

- Gov. said she will be discussing with her cabinet members later today the guidance necessary to start transitioning state employees back to their physical offices
 - o She highlighted the “Let It Shine” event that will take place across the state later tonight
 - o Said the official recommendations from state government are to continue to practice social distancing, keep vulnerable populations at home, wash hands frequently and call the doctor if you are not feeling well
 - o Also stressed the advantage of downloading the CARE 19 app to allow contact tracing if someone tests positive for the virus
- Reporter ?: What time is the “Let It Shine” event tonight?
 - o Gov. said it will be from 9:30-10 pm tonight; there will be aerial photography and video in 12 of the state’s largest communities; also planning to do some very special lighting things at the State Capitol
- Reporter ?: Is there a timeline for state workers to return to work?
 - o Gov. said it will be different for every agency, depending on the services they provide; some agencies will stagger their employees return to work and make other accommodations to protect state employees
- Reporter ?: Is there a timeline to re-open the Smithfield Foods plant?
 - o Gov. said that she hopes to report some good news next week about the plant re-opening plans; state government is working with Smithfield to help supply PPE for the workforce
- Reporter ?: Are there enough supplies to do 3,000 Covid tests/day per the Governor’s statements of earlier this week?
 - o Kim Malsom-Rysdon (Dept. of Health secretary) – SD has the supplies to do 3,000 tests/day currently, and have capacity to handle that number currently, and are working to having the ability to do 5,000 tests per day in the next couple of week which will be a combination of all available labs (local labs, state health lab and private labs)
 - o Gov. said the supply chain for testing supplies has gotten much better in the past several weeks and that we don’t anticipate there will be problems getting enough supplies to do 5,000 tests/day going forward
- Reporter ?: CDC says that states will need to have the ability to test 1-2% of their population every week. Is that feasible in SD?
 - o Malsom-Rysdon – We are not setting a certain percentage, but expect SD will have the tests and capacity to handle the number of tests which will be necessary based on our current models
- Reporter ?: Are there any new clusters of cases being reported in nursing homes?
 - o Malsom-Rysdon – There are no new clusters in long term care facilities to discuss at this time; DOH is doing aggressive testing at a long-term care facility in Sioux Falls that has had a number of cases; infectious disease procedures are being followed at the facility at this time
- Reporter ?: Any new info on the meeting that has been requested by groups representing Smithfield employees? Also, are there any plans to have an enforcement plan with Smithfield if they don’t follow CDC social distancing recommendations?
 - o Gov. said there are on-going discussions with Smithfield about social distancing policies, but that the language in the President’s executive order directing packing plants to operate is making things a bit more complicated; Gov. said she is still talking through the issues involved in setting up the meeting with reps of Smithfield employees, but that state government is providing the groups who have requested the meeting all the info they need

- Reporter ? : What was the word “never” used repeatedly in the Back to Normal plan? (ie. Never mandated businesses close, etc.)
 - o Gov. said that the BTN plan is a pathway for providing guidance to employers, employees, schools, etc.; state government did not mandate any business closures, asked businesses to be innovative when working to keep their customers and employees safe
- Reporter ? : Mayor of Mitchell called the BTN plan a “bombshell”. What is your reaction?
 - o Gov. said she was surprised by that comment, and that it should not have been a “bombshell” to any local government official; Gov. has been communicating with mayors regularly during the past several weeks
- Reporter ? : How can we go “Back To Normal” when SD has not hit the peak number of infections yet?
 - o Gov. said we are not going to talk about the number of positive cases; the number of focus on going forward is the number of hospitalizations; state was able to formulate a plan to push down the peak number of hospitalizations by over 75%; South Dakotans have done a great job in doing their part to push the peak down
- Reporter ? : It is School Lunch Hero Day, any reaction? Also, does Gov. have any updates on the federal government providing more flexibility that would allow SD to better utilize the funds that have come down from the CARES Act?
 - o Gov. said it has been some time since we have talked about the significant role that school lunch workers have played in getting food to kids across SD and they need to be thanked for all they have done; Gov. said she and other state officials have done a lot of education with federal policy makers about the challenges that SD is up against with the loss of state revenue sources, and that she hopes there will be language in the next Congressional bill that will allow SD to have some flexibility to better use those federal funds
- Reporter ? : What is the number of hospital beds that SD has ready to handle the peak?
 - o Malsom-Rydson: SD is still planning to stand up 5,000 hospital beds even though current projections show that state will only need 2,200; am expecting the peak will be handled by existing beds in hospitals but we will be ready to stand up temporary facilities with additional beds if necessary
 - o Gov. said SD has the capacity to handle 2,200 beds at the expected peak, and that the SD National Guard is planning to stand up temporary hospital facilities if needed; at this point, we don’t think we will need the temporary facilities but they will be ready if we need them
- Reporter ? : Yesterday, the Gov. signed an executive order that used legislation that was passed on the last day of the legislative session. The NRA added an amendment to one of the bills and that amendment was part of the EO signed yesterday. Does the Gov have a comment?
 - o Gov. said the NRA amendment was not something that came from her or her staff; Gov. said she decided to sign the bill even with the NRA amendment as she felt it was a piece of legislation that would still provide benefits for SD
- Reporter ? : Lt. Governor was at the house where drinking took place late on the night of veto day, does the Gov. have any comment on that?
 - o Gov. said she and the Lt. Gov. talk regularly, and that she is not going to comment on the LG’s actions
- Reporter ? : There was a Harvard poll that was released yesterday which showed how respondents viewed the job that states are doing in handling the Covid outbreak and that SD ranks toward the bottom of the list. Does the Gov. have any comment on the poll?

- Gov. said that it is hard to believe that we are being political in the middle of an outbreak; this is not a time to play politics; this is a time to focus on what is important and that we need to be united, not divided, and that we need to work together to battle the virus; Gov. said she does not spend any time looking at polls