



Good morning!

The numbers are exploding. As of a week ago on Sunday afternoon (3/15/20), more than 150,000 people globally were confirmed to be infected with the COVID-19 virus, separate from the almost 6,000 worldwide deaths. By late Sunday afternoon (3/22/20), there were 330,000 confirmed cases globally, with 14,000 deaths, i.e., both numbers had more than doubled in just one week. The response from the United States, with 33,000 cases and 400 deaths by Sunday afternoon, accelerated throughout the week, with “shelter-in-place” or “stay-at-home” orders implemented in 8 different states, including New York, California, Illinois, Connecticut, New Jersey, Louisiana, Ohio and Oregon (source: Center for Systems Science and Engineering).

Initial jobless claims nationwide jumped to 281,000 for the week ending 3/14/20, up +33% in one week. The total could get much worse – initial US jobless claims peaked during the 2008 financial crisis at 665,000 in late March 2008 and were above 500,000 for 54 consecutive weeks from 11/2008 to 11/2009 (source: Department of Labor).

The House and the Senate will continue its debate this week over a Senate Republican proposal to send 2 cash payments of \$1,200 per taxpayer (plus \$500 per child) to individuals who made less than \$75,000 on their 2018 tax returns (\$150,000 for couples). Lawmakers were targeting 4/13/20 for the first payment and 5/25/20 for the second payment. If passed, it will be the 3rd time in US history (occurring previously in 2001 and 2008) that such payments have been used during a time of crisis (source: Congress).

Notable Numbers for the Week:

1. **JOBS** - There was a **turnover of 5.615 million** employees nationwide during the month of January 2020, comprised of **3.532 million** employees who **quit their jobs** (63%), **1.684 million** employees who were **fired** (30%) and **399,000 employees** who **retired, died or became disabled** (7%) (source: Department of Labor).
2. **SEVEN MONTHS** - The **worldwide flu outbreak** that occurred in the fall of 1918 **killed 50 million people** globally, including 675,000 Americans. The **health crisis** was a primary cause of a **7-month recession** in the USA that lasted from August 1918 through March 1919 (source: National Bureau of Economic Research).
3. **WILL THIS BE ENOUGH?** - There are **924,100 hospital beds** in the United States (source: 2018 American Hospital Association survey).
4. **HIGHER PRICE NEEDED** - Saudi Arabia needs to sell oil at **\$78 a barrel** to balance its sovereign budget, while Russia requires a price of **\$45 a barrel**. Brent crude oil, the **benchmark for the oil industry** outside of the United States, closed last Friday 3/20/20 at **\$26.98 a barrel** (source: International Monetary Fund).

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