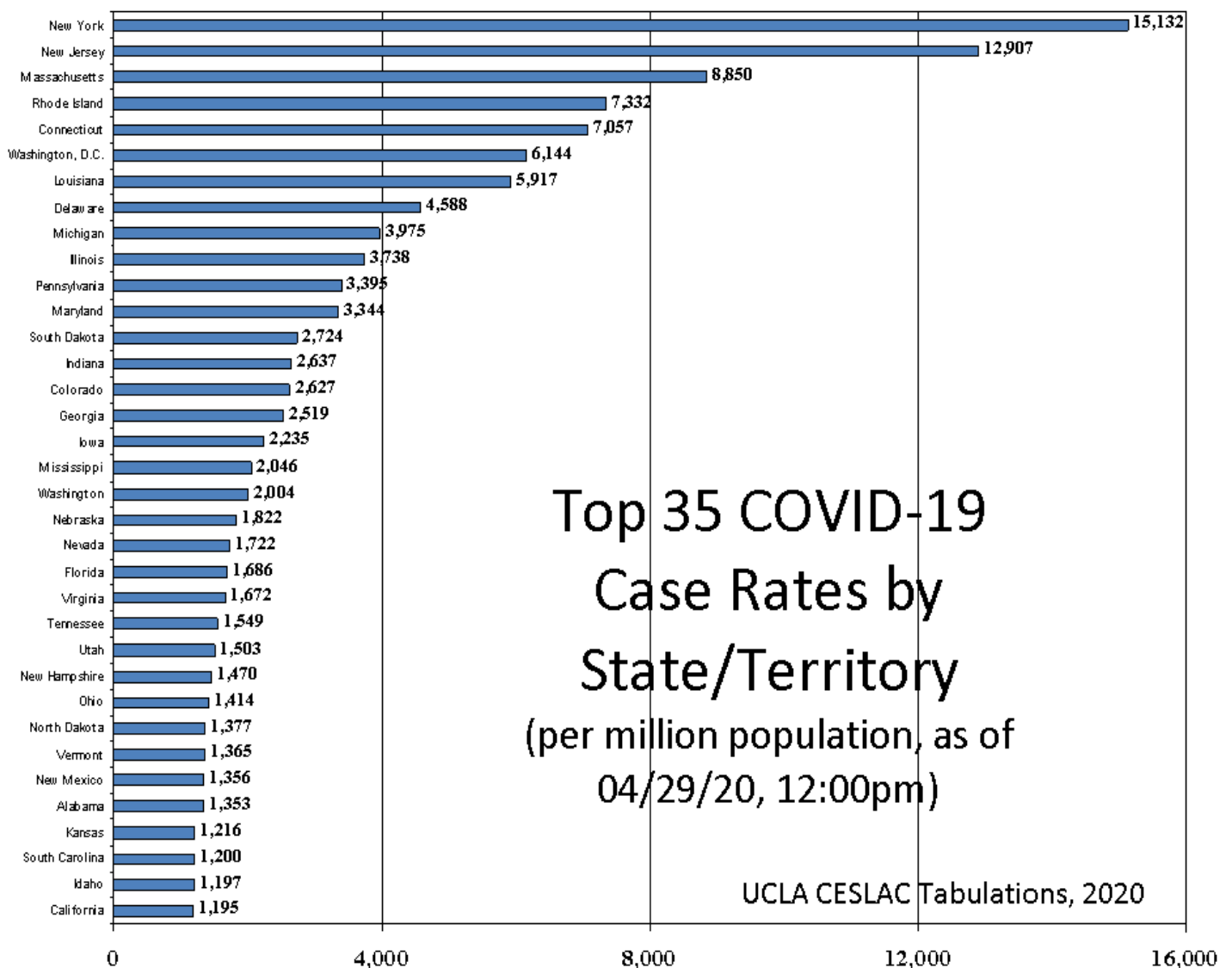


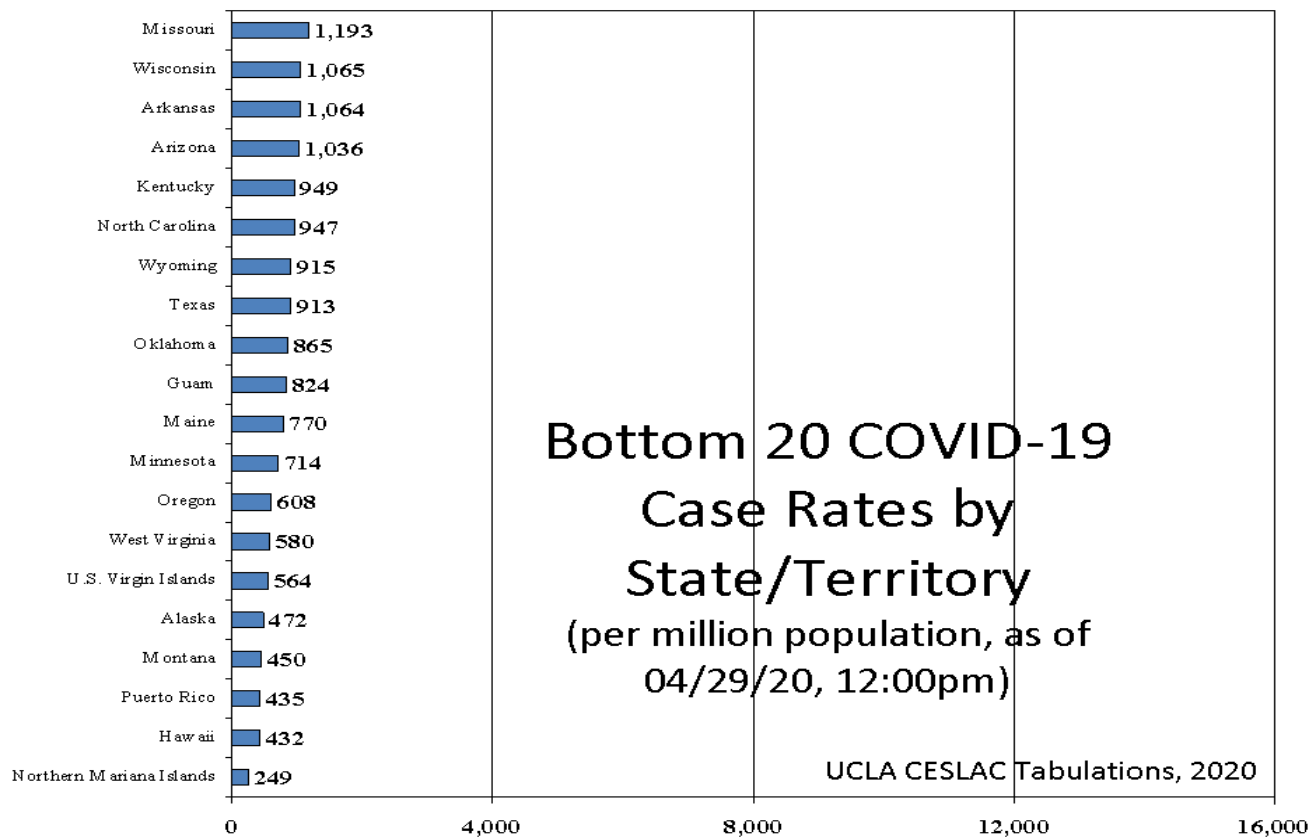
State COVID-19 Case Rates and Pandemic Protection: A Metric for Decisions to Implement, Continue, or Relax Measures

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A governor’s decision to implement, continue, or relax pandemic protection measures needs to take into account that state or territory’s COVID-19 case rate: the number of COVID-19 cases per million state residents. Using this metric, the case rate for New York state, the highest in the country, is nearly 35 times higher than the case rate for Puerto Rico, which has the lowest case rate in the country. This wide disparity indicates that the governors of these respective areas might take different approaches on the implementation, continuation, or relaxation of pandemic protection measures.

This report ranks the COVID-19 case rates for all U.S. states and territories, from the highest to the lowest, to provide a starting point for making decisions about such measures.





The decision to implement, continue, or relax pandemic protection measures should be guided by basic public health principles, using the best data available, not by fleeting political pressures. A summary measure of the overall burden in each state offers one starting point for determining whether to continue protection measures.

Methods. Cases include those who have tested positive since the beginning of the outbreak, but their number will depend on the availability and accessibility of testing. Some regions have not been able to acquire sufficient testing kits (availability), and even where available, not all individuals have had equal access. Thus, these numbers are most likely an undercount of the actual scope of the disease.

Hospitalizations and/or deaths can also provide information, but are further “downstream” and may reflect additional structural factors such as healthcare capacity. An “epidemic curve” of new cases over time would provide further context, reflecting the temporal course of the disease, but a separate graphic would be required for each state or territory. All data are sourced from Wikipedia¹, and may not reflect cases still being reported.²

About CESLAC. Since 1992, the Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture (CESLAC) of the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA has provided cutting-edge, fact-based research, education, and public information about Latinos, their health, their history, and their roles in California society and economy.

For more information, or to arrange a telephone interview with the Center’s Director, David E. Hayes-Bautista, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Medicine, please contact Adriana Valdez, at (310) 794-0663 or cesla@ucla.edu.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_coronavirus_pandemic_in_the_United_States

² American Samoa is not listed because it has not reported any confirmed cases.