

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES

Governors Make Pact And Spar With Trump On When To Reopen Country

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April 13, 2020

Several United States governors from both the East and West coasts have made a pact to create a planning system that will determine when to restart each region's economy but President Donald Trump said the decision to reopen the country was solely his and not the governors.

On Monday, the governors of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Rhode Island assigned some representatives to work with the new planning system. The move was followed by the governors of California, Washington and Oregon, who also created their "Western States pact."

These representatives, composed of high-ranking public health and economic officials from each state, will be coordinating with each other on the gradual reopening of businesses and the phase-out of the stay-at-home orders.

"This is not a light switch that we can just flick on and everything goes back to normal – we have to come up with a smart, consistent strategy to restart the systems we shut down and get people back to work, and to the extent possible we want to do that through a regional approach because we are a regional economy," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced during his daily press briefing.

Cuomo confirmed New York was making a pact with five neighboring states to come up with a system based on science and data to gradually loosen the stay-at-home restrictions. The governors on the West Coast were also looking at science and data.

"We will be driven by facts. We will be driven by evidence. We will be driven by science. We will be driven by our public health advisers, and we will be driven by the collaborative spirit that defines the best of us at this incredibly important moment," California Gov. Gavin Newsom said during his own press briefing.

Trump, however, posted in a tweet prior to the announcements of the regional pacts he will decide when to reopen America, after getting inputs from the governors and his team.

The statement came after Trump said Friday (April 10) that he will let the governors make the decision "without overruling them" as this was the right thing to do based on the constitution.

Trump plans to reopen the economy after April 30. However, some governors have set extended stay-at-home orders until May despite acknowledging that people were anxious to get back to work.

Constitutional scholars said Trump does not have the legal authority to rescind or override these stay-at-home orders. However, Ilya Shapiro from the Cato Institute said states may likely "follow the federal government's lead," per a CBS report.

Steve Vladeck, a professor of law from the University of Texas, mentioned the president may pressure state leaders to reopen by ordering federal agencies in the region to resume work or holding emergency funds for these states.