



COVID-19 UPDATE: COVID-19 is in retreat in 73% of the US. NYC returning to work + indoor dining = big deal. 45 Epicenter + Trifecta stocks

THIS MESSAGE IS BEING SENT SOLELY TO CLIENTS OF FS INSIGHT

This week has been an exceptionally positive week in COVID-19 daily case data. For each of the 4 weekdays, M-Thu, daily cases have been down vs 7D ago (seasonality is big) and given some expected backlog for the long weekend, we did not see any "payback." Daily cases came in at 36,981 which is down -7,381 vs 7D ago.

- at this pace, daily cases will likely fall below 20,000 next week --> yup
- moreover, this trend suggests daily cases in a serious retreat
- we discuss below how daily cases are falling sustainably in 73% of the US and only 27% of the US is seeing stubborn case trends (see below).

The obvious question is whether anyone really believes this? We see media headlines continuing to point to rising case figures (which will happen in 5 of 7 weekdays, due to seasonality) and that COVID-19 remains unchecked. But the underlying is pointing to a rapid retreat in cases. This despite back to school and other headwinds.

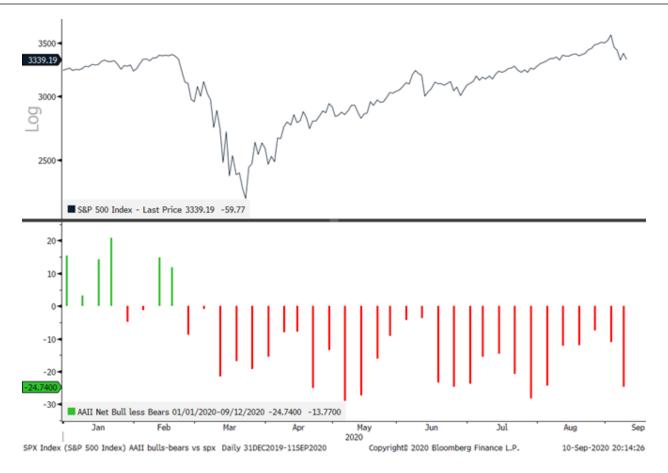
STRATEGY: Updating optimal "epicenter" stock picks --> 45 names

Baby Boomer retail investors, measured by AAII Sentiment Survey, have been bearish since March...

As many of our clients are aware, we view the AAII survey, or American Association of Individual Investors, as one of the standard bearers of retail sentiment. The survey has been conducted since at least 1987 and today represents a very good snapshot of retail investor sentiment. The members are now much older, typically representing Baby Boomers, but as we all know, Baby Boomers also happen to control 76% of the \$100 trillion of US household net worth.

- thus, Baby Boomer retail sentiment is arguably the best measure of true retail sentiment, as measured by wallet
- AAII survey shows Baby Boomers have been persistently bearish since the start of the Feb/March crash
- But they never turned bullish





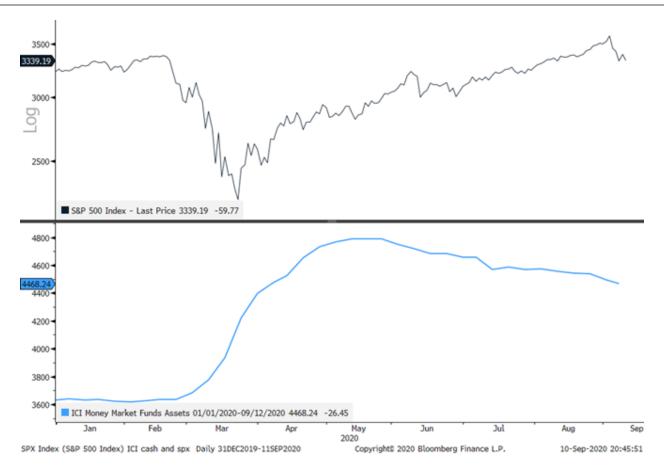
This is one of the reasons we believe markets are not that bullishly positioned. Notice how this survey showed net bullishness in Jan and Feb and this has since evaporated.

- Baby Boomers are more vulnerable to the risks of COVID-19
- they are less concerned about employment prospects, since they are more likely to be retired

Thus, while equity markets have risen to new highs, the typical retail investor remains cautious. Take a look at how stubbornly high money market has remained despite the move in equities to record highs.

- Total money market is \$4.6 trillion, which is above the \$3.6 trillion at the start of 2020.
- Do you wonder why pullbacks remain shallow?





We have asked our global macro strategy team to identify attractive stocks that are positively levered to the economy re-opening. This is in addition to their Growth recommendations -- both Brian Rauscher, Global Portfolio Strategist, and Rob Sluymer, Head of Technicals, still like Growth stocks.

But below are the trifecta. Ranked OW by 2 of 3 teams, Strategy, Technicals and Quant.

Below are the 45 names.

(*) Please note that the stocks rated OW on this list meet the requirements of our investment theme as of the publication date. We do not monitor this list day by day. A stock taken off this list means it no longer meets our investment criteria, but not necessarily that it is neutral rated or should be sold. Please consult your financial advisor to discuss your risk tolerance and other factors that characterize your unique investment profile.



								Performance		
Ticker	Companyname	Sub-industryname	Current Price	MarketCap (\$mm)	DQM Quintile 1	Brian I Rausche	Robert r Sluymer	2/19-3/23	3/23-9/10	Since 2/19
Consum	er Discretionary									
Automo l	biles & Components									
LEA	Lear Corp	Auto Parts & Equipment	\$117.58	\$7,048		OW	OW	-36.6%	48.6%	-5.8%
GM	General Molbrs Co	Automobile Manufacturers	\$30.17	\$43,176	OW		OW	-49.6%	71.4%	-13.6%
_	Casinos, Restaurants, Leisur	- 1 1	fsn sn	foo oco		OW	OW	22.40	00.40	
LVS	Las Vegas Sands Corp	Casinos & Gaming	\$52.32	\$39,962		OW	OW	-37.1%	20.4%	-24.3%
CCL	Carnival Corp Hiton Worldwide Holdings Inc	Hotels, Resorts & Cruise Lines Hotels, Resorts & Cruise Lines	\$17.88 \$89.36	\$14,684 \$24.780		ow ow	OW	-72.3%	49.0%	-58.7%
HLT	Wyndham Destinations Inc	Hotels, Resorts & Cruise Lines	\$31.80	\$2,711	OW		ow	-43.8% -66.2%	41.1% 89.2%	-20.7% -36.0%
SIX	Six Flags Entertainment Corp		\$22.33	\$1,893		OW	ow	-70.6%	99.6%	-41.3%
DRI	Darden Restaurants Inc	Restaurants	\$89.95	\$11,701		OW	OW	-66.0%	119.2%	-25.5%
EXPE	Expedia Group Inc	Internet & Direct Marketing Re	\$97.24	\$13,733		OW	OW	-58.3%	91.2%	-20.2%
Consum	er Durables & Apparel									
LEG	Leggett & Platt Inc	Home Fumishings	\$44.25	\$5,858	OW		OW	-50.0%	96.9%	-1.6%
TPX	Tempur Sealy International In	c Home Fumishings	\$85.14	\$4,390	ow		ow	-61.6%	135.1%	-9.8%
PHM	Pultegroup Inc	Homebuilding	\$44.50	\$11,934	ow		OW	-61.9%	150.8%	-4.4%
TOL	Toll Brothers Inc	Homebuilding	\$43.21	\$5,452		OW	OW	-70.9%	213.1%	-8.7%
COLM	Columbia Sportswear Co	Apparel, Accessories & Luxury	\$89.10	\$5,894		OW	OW	-37.6%	58.5%	-1.2%
VFC	Vf Corp	Apparel, Accessories & Luxury	\$68.39	\$26,648		OW	OW	-44.9%	48.7%	-18.0%
Retalling		Annual Satul	£0040	60 450		OW	ow		04.00	40.00
FL	Foot Lockerinc Ulto Beautyinc	Appare I Retail Specialty Stores	\$33.13 \$232.10	\$3,458 \$13.073		ow	ow ow	-53.8%	81.8%	-16.0%
ULTA	er Services	Specially dutes	\$232.10	\$10,010				-51.7%	62.0%	-21.8%
SCI	Service Corp International/Us	Specialized Consumer Services	\$43.34	\$7,637	OW		OW	-29.9%	21.3%	-15.0%
Energy										
Energy E	Equipment & Services									
HAL	Halliburton Co	Oil & Gas Equipment & Services	\$14.28	\$12,545		ow	OW	-76.5%	172.5%	-35.9%
	& Consumable Fuels						<u></u>			
EOG	Eog Resources Inc	Oil & Gas Exploration & Produc	\$38.00	\$22,125	ow	ow		-55.3%	10.0%	-50.8%
PXD		o Oil & Gas Exploration & Produc	\$91.45	\$15,023	OW	OW	<mark></mark>	-56.6%	49.2%	-35.2%
WMB	Hollyfrontier Corp Williams CosInc/The	Oil & Gas Refining & Marketing Oil & Gas Storage & Transports	\$20.55 \$20.18	\$3,329 \$24.490	OW	OW	OW	-56.4%	10.1% 81.0%	-52.0%
				4,				-48.3%	01.0%	-6.4%
Financia	ils									
Banks										
С	Citigroup Inc	Diversifed Banks	\$50.95	\$106,071	OW	ow		-54.7%	44.0%	-34.7%
CFG	Citizens Financial Group Inc	Regional Banks	\$26.72	\$11,405		ow	OW	-58.6%	68.4%	-30.3%
WTFC	Wintrust Financial Corp	Regional Banks	\$41.84	\$2,410	OW	ow		-54.1%	41.3%	-35.1%
	ed Financials									
SYF	Synchron y Financial	Consumer Finance	\$25.40	\$14,827	OW	OW	OW	-61.6%	98.4%	-23.9%
Insuran		Life C Haalife Incurrence	enn sc	60.750	OW	OW	OW		77.40	77.00
BHF	Brighthouse Financial Inc Prudential Financial Inc	Life & Health Insurance	\$29.56	\$2,750	ow	OW	······································	-64.4%	77.1%	-37.0%
PRU	American Financial Group Inc	Life & Health Insurance	\$67.26 \$67.15	\$26,568 \$5.945		ow ow	ow	-57.9%	71.5%	-27.8%
AFG	Allendari Illandia Group III.	A matrice module	207.10	\$0,540				-56.5%	37.7%	-40.1%
ind ustria	als									
Transpo	rtation & Airlines									
ALK	Alaska Air Group Inc	Airlines	\$40.89	\$5,056		ow	OW	-63.1%	70.2%	-37.3%
DAL	Delta Air Lines Inc	Airlines	\$31.79	\$20,277		ow	ow	-62.0%	43.1%	-45.7%
LUV	Southwest Airlines Co	Airlines	\$38.94	\$22,970		OW	OW	-40.9%	15.4%	-31.8%
UBER	Uber Technologies In c	Trucking	\$35.98	\$63,059	OW	ow	OW	-45.4%	60.6%	-12.4%
Capital G	Goods									
WAB	Westinghouse Air Brake Tech	n Construction Machinery & Heavy	\$67.28	\$12,803	ow	ow	OW	-47.7%	63.6%	-14.4%
CFX	Colfax Corp	Industrial Machinery	\$32.86	\$3,890	ow	<u></u>	OW	-58.9%	119.1%	-9.9%
DOV	Dover Corp	Industrial Machinery	\$110.88	\$15,963	OW		OW	-44.2%	69.6%	-5.4%
MIDD	Middleby Corp/The	Industrial Machinery	\$93.57	\$5,204		OW	OW	-60.8%	113.3%	-16.4%
XYL	Xylem Inc/Ny Owens Coming	Industrial Machinery	\$82.02 \$64.51	\$14,760	OW	OW	OW	-35.6%	44.8%	-6.8%
OC CSI	Owens Coming Carlisle Cos Inc	Building Products Industrial Conglomerates	\$121.23	\$6,968 \$6,617	ow ow	OW	OW	-52.6% -38.2%	20.0%	-1.7% -25.3%
CSL	carbe cos III.	Industrial Conglomerates	. 12 1.23	20,017	OW.		···	-38.2%	20.9%	-25.3%
Material	s									
Chemica										
LYB	Lyondellbasell Industries Nv	CommodityChemicals	\$70.94	\$23,683	ow	ow	OW	-50.6%	75.2%	-13.4%
MOS	Mosaic Co/The	Fertilizers & Agricultura I Che	\$17.72	\$6,717	ow	ow	ow	-49.9%	92.2%	-3.7%
Real Est										
	eal Estate Investment	Disperito d Daile	****	#T			OW			
STOR	Store Capital Corp	Diversifed Reits Retail Reits	\$28.26 \$63.76	\$7,162	OW	OW	OW	-55.2%	69.3%	-24.2%
0	RealtyIncome Corp	nealines	203.70	\$22,000	ow	OW	OW	-45.6%	47.1%	-20.0%

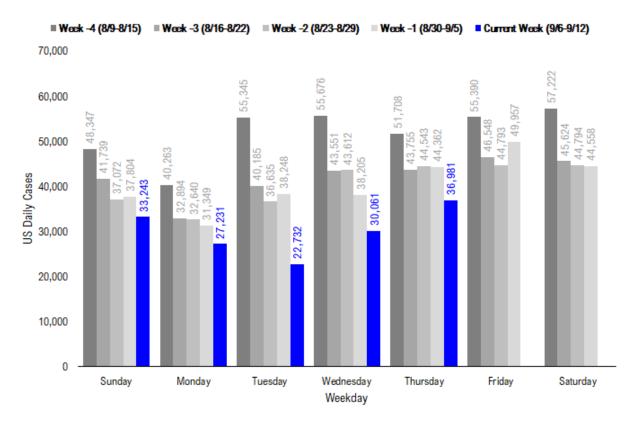
Source: Fundstrat



POINT 1: Trend in daily cases remains surprisingly good at 36,891, as no post-Labor day surge seen...

Daily cases continue to show a dramatic organic improvement. Daily cases came in at 36,981, which is down -7,381 vs 7D ago. We have been looking for a day of "payback" where the long holiday weekend would have resulted in a backlog of cases. Instead, we are seeing cases fall.

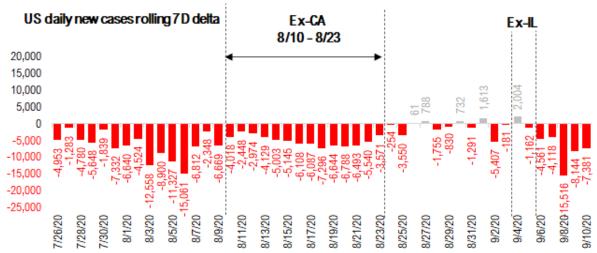
- key --> this is a downside break in case trends
- cases are organically retreating across the US, despite back to school



Source: COVID-19 Tracking Project



Again, the daily change vs 7D ago, in our view, is the leading indicator as it is what influences the 7D moving average. After seeing daily cases essentially flat for nearly 10 days, the last 5 days were good gains and today's drop of -7,381 is encouraging given the chances for payback.



Source: COVID-19 Tracking and Fundstrat

6 states with largest 7D delta in daily cases

Wisconsin	1,547 vs 727	+820
Illinois	1,953 vs 1,360	+593
Puerto Rico	459 vs 127	+332
Michigan	924 vs 685	+239
Connecticut	222 vs 101	+121
Virginia	1,236 vs 1,126	+110
Total		+2,215

6 states with largest 7D delta in daily cases

California	3,338 vs 5,125	-1,787
Florida	2,583 vs 3,571	-988
Georgia	1,836 vs 2,675	-839
South Cardina	379 vs 1,193	-814
Minnesota	381 vs 1,038	-657
Arizona	461 vs 1,091	-630
Total		-5,715



Daily Case Increases (by State) (09/10)

% total new cases (state cases/ total US cases) % total US pop (state population/ total US population)

Sorted
7D Ago Last 3-day Trend

		9/3/20	9/8/20	9/9/20	9/10/20	vs 7D ago
	United States	44,362	22,732	30,061	36,981	-7,381
	Office Offices	44,002	22,102	30,001	00,001	7,001
	States:					
1	Texas	3,899	1,416	4,285	3,852	
2	California	5,125	2,676	1,616	3,338	
3	Florida	3,571	1,823	2,056	2,583	
4	Illinois	1,360	1,392	1,337	1,953	<higher< td=""></higher<>
5	Georgia	2,675	1,543	1,937	1,836	
6	Tennessee	1,715	645	833	1,650	
7	Wisconsin	727	717	857	1,547	<higher< td=""></higher<>
8	Virginia	1,126	836	882	1,236	<higher< td=""></higher<>
9	North Carolina	1,656	716	897	1,222	
10	Alabama	1,046	633	811	1,148	<higher< td=""></higher<>
11	Ohio	1,345	656	973	1,121	
12	Missouri	1,397	773	1,362	1,116	
13	Michigan	685	441	783	924	<higher< td=""></higher<>
14	lowa	878	455	364	902	<higher< td=""></higher<>
15	Kentucky	894	255	658	795	
16	Oklahoma	909	833	876	771	
17	Indiana	1,104	386	705	758	
18	New York	889	557	576	757	
19	Pennsylvania	1,160	496	931	587	
20	Mississippi	751	249	426	517	
21	Maryland	693	356	336	503	
22	Louisiana	884	256	821	464	
23	Arizona	1,091	81	496	461	
24	Puerto Rico	127	96	1	459	<higher< td=""></higher<>
25	Washington	438	310	464		<higher< td=""></higher<>
26	Nebraska	474	502	440	456	
27	New Jersey	378	277	323	424	<higher< td=""></higher<>
28	Massachusetts	415	171	181	403	
29	Arkansas	969	294	385	398	
30	Minnesota	1,038	383	260	381	
31	South Carolina	1,193	301	305	379	
32	Utah	504	326	314	346	
33	North Dakota	362	71	238	333	
34	Idaho	263	240	329		<higher< td=""></higher<>
35	Nevada	351	137	154	288	
36	Colorado	268	187	246	265	
37	South Dakota	334	103	168	263	
38	Connecticut	101	417	89		<higher< td=""></higher<>
39	West Virginia	203	86	147		<higher< td=""></higher<>
40	Montana	180	65	87		<higher< td=""></higher<>
41	Oregon	261	165	116	183	
42	Hawaii	211	64	100	169	
43	New Mexico	200	37	87	161	
44	Delaware	104	59	0		<higher< td=""></higher<>
45 46	Alaska	102	35	63		<higher< td=""></higher<>
	Rhode Island	65	20	84		<higher< td=""></higher<>
47	Guam Navy Hammahina	66	42	45		<higher< td=""></higher<>
48 49	New Hampshire	38	18 71	23 48		<higher< td=""></higher<>
49 50	Wyoming	28				<higher< td=""></higher<>
50 51	Maine District of Columbia	50 58	12 47	21 25	26 25	
52		1	1			e bleker
52 53	U.S. Virgin Islands Vermont	0	3	0		<higher <higher< td=""></higher<></higher
54	Vermont Northern Mariana Islands	0	1	0	0	<riigner< td=""></riigner<>
55	Kansas	0	0	496	0	
56	American Samoa	0	0	490	0	
50	randridan danida					

Source: COVID-19 Tracking and Fundstrat

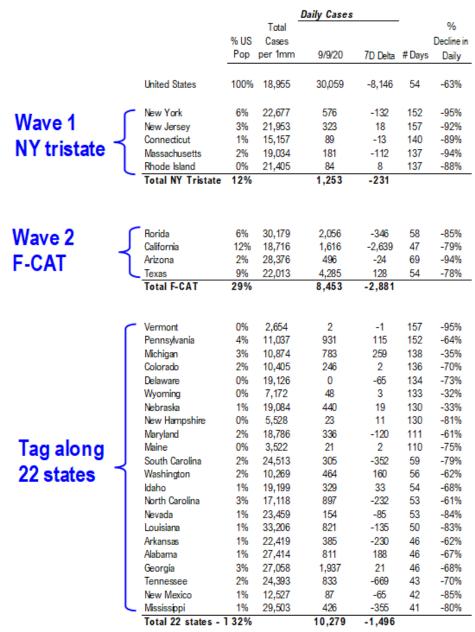
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POINT 2: COVID-19 is in retreat across 34 states, or 73% of the US

We have written a few times about how the daily cases in the NY tristate (March wave) and FL, CA, AZ, TX, or F-CAT (June-July wave) are in retreat. But there are also 22 states along with F-CAT that have been seeing a sustained decline in cases.

- these 22 states are shown below on the lower section
- they are Vermont, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Colorado, Delaware, Wyoming, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Maryland, Maine, South Carolina, Washington, Idaho, North Carolina, Nevada, Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, New Mexico, Mississippi



Source: COVID-19 Tracking Project



But as you can see from the table above, this third group of states has cases down >70% from its peak and has been more than 45 days since such a peak. We view this combination as conclusive of states with a peak.

- Moreover, most of these states have a case prevalence >12,500 per 1mm and as we stated in past reports, is a sign of a region with "breakpoint" in infection rates.

What states are still vulnerable? Still 21 states, but only 27% of population...

But there are 21 states where daily cases are still high, or rather more specifically, not that far away from a peak. These 21 states are shown below and the criteria used to identify them is quite simple:

- state is fewer than 60 days since peak in cases
- total cases per 1mm residents <20,000 decisively (lower than required for infection break point)

These are the 21 states falling into this category below.

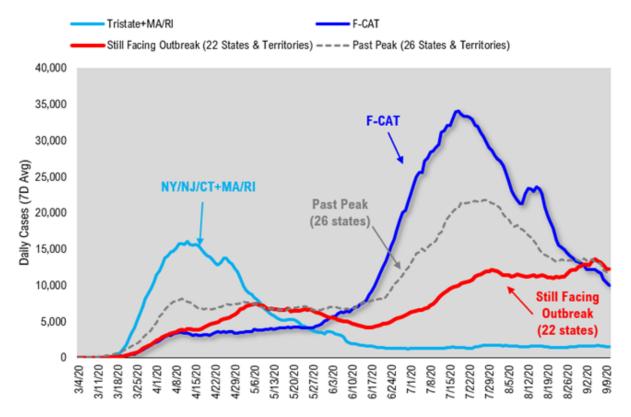
			Daily Cases		Peak in cases		
		Total				%	
	% US	Cases				Decline in	
	Pop	per 1mm	9/9/20	7D Delta	# Days	Daily	
Illinois	4%	20,172	1,337	-791	3	-58%	
Wisconsin	2%	14,313	857	312	3	-36%	
North Dakota	0%	18,516	238	-29	4	-55%	
West Virginia	1%	6,589	147	12	4	-39%	
Montana	0%	7,923	87	-96	5	-60%	
South Dakota	0%	17,601	168	-86	10	-59%	
Minnesota	2%	14,517	260	-470	11	-58%	
Hawaii	0%	7,150	100	-239	11	-69%	
lowa	1%	22,029	364	-362	12	-67%	
Guam	0%	10,705	45	-2	13	-73%	
Kansas	1%	16,274	496	-832	14	-29%	
Puerto Rico	1%	5,257	1	-357	22	-60%	
Kentucky	1%	12,082	658	-148	26	-52%	
Virginia	3%	15,147	882	-45	31	-44%	
Indiana	2%	14,930	705	-154	31	-49%	
Alaska	0%	8,060	63	-3	38	-67%	
Oregon	1%	6,750	116	-13	39	-61%	
Ohio	4%	11,375	973	-184	40	-48%	
Missouri	2%	15,719	1,362	-96	41	-47%	
Oklahoma	1%	16,661	876	157	43	-37%	
Utah	1%	17,365	314	-105	53	-59%	
Total 21 states	27%		10,049	-3,531			

Source: Fundstrat



And if we made a composite of these states, it is the red line in the chart below. As you can see, these are the states where daily cases have remained stubbornly high, inching higher in recent weeks while F-CAT and other have seen declines.

- thus, the trend in these 21 states is the one to watch.



Source: Fundstrat



POINT 3: NYC largely "back to normal" by October --> Big deal

Let's be honest with ourselves. One can assert that for many people, there has been a large perception gap between the risk of COVID-19 and its actual risk. Witness those Americans wearing full protection gear with bodysuits and masks, or those who think anyone with a sniffle is infected.

- As this article in the UK Spectator points out, a recent poll shows that Americans believe that 9% of citizens perished in the pandemic.



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> Issue: 8 August 2020 > Columns



Lionel Shriver

Never has a virus been so oversold

From magazine issue: 8 August 2020

In a recent Kekst CNC poll, British respondents estimated that nearly 7 per cent of the UK population has died from the coronavirus. That would be 4.5 million people. Scots supposed that more than 10 per cent of the UK population has died. That would be seven million people. Astonishingly, Americans believed that Covid has killed 9 per cent of their compatriots, or almost 30 million people! The real US total has indeed crossed the milestone of 150,000, but for pity's sake, 'only' 20 million people died in the first world war.

https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/never-has-a-virus-been-so-oversold



Americans will have a very different view of the risk of this pandemic in 30 days -- witness what is happening in NYC

There are a few things happening in the NYC metro area, that within 30 days, will vastly change perception. In fact, 3 things really stand out:

- NYC is opening for indoor dining on 9/30
- NYC is seeing vast numbers of workers return to the offices, led by JPMorgan
- Inbound international travel is no longer subject to COVID-19 screening

Think about this. In 30 days, NYC residents will be dining indoors. Many will be back at their offices. And inbound international travelers will be coming to NYC.

- Doesn't this sound like a massive change compared to what we have seen since March 2020?

If you do not believe this is possible. Please read the headlines below.



Source: Bloomberg



U.S. Ends Airport Covid Screening of International Arrivals (1)

- Government had funneled high-risk entrants to 15 U.S. airports
- · Move comes as carriers seek new virus testing to boost travel

By Alan Levin and Ryan Beene

(Bloomberg) -- The U.S. government is ending Covid-19 screening of international travelers arriving at airports as airlines seek new ways to more aggressively test for the virus to boost anemic traffic.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said it is ending its program that directed all flights from high-risk areas to 15 U.S. airports. The system was deemed ineffective because so many people who transmit the disease don't show symptoms, the CDC said.

The government will now focus more on voluntary measures, such as educating passengers and requesting contact information electronically. The health screening will end on Sept. 14.

"We now have a better understanding of Covid-19 transmission that indicates symptom-based screening has limited effectiveness," the agency said in a

Source: Bloomberg

Granted, this might be long overdue. NYC, as we pointed out yesterday, has seen COVID-19 under control for more than 12 weeks, with daily cases and hospitalizations pinned at extremely low levels. But yet, NYC has been largely shut.

- But as the NY Times article below shows, business leaders are now pushing to change the status.
- Has the mayor of NYC handled this crisis properly?



150 Big Businesses Warn Mayor of 'Widespread Anxiety' Over N.Y.C.'s Future

Leaders of companies like Goldman Sachs and JetBlue implored Mayor Bill de Blasio to take more decisive action to halt the city's decline.



Mayor Bill de Blasio urged the city's business leaders to help in the effort to get more relief funds from Washington and new borrowing capacity from the state. John Minchillo/Associated Press

By Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Dana Rubinstein

Sept. 10, 2020 Updated 7:31 p.m. ET



More than 150 powerful business leaders in New York City joined together on Thursday to warn Mayor Bill de Blasio that he needed to take more decisive action to address crime and other quality-of-life issues that they said were jeopardizing the city's economic recovery.

Chief executives of companies like Goldman Sachs, Vornado Realty Trust and JetBlue <u>sent a letter to the mayor</u> portraying a bleak assessment of life in New York City during the pandemic, and

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/10/nyregion/de-blasio-economy-coronavirus.html?referringSource=articleShare



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