



National Coronavirus Recovery Commission Launches to ‘Save Lives and Livelihoods’

April 6, 2020

The Heritage Foundation announced today the formation of the National Coronavirus Recovery Commission, which will examine the extraordinary public health crisis facing America and the steps needed to move prudently toward recovery.

The commission will be led by Heritage Foundation President Kay C. James and includes top experts and thinkers from government, public health, disaster response and relief, academia and education, business, and the faith community. The list of commissioners is below and available at [CoronavirusCommission.com](https://www.heritage.org/coronavirus).

The experts on the commission will bring their specialized experience and expertise to chart out the path to best navigate our nation through this crisis to determine when and how to begin to get Americans’ lives “back to normal” again. The commission’s work will consider two primary categories—crisis mitigation as well as recovery and restoration—and answer important questions that will serve as a roadmap to America’s post-pandemic future.

“Good public health policy is good economic policy,” said Heritage President Kay C. James. **“Saving lives and saving livelihoods are part of the same road to recovery that we need to pursue today. A physically healthy America is an economically strong America, so we need to think of them in concert rather than as competing priorities.”**

Throughout her career, James has served on numerous boards and commissions. She also brings experience leading crisis management teams through trying times while serving as Virginia’s secretary of Health and Human Resources and as the director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

The National Coronavirus Recovery Commission will carefully examine decisions that policymakers are making that significantly impact the scope of this crisis and the duration of social restrictions, economic hardship, recovery, and the potential permanent effects.

Two leading scholars and policy experts, Paul Winfree and Charmaine Yoest, will serve as the commission’s executive directors.

Winfree directs Heritage’s Roe Institute for Economic Policy Studies. He previously worked in the White House and Congress. His research focuses on public finance, health economics, economic history, and microeconomic modeling. Winfree is also chairman of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. He has a master of science in economics and economic history from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a bachelor of science in economics from George Mason University.

Yoest is vice president of Heritage's Institute for Family, Community and Opportunity. Prior to joining Heritage, she directed intergovernmental, public affairs, and public liaison programs at Office of National Drug Control Policy, and also served as assistant secretary for public affairs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. After receiving her bachelor's degree from Wheaton College, Yoest earned a masters and Ph.D. from the University of Virginia.

The commission's initial meeting is scheduled for April 9 with additional videoconferences through the month of April. At the conclusion of the commission's meetings, the reports from each discussion will be compiled into a final report for the American people and their policymakers.

“Americans are confronting one of the greatest challenges of their lifetime and they are seeking answers for how we navigate through this crisis and toward recovery,” said Rob Bluey, spokesman for the commission. **“This commission will gather ideas from experts and the general public for consideration. We welcome contributions from the American people to make sure all ideas are considered and the best recommendations are ultimately made to our leaders.”**

Commissioners

Kay C. James, Chairman

President, The Heritage Foundation

George Allen

Former U.S. Senator and Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia

John A. Allison IV

Director, Moelis & Co.; Former CEO, BB&T; Former President, Cato Institute

Lawrence J. Blanford

Former President & CEO, Green Mountain Roasters