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Editor-in-Chief

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## **KETCHUM CEO RAFFERTY TO WELLS FARGO**

Ketchum CEO Barri Rafferty is joining Wells Fargo & Co. next month to head the corporate communications department of the San Francisco-based bank. She'll report to Bill Daley, vice chairman of PA.



**Barri Rafferty**

He praised Rafferty as “a strategic and collaborative leader with deep experience in communications strategy, change management, brand marketing, and business transformation.”

Rafferty, a 25-year Ketchum veteran took the helm of the Omnicom unit on Jan. 1, 2018, succeeding Rob Flaherty.

In making that announcement, Ketchum said Rafferty was the first woman to lead a top 5 PR firm.

She is a founding member of Omnifem — an initiative to increase the number, seniority, and influence of women in leadership roles.

Mike Doyle, North America president, is replacing Rafferty as Ketchum CEO.

## **PHARMA VET JORDAN JOINS MODERNA**

Ray Jordan, who held top PR jobs at Amgen, Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer, has joined biotech firm Moderna, which has developed the first US COVID-19 vaccine to post positive trial results. He will be chief corporate affairs officer.

Jordan was previously senior VP, corporate affairs at Amgen, where he led internal and external communications, issues management and philanthropy. Before that, he was VP of public affairs and corporate communication for Johnson & Johnson, and VP of communications and information at Pfizer.



**Ray Jordan**

“His strategic communications and management experience at global commercial biopharmaceutical companies will be a tremendous asset as we continue into late-stage commercial development of our COVID-19 vaccine and our CMV vaccine,” said Moderna chief executive officer Stéphane Bancel.

Moderna has strategic alliances with Merck, AstraZeneca, Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, Part of the Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Israel is in advanced discussions with Moderna to buy its vaccine, which will begin a test trial of 30,000 volunteers next month.

## **WPP LAUNCHES \$30M ANTI-RACISM PROGRAM**

WPP today announced a \$30M three-year program to combat racism and to invest in Black and minority ethnic talent. The money will flow to external organizations and internal inclusion programs.

CEO Mark Read promised that WPP will also support each of the 12 goals of the “Call for Change” program developed by more than 1,200 Black advertising professionals.

They include investing in career paths of Black employees, bolstering their representation in senior management, measuring progress, supporting wage equity plans for people of color and launching mandatory anti-racism training for executives and HR employees.

WPP also will only participate in industry events or panels where people of color are represented.

“This is the moment to embrace change, and to use our creativity, our scale and our influence to make a difference in the fight against racism,” said Read. “WPP must support and elevate Black employees, and those from other under-represented groups, not as a diversity and inclusion initiative but as a business and moral imperative.”



**Mark Read**

## **GRAHAM TO LEAD D&I AT FLEISHMANHILLARD**

FleishmanHillard has appointed Emily Graham as its first chief diversity and inclusion officer. Before joining FleishmanHillard in 2017, Graham held senior positions at MWWPR and Burson-Marsteller.

In her new role, she will work alongside a global DE&I taskforce to analyze recruitment, retention, compensation, training and development opportunities for colleagues. Graham will also continue to provide client counsel through her leadership of True Mosaic, a newly developed DE&I offering for clients.

This offering will complement FH Perspectives, the agency's internal engine for DE&I. Graham will report to CEO and president John Saunders and chief operating officer J.J. Carter.

“Emily already touches many critical parts of our business; in this role, she'll be 100 percent focused on helping us take action, enable meaningful change and measure progress,” said Saunders.



**Emily Graham**

## **TENEO GETS \$2M JOB FROM UAE FOUNDATION**

Teneo has inked a \$2M contract to provide communications and media relations services to the Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, which promotes social development in the United Arab Emirates.

The Foundation focuses on art, culture, healthcare, early childhood development and heritage. Its Muntada (“forum” in Arabic), program features seminars of thought leaders and innovators. It was founded by the wife of Sheikh Mohamed bi Zayed Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi’s crown prince and deputy supreme commander of the UAE armed forces

Teneo’s contract went into effect April 12 and runs through the end of the year. It covers stakeholder research, narrative development, communications vision/strategy, crisis preparedness/response strategy and media outreach.

Teneo co-founder Doug Band and president Robert Mead lead the firm’s 14-member team working on the Foundation’s business.

## **EVERSOURCE SEEKS ENERGY EFFICIENCY PR**

Eversource Energy, which delivers electricity and natural gas to about 4M customers in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire, is looking for PR and marketing support for its energy efficiency programs.

The EE program areas include residential, low income, education, regulatory, large & small business as well as electric vehicles.

New England’s largest energy provider, Eversource registered \$2.3B in first-quarter revenues and \$335M net income, and promotes its EE effort as a way for customers to save money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Proposals are due by 3 p.m on June 24. Bidding agencies must first register in procurement platform ARIBA in order to reply to the RFP. [Click here to register.](#)

Direct questions to [eeprocurement@eversource.com](mailto:eeprocurement@eversource.com).

[View the RFP \(PDF\).](#)

## **TURTON TROTS TO TYSON**

Dan Turton, who was VP North American public policy at General Motors and an Obama White House alum, joins Tyson Foods on June 29 as senior VP, global government affairs.



**Dan Turton**

He will move to Tyson, which is the No. 1 chicken producer in the US, from the House Rules Committee, where he was a senior advisor.

At GM, Turton managed federal, state and local regulatory affairs as well as environmental/social/governance/sustainability, grassroots, political action committee and autonomous vehicle policy teams. Earlier, he was VP-federal government affairs at Entergy Corp. and deputy assistant to the president in

the White House’s office of legislative affairs.

On June 10, Tyson announced it is cooperating with the Justice Dept. in its price-fixing investigation into the chicken business. That cooperation is under a leniency program that will allow Tyson to avoid criminal prosecution in exchange for aiding the probe of other poultry companies.

Based in Springdale, AR, Tyson markets food under the Tyson, Jimmy Dean, Ball Park, State Fair, Wright, Aidells and imp brands. It employs more than 140K people.

## **ON THE MOVE**

Clarity has named **Elizabeth Minton** vice president of global sales and marketing. Minton comes to Clarity from Independence Public Relations, where she served as vice president, marketing.

Her previous positions include head of business development & corporate marketing at Blue Fountain Media and senior vice president, marketing and business development at 5W Public Relations. At Clarify, Minton will work closely with the agency’s leadership team and individual offices to elevate its brand, as well as identifying and expanding new business opportunities for the agency globally. Based out of Clarity’s New York office, Minton will report to CEO Sami McCabe and will be responsible for global initiatives across the agency’s offices in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and London.



**Elizabeth Minton**

**Novavax**, a late-stage biotechnology company, has brought on **Silvia Taylor** as senior vice president, investor relations and corporate affairs. Taylor comes to Novavax from Autolus Therapeutics, where she was vice president of global corporate affairs and communications, leading all financial, scientific and corporate communications. She was previously senior vice president of global investor relations and corporate affairs at Sucampo. At Novavax, Taylor will oversee the company’s investor relations, public relations and corporate communications activities.

**D S Simon Media** has promoted **Tameeka Henry** to vice president, analytics and media syndication. Henry has been with the firm since 2011, most recently serving as executive marketing manager, reporting & analytics. In her new role, she will oversee a significant expansion of distribution offerings in broadcast, online and social media, as well as continuing to lead the team and manage project analytics that are delivered to clients to assess effectiveness and reach of campaigns.



**Tameeka Henry**

**GMMB** has named senior vice president and managing director **Micheline Kennedy** a partner in the firm. Kennedy has been at GMMB since 2008, handling a portfolio of clients that includes the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Ibis Reproductive Health and Power to Decide. Before coming to GMMB, she spent 15 years in non-profit communications, working on global population, health and development issues, creating awareness about learning disabilities and advancing women’s reproductive health and rights in the U.S.

**Storj Labs**, a company that provides end-to-end encrypted, distributed cloud storage, has named **Paul Ford** chief marketing officer. Ford was previously a vice president at information technology company SendGrid. He also led developer marketing efforts for the company through its 2019 acquisition by Twilio. In his new post, Ford will manage Storj Labs’ marketing, branding, creative, communications, and other go-to-market efforts for its Tardigrade decentralized cloud storage service. He will report to CEO Ben Golub and be a part of the company’s executive leadership team.

## **PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM UPDATES**

Updated Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness applications have been released by the U.S. Small Business Association and the Treasury Department in an effort to make the process easier for borrowers as well as reflect changes



**Richard Goldstein**

from the recent passage of the Payroll Protection Program Flexibility Act. Two versions of the loan forgiveness applications are now offered to borrowers.

Highlights of the PPP loan forgiveness applications

The full loan forgiveness application has been shortened from eleven pages to five pages.

Both applications give borrowers the option of using the original eight-week period—if the loan was made before June 5, 2020—or the extended 24-week covered period.

They include how to calculate forgiveness inclusive of the newly revised 60 percent payroll cost requirement.

Health insurance costs for S corporation owners can't be included when calculating payroll costs; however, retirement costs for S corporation owners are eligible costs.

They also include the addition of a safe harbor for businesses that have been unable to return to the level of business activity they had before the COVID-19 pandemic due to compliance with health and safety guidelines for slowing the spread of the virus.

### **Loan forgiveness application form EZ**

A new, shorter version of the loan forgiveness application is available for certain borrowers. It requires less calculations and documentation than the full application. The three-page form can be used by borrowers that:

Are self-employed, independent contractor or sole proprietor that had no employees at the time of the PPP loan application; or

Didn't reduce annual wages or salaries of any employee by more than 25 percent during the covered period or alternative payroll covered as compared to Q1 2020 and the borrower didn't reduce the number of employees and the average paid hours of employees between January 1, 2020, and the end of the covered period (ignoring reductions from the inability to rehire individuals and reductions in hours offered to be restored and refused); or

Didn't reduce annual wages or salaries of any employees by more than 25 percent during the covered period at the same level of business activity as before February 15, 2020, as a result of health insurance directives related to COVID-19 between March 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020.

The SBA issued a new, final rule on how to determine payroll costs and owner compensation when calculating loan forgiveness under the new 24-week covered period.

That new interim rule establishes the 24-week maximum amount for forgiveness at \$46,154 per employee or \$15,385 per employee for the eight-week covered period (plus covered benefits for employees). For owner compensation replacement, the forgiveness calculation is limited to 2.5 months' worth of 2019 net profit, up to \$20,383 for the 24-week period or up to \$15,385 for those electing eight-week period.

### **Some other important news**

We know your business is facing unprecedented challenges right now with the coronavirus (COVID-19), and we're here to partner with you in any or all of it. We're available to

discuss the new government requirements, tax deadlines and relief efforts, as well as how to approach the business impacts of the outbreak. To help you stay informed about the ongoing issues impacting you, check out the Coronavirus Resource Hub on our website.

*Richard Goldstein is a partner at Buchbinder Tunick & Company LLP, New York, Certified Public Accountants.*

## **OPA-LOCKA SEEKS PR TO IMPROVE IMAGE**

Opa-Locka, which is located in northwestern Miami-Dade County, FL, is looking for a PR firm to help create a "unique and memorable" identity for the city.

Chartered in 1926, Opa-Locka was developed based on an Arabian Nights theme, which is evident by the large collection of Moorish architecture throughout the city and streets named Ali Baba, Sultan and Aladdin.

The RFP calls for a PR program to increase positive perceptions of Opa-Locka and to build community support for its missions and goals.

The desired partner will handle any PR crisis that may arise. It also will advise on "media and PR strategies in multi-disciplinary efforts to address possible changes to the city's physical and social fabric," according to the RFP.

The contract will run for two years with a one-year renewable clause.

Responses are due July 1.

They may be emailed to [www.demandstar.com](http://www.demandstar.com) or mailed to: City of Opa-Locka; Office of the City Clerk; 80 Fisherman Street, 4th Floor; Opa-Locka, FL 33054

[Download RFP \(PDF\).](#)



## **PR'S TOP PROS TALK: MATT KUCHARSKI**

Padilla president Matt Kucharski offers some pointers on how firms can make the most of the "new reality" they are facing in the latest installment of "PR's Top Pros Talk," a video interview series produced by D S Simon Media in partnership with O'Dwyer's.

Kucharski says that the expectations of a company's employees and clients are changing to adjust to the new environment, leading to a greater appreciation of the role strategic communications play.

Top of the list for communicators, Kucharski says, is transparency—which is leading to a greater demand for company leaders and spokespeople to get out in front of the public themselves to deliver their messages.

Despite the challenges, Kucharski sees a positive side to the ever-changing situation. "Employees and customers have this opportunity to look at how each one of these brands is responding to these life-changing events and determining whether or not their character and their reputation is reflective of that."

All of the interviews in the "PR's Top Pros Talk" series [can be seen here.](#)

Interested in taking part? Contact Doug Simon at [dougs@dssimonmedia.com](mailto:dougs@dssimonmedia.com)



**Matt Kucharski**

## **TRAVELERS GETTING URGE TO HIT THE ROAD**

Travelers are slowly beginning to feel more secure about heading out on trips, according to the latest MMGY Travel Safety Barometer, which was released on June 15.

The study asked respondents to rank how safe they felt various travel activities were on a scale of 0 (extremely unsafe) to 100 (extremely safe).

While the perceived level of safety remains fairly low across the board, there was a marked improvement from the May 8 edition of the report. Respondents overall gave domestic travel a 44 on the scale, up 29.4 percent from the 34 it received in the earlier survey.



International travel lagged behind, only racking up a score of 32, but that number still represents a 45 percent uptick from May's rating of 22. Business travel was up 24 percent, going from 29 in May to 36 in June.

When asked how safe they felt getting to their travel destination would be, confidence is once again rising slowly. While transportation, in general, pulled in a score of 60 (up from 56 in May), there was a big difference as regards the mode of transportation.

Not surprisingly, the family car was seen as the safest way to travel, with a confidence score of 74. And while domestic flights (36) and rail travel (34) came in far behind, both were still up from the numbers they recorded in May.

The trust in the safety of lodgings is also on an upward path, going from 35 in May to 44 in the new survey.

But while trust in dining and entertainment overall rose from 33 to 43, the scores of individual options varied widely. Coming in at the top were going to a park (57) or the beach (50), followed by visiting a bar or restaurant (40).

Outdoor activities were preferred, with outdoor sporting events (38) outranking ones held indoors (30) and outdoor concerts/festivals (36) topping their indoor versions (28).

The perceived safety of cruises trails all other areas, but their reputation still rose 39 percent—from 18 to 25.

The Travel Safety Barometer survey is conducted monthly among 1,200 U.S. residents who have taken an overnight trip for either business or leisure in the past 12 months. The most recent survey was done on June 9.

## **COYNE PR PICKS UP FIREHOUSE SUBS**

Coyne Public Relations has been named agency of record by Firehouse Subs and the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation. Coyne will provide Firehouse with public relations and crisis communications support.



Founded by two former firefighter brothers in 1994, Firehouse Subs has more than 1,180 restaurants in 45 states, Puerto Rico, Canada and non-traditional locations across a family of more than 525 small business owners. The brand's charitable arm, Firehouse Subs Public Safety

Foundation has granted more than \$50 million to public safety organizations since it was founded in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The Firehouse Subs brand and Foundation will join Coyne's roster of clients in the restaurant space, which include Red Robin Gourmet Burgers and Brews and Hard Rock Cafe.

## **ECUADOR HIRES BALSERA FOR COVID-19 PR**

Ecuador, one of the countries in Latin America hardest hit by COVID-19, has hired Balsera Communications (Coral Gables, FL) to counter the perception that it is besieged by the virus and lacks a cohesive response.

Working with the Ecuadorian ambassador to the US, Balsera is to execute crisis and reputational management pertaining to COVID-19 in the US. It will conduct outreach to think tanks and non-governmental thought leaders and monitor media and prepare appropriate reactions when necessary, according to its agreement with Ecuador.

The contract went into effect June 4 and runs through Aug. 15. Balsera has received \$37,500 to cover its May activity.

ABC News reported that a major laboratory in Ecuador's capital city of Quito had to close June 12 and halt COVID-19 tests due to lack of basic supplies to analyze specimens.

Corruption scandals have set back testing, according to ABC. Ecuador's former president Abdalá Bucaram was arrested earlier this month as part of a corruption probe after investigators found 5,000 masks and 2,000 test kits in his home.

China said it would support Ecuador by supplying assistance and cooperating in areas such as vaccine and drug research and production. Ecuador president Lenin Moreno called China Ecuador's most important comprehensive strategic partner.

## **STATE DEPT. LOBBYIST RESIGNS IN PROTEST**

Mary Elizabeth Taylor, one of the highest-ranking Black officials in the Trump administration, has resigned to protest the president's handling of racial issues.

"The President's comments and actions surrounding racial injustice and Black Americans cut sharply against my core values and convictions," she wrote in a letter to secretary of state Mike Pompeo.

As special assistant for legislative affairs at the State Dept., Taylor shepherded the nominations of Supreme Court justice Neil Gorsuch, CIA director Gina Haspel and Pompeo through the Senate, according to her State Dept. bio.

The *Washington Post* called Taylor "a pivotal behind-the-scenes figure in the administration." At 30, she was the youngest person to hold her State Dept. job and the first Black woman to do so.



**Mary Elizabeth Taylor**

Prior to joining Team Trump, Taylor worked in the office of majority leader Mitch McConnell.

## **FTI TO HELP 24 HOUR FITNESS SHAPE UP**

FTI Consulting is handling the restructuring of 24 Hour Fitness as the chain of gyms blames the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for triggering Chapter 11.

Based in San Ramon, CA, the company runs more than 400 fitness centers across the US.

24HF expects the majority of its clubs to reopen by the end of June and the rest by the end of the year. They have been retooled with touch-free check-in/check-out, stringent cleaning and social distancing protocols.

"If it were not for COVID-19 and its devastating effects, we would not be filing for Chapter 11," said CEO Tony Ueber. He said the restructuring will provide 24HF the financial strength and flexibility to accelerate its business transformation plan, which includes the closing of 130 locations.

## **DISABILITIES COUNCIL FLOATS RFP**

The Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities, the government agency which supports and advocates for Alabamians with developmental disabilities, is requesting proposals from agencies that can help develop and implement a statewide public awareness campaign.



Scope of the work includes: creating and implementing a public relations/awareness plan; developing, producing, publishing and distributing accessible materials for print, TV, radio and web; media placement; conducting engagement or outreach; website design, hosting and maintenance; managing social media accounts; and providing technical assistance.

ACDD anticipates the work to begin on October 1.

Deadline for proposals is 12 p.m. (CST) on Friday, July 17. All proposals should be mailed to: Alabama Council on Developmental Disabilities; RSA Union Building; 100 North Union Street, Suite 682; Montgomery, AL 36130

Bidding agencies should submit one original and five copies of their proposals, as well as an electronic copy on a USB flash drive. All proposals must be clearly marked as “ACDD Public Awareness Campaign.”

[View the RFP here \(PDF\).](#)

## **NPC FURLOUGHES 44% OF STAFF**

The National Press Club is furloughing up to 50 of its 113-member staff and cutting the salaries of remaining employees by 15 percent to deal with the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The moves are to align payroll costs with current and anticipated levels of business during the pandemic and the ensuing recovery.

The NPC, which suspended in-person operations on March 16, is resuming some activity as Washington moves into Phase 2 reopening of its economy. It warns that a return to “normal” (“pre-pandemic”) operations is not yet within sight.

NPC participated in the CARES Act Paycheck Protection Program, which is coming to an end.

The furloughed employees are eligible for unemployment insurance and will receive accrued vacation time and healthcare. It is expected that they will be recalled once NPC returns to full operation.

## **REEVEMARK REPS SIMON PROPERTY**

Reevemark represents Simon Property Group, which has terminated its \$3.6B deal to acquire Taubman Group because of the alleged failure of the mall operator to take action to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SPG filed a suit in a Michigan court requesting a declaration that Taubman suffered a material adverse event and breached the merger agreement announced in February.

The Indianapolis-based company claims that COVID-19 disproportionately impacted Taubman because its enclosed malls are located in densely populated metro areas and are dependent on domestic and international tourism business.

Taubman believes that SPG’s “purported termination” of the merger agreement is invalid and without merit, and that it continues to be bound to the transaction in all respects.

Reevemark’s Hugh Burns and Paul Caminiti represent SPG.

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**Rogers & Cowan PMK** is partnering with **One GS Media**, the new for-profit subsidiary of Girl Scouts USA, on the launch of its new media brand and online platform CircleAround. R&CPMK will provide comprehensive brand conceptualization, strategy, content creation, communications, launch and execution support to create and amplify opportunities for CircleAround and OGSM. In addition, the agency will collaborate with One GS Media on revenue-generating sponsorship and partnership opportunities for the new website. Launching in July, CircleAround will feature content tailored for women with specific messages of commonality, positivity and inclusivity.



**French/West/Vaughan** has been selected as agency of record for **Nutramax Laboratories Consumer Care’s** Avmacol nutritional supplements. FWV will work alongside the Avmacol marketing team in Lancaster, SC, raising brand awareness and educating the public about clinical studies of the product’s effects through public relations, creative, paid media and social media strategy and execution. Avmacol supports the production of sulforaphane, a phytochemical that turns on genes, resulting in what the company says are powerful health benefits.

**KMR Communications** has added **Riverchase Dermatology, Perfect Image** and **Dr. Durga Posina** to its client roster. KMR will work to position Riverchase’s doctors as key opinion leaders. Skin care company Perfect Image has enlisted KMR to undertake outreach to beauty media and influencers. The agency will work to position Dr. Durga Posina as an internist with a focus on beauty.

**Marino** has added **True Terpenes** and **Jenny’s Baked At Home** to its portfolio of cannabis and CBD accounts. The agency has been tasked with developing and executing a communications strategy to help build and establish the brands among key target audiences. True Terpenes creates, researches, and sells terpene blends used for cannabis, beverage, cosmetic, food, industrial and pharmaceutical products. Jenny’s Baked at Home produces organic, full-spectrum CBD foods and skin products.

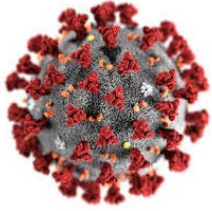
**Brainbox Immersive Marketing** is working with the **U.S. Army Mid-Atlantic Recruiting Battalion** to support the Army’s National Hiring Days initiative. As part of the Army’s “Find Your Warrior” campaign, BBIM has developed a social media-based quiz for potential Army candidates and, based on their answers, calculate the position that best suits them. Users can then share their results with friends on social media.



**Chapter 2** is now representing Josh Kesselman and lifestyle brand **RAW**. The agency will be handling media and partnership opportunities for the client. Founded by Kesselman in 1993, RAW produces a line of vegan rolling papers, as well as pre-rolled filter tips, and other accessories. It sells its products in convenience stores, smoke shops and cannabis dispensaries. Kesselman has also started up the RAW Foundation, which has supported such projects as digging wells in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## COMMENTARY

**President Trump, who once said that any American who wanted to be tested for COVID-19** could do so, is singing a different tune these days.



The president unveiled his “ostrich’s head in the sand” approach to COVID-19 during a June 15 White House discussion billed as “fighting for America’s seniors.”

After saying there are at least 15 different names for COVID-19, but only one certainty---it came from China—Trump suggested that perhaps the U.S. should scale back testing because

America’s tests are more advanced than other countries.

The president said: *“It’s so much bigger and better than any other country, that we’re going to have more cases. We’re always going to have more cases. And as I said this morning, that’s probably the downside of having good testing is you find a lot of cases that other countries, who don’t even test, don’t have. If you don’t test, you don’t have any cases. If we stopped testing right now, we’d have very few cases, if any.”*

Bingo! The president, who famously said that COVID-19 might just go away, now presents the miracle cure: no testing = no disease. That cure doesn’t work very well for people who can’t breathe because they are sickened by the virus and in need of hospitalization—tough luck.

Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, doesn’t see a return to normality for at least another year, and then expects COVID-19 “could go on for a couple of cycles, coming back and forth” in the U.S.

Meanwhile, it’s been a month since the White House COVID-19 task force briefed the nation on developments.

**The president is no fan of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act**, which shields Internet companies from liability for content posted on their sites.

After Twitter slapped a warning label on his “when the looting starts, the shooting starts” tweet last month, he signed an executive order designed to scale back Section 230.

Trump is shooting himself in the foot with his effort to roll back Section 230. A Knight Foundation/Gallup poll released June 16 found overwhelming support (66 percent) for Section 230. Only thirty-one percent favor changing the law so people can sue companies for content that causes them harm.

Trump may have a narrow opening, as Americans do want to hold companies like Facebook, Twitter and Google responsible for what they publish.

A majority (54 percent) says Section 230 has done more harm than good because it fails to make companies accountable for content they have published online.

More than four-in-ten (44 percent) believe Section 230 has done more good than harm because it allowed the Internet to grow as a place where people can say what they think.

Americans say “no” to digital censorship as nearly two-thirds (65 percent) support allowing people to express their views on social media even if the opinions are considered offensive. Thirty-five percent are in favor of restricting what people say, “based on societal norms or standards of what is

fair or appropriate.”

There are categories that should be banned or restricted on online content. Child pornography, at 95 percent tops the list, followed by misleading health information (85 percent).

**That didn’t take very long. T-Mobile completed its contentious \$26B merger with Sprint**, a move that consolidated the number of major telecoms from four to three, on April 1.

To win federal approval and ease concern about reducing consumer choice, T-Mobile argued that a beefed-up company would have the financial wherewithal to go head-to-head with Verizon and AT&T, invest in new technologies and create thousands of new jobs.

Now former CEO John Legere promised a combined company would create 11K more jobs by 2024 than the stand-alone companies would have.

It’s not looking very good.

Via a six-minute conference call on June 15, T-Mobile told hundreds of Sprint employees that they are being let go.

The company claims it is scrutinizing the merged organization to focus on areas where consumers need it most. “This will result in additional career opportunities for many, as the company positions itself for long-term healthy growth,” T-Mobile said.

The Communications Workers of America union isn’t so bullish about T-Mobile’s job-creating potential. It worries about the 30K jobs at stake with the consolidation of retail outlets and corporate roles.

The T-Mobile and Sprint hook-up is likely to turn out to be a wrong number for both consumers and employees.

**Thermo Fisher Scientific’s corporate credo** is “making a difference in the world.”

The Massachusetts-based maker of genetic test kits is certainly doing that in China, helping the Government of the People’s Republic set up a DNA tracking system of the nation’s 700M men.

The country’s law enforcement agencies say the tracking system will help them catch criminals, while human rights activities call it an invasion of privacy and a way to punish the relatives of dissidents.

Thermo Fisher says it is “proud to be part of the many positive ways in which DNA identification has been applied, from tracking down criminals to stopping human trafficking and freeing the unjustly accused.”

It also understands the “importance of how our products are used—or may be used—by our customers.”

On the CSR page of its website, Thermo Fisher calls itself a world leader in serving science and aware that with that position comes a great sense of responsibility to the global community. “We realize we have the ability to make a significant positive impact on society in many different ways.”

The jury is out on whether a police-operated nationwide surveillance system of every male in China is making a “significant positive impact on society.”

Would Thermo Fisher sell its kits to the FBI for a tracking system of half the population of U.S.? —Kevin McCauley