work that's been done is incredible, and it will be incredible for the next administration.

And hopefully the next administration will be the Trump administration, because you can't steal hundreds of thousands of votes. You can't have fraud and deception and all of the things that they did, and then slightly win a swing state. And you just have to look at the numbers. Look at what's been on tape. Look at all the corruption. And we'll see. You can't win an election like that.

So hopefully the next administration will be the Trump administration, a continuation — which has led us to the highest stock markets we've ever had, the best employment numbers we've ever had, a rebuilt military.

If you look at — the tax reductions are the greatest in history; the regulation reductions, the greatest in history. It leads us to Space Force, which nobody thought was possible. All of the things we've done. And we were rewarded with a victory.

Now, let's see whether or not somebody has the courage — whether it's a legislator or legislatures, or whether it's a justice of the Supreme Court or a number of justices of the Supreme Court. Let's see if they have the courage to do what everybody in this country knows is right.

I received almost 75 million votes, the highest number of votes in the history of our country for a sitting President — 12 million more than the 63 million we received four years ago. President Obama received 3 million less in his second term, and he won easily. I received 12 million more, which, by the way, is a record. Twelve million more.

And they say that when the numbers came out — and the numbers came through machines. And all of those ballots were taken away and added. All you have to do is turn on your local television set and you'll see what happened with thousands of ballots coming out from under tables — with all of the terrible things you saw. All you have to do is take a look.

And if somebody has the courage, I know who the next administration will be. And I'll tell you what: Life will be much easier for this country because of what we've done right now and because of a lot of the people in this room. The job you've done on the vaccine, together with a lot of others, has been a modern-day miracle, and it's really been acknowledged as such.

And I want to thank you. I want to give you my love, and I want to give you my thanks because you're very special people.

And now, good luck. You distribute that, General, and really set records. Okay? Set records, just like we've been doing for four years.

Thank you very much. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. (Applause.)

END 2:28 P.M. EST

