

COVID-19: Is the United States Committing Economic Suicide?

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#)

Houston, we have a problem. That problem is Covid-19 (named for Coronavirus disease 2019), first identified in Wuhan City, China.

Our government is taking actions which appear to be excessive and misguided, based on the concept of “cost versus benefits”.

These actions, at the minimum, are shutting down portions of our economy. The ambiguities of the unintended consequences are extremely problematic in that the costs of these actions are massive and may become severe enough to cause a recession or even a depression.

What “value” do we expect to receive from these actions?

Based on the most recent evidence, it appears this virus is most damaging to the elderly, especially those with medical problems.

What is the cost of the common-sense concepts of washing our hands, staying home if ill, identifying at-risk signs (high fever, coughing, and sore throat) reacting appropriately, adjusting protocols at nursing homes, reasonably segregating at-risk persons, etcetera?

Can we make a rational extrapolation of these common-sense costs and compare to those which will result from the proposed protocols? The “value” differential must also be evaluated. That accumulated comparative data should inform our “adjusted” actions.

We probably have the requisite evidence to guide us on how we should expend our energies, most effectively and efficiently, to mitigate the damages which will be caused by the virus.

There are, now, about 5,000 deaths, worldwide and climbing. What if the year’s total were 100,000? Would that cost, rationally, necessitate our shutting down our normal activities?

The World Health Organization estimates that worldwide annual influenza epidemics result in about 3 to 5 million cases of severe illness and about 250,000 to 500,000 deaths. Using 4 million cases and 375,000 deaths, it shows a mortality rate of 9.375%.

Once again, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself” (FDR).

Let’s use common sense and get back to living.

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