

Facing the challenge



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President-elect Joe Biden speaks Saturday in Wilmington, Del. Biden was declared the winner of the highly contentious election on the fifth day of vote counting on Saturday.

Biden targets virus as his White House transition begins

BY WILL WEISSERT,
PHILIP MARCELO AND
AAMER MADHANI
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WILMINGTON, Del. — President-elect Joe Biden signaled strongly on Monday that fighting the raging pandemic will be the immediate priority of his new administration, an abrupt shift from President Donald Trump's more unworried approach to the virus, as the nation surpassed 10 million COVID-19 cases.

Biden, who was declared the winner of last week's presidential election shortly before 11:30 a.m. Saturday on the fifth day

of vote counting, began with a direct appeal to all Americans to wear masks, a departure from Trump, who has mocked Biden and others who make a point of always wearing protective face coverings when around others. In an official move, the president-elect formed a coronavirus advisory board dominated by scientists and doctors, while Trump has had a falling out with the medical experts on his own virus task force.

The swift actions come at a critical moment in the U.S. effort to combat the coronavirus. Pharmaceutical giant Pfizer announced

progress with its vaccine trial, helping send financial markets soaring. But surging caseloads, including new infections among leading figures in Trump's administration, offered a fresh reminder that the nation is still in the grip of the worst pandemic in more than a century.

"The challenge before us right now is still immense and growing, and so is the need for bold action to fight this pandemic," Biden said after being briefed on the virus. "We are still facing a dark winter."

He called on Americans

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Joe Biden
U.S. president-elect

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