



News Release

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CED Issues Statement on Federal Guidelines for Reopening the Economy

Washington, DC, April 28, 2020... While the federal government’s guidelines appropriately call for a phased approach to the reopening of the economy, they have significant shortcomings that need to be addressed expeditiously by our nation’s leaders on the federal, state and local levels working in close collaboration with business leaders. According to [A Realistic Blueprint for Reopening the Economy](#) released today by the Committee for Economic Development of The Conference Board (CED), “America is going back to work. It must be done safely. And it can be done safely even with today’s limited testing capacity by pacing the reopening to the testing capacity.” The Blueprint’s central recommendations are outlined in this [op-ed](#) published in *Fortune*.

As part of CED’s ongoing COVID-19 efforts, co-chaired by Trustees Joseph E. Kasputys and W. Bowman Cutter, the organization released the following statement urging increased federal leadership in collaboration with states and businesses to safely reopen our economy while ramping up testing.

“Americans have proven over these recent weeks that citizens in a democracy can effectively and responsibly respond to a pandemic threat. We can likewise effectively and responsibly reopen our economy as we race to develop effective treatments or a vaccine. To achieve this objective, the US must apply a wartime approach to the economy, with federal, state and private sector leadership that matches its testing capabilities to its workforce capacity, to gradually achieve a peacetime, post-COVID-19 economy where true and comprehensive fiscal responsibility must follow.”

CED recommends that “our nation’s leaders on the federal, state and local levels must work urgently with business leaders to ensure that reopening does not cause a resurgence of the pandemic, which would have debilitating effects on American lives and set the economic recovery back even further. Such an approach would:

- 1) Increase leadership by the federal government, particularly in coordinating the healthcare infrastructure including testing equipment and assessments, contact tracing personnel, hospital capacity, and funding and development of treatments and vaccines.
- 2) Increase testing metric requirements and clear and transparent reporting to include a percentage of the population that has been infected, and increase testing capabilities to include reliable serology (antibody) tests and sufficient capacity for point of care testing.
- 3) Strengthen guidelines for Governors on opening businesses with a targeted sector approach appropriate for each state and local region, under conditions that can provide safety with current limited testing capacity.
- 4) Strengthen and enhance guidelines for employers as they work to develop their plans on how to open their businesses and assure the safety of their employees, and;
- 5) Support and strengthen our most vulnerable communities which are taking the brunt of this economic and health crisis.

“As America gets back to work, while COVID-19 still threatens our health and well-being, the overriding principles for reopening the economy—which is much harder than turning the economy off—must be: the health and safety of American workers; protection of the most vulnerable citizens and frontline workers; and regulatory and “Manhattan Project” scale financial support of innovation in the pursuit of treatments and a vaccine. Adhering to these principles will ensure that we responsibly and safely return to an economy that provides high levels of employment, production and consumption.”

A full version of *A Realistic Blueprint for Reopening the Economy* can be read [here](#).



Joseph E. Kasputys is Chairman & CEO of Economic Ventures. He was Assistant Secretary of the US Department of Commerce under the Ford Administration. He is Co-Chair of CED's Ad Hoc Committee on COVID-19.

W. Bowman Cutter is Senior Fellow and Director of the Next American Economy Project at the Roosevelt Institute. He was Director of the National Economic Council and Deputy Assistant to the President during the Clinton Administration. He is a Co-Chair of CED's Ad Hoc Committee on COVID-19.

About CED

The Committee for Economic Development is the Public Policy Center of The Conference Board that delivers well-researched analysis, and non-partisan, reasoned solutions in the nation's interest. www.ced.org.

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