

Murphy: GOP should focus on COVID, not SCOTUS

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

As New Jersey surpassed 200,000 cases of COVID-19 – and the U.S. death toll from the coronavirus nears 200,000, Gov. Phil Murphy used Monday’s press conference to blast President Donald Trump and Senate Republicans for focusing on the U.S. Supreme Court instead of addressing the continuing pandemic.

Saying she was small in stature but a giant in her field and in this nation’s history, Murphy lauded the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, before hammering hypocritical Republican senators for planning to rush a replacement nomination in before the Nov. 3 election.

Ginsburg, 87, died Friday, Sept. 18. The liberal justice served on the U.S. Supreme Court since 1993, appointed by President Bill Clinton.

“May the posturing that has already commenced be a cautionary tale of how our national politics has careened off the rails over the past four years. The rank hypocrisy of those like Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is showing,” Murphy said.

“They want to ram a nominee through six weeks before a presidential election,” he said, “when just four years ago they refused to offer even a hearing to a nominee who was put forward eight months before an election.

“Let the people decide,” they screamed in 2016, but today they are thumbing their noses at the people in the name of a narrow political ideology,” Murphy said. “How many Senate Republicans will have the guts to stand up and demand the process be put on hold until after the nation chooses its next president?

“That’s really a rhetorical question as so few have shown any guts over the past four years,” Murphy said. “Please, God, can four of these people channel the likes of (late Senator) John McCain and others who went before them. But for them, this isn’t about the nation’s future, it’s about reasoned jurisprudence. It’s a blatant power grab by those whose mission is to undo decades of civil rights progress, protect polluters over the environment, gut health care for millions of Americans, and deny a woman the right to make

her own medical and reproductive decisions.”

“Right now the attention of the president and of Congress should be focused on the pressing issue of getting ahead of COVID-19 and ensuring a comprehensive national response and recovery. We cannot be distracted from that goal.

“I think I know what Justice Ginsburg’s opinion would be on the matter,” Murphy continued, “and there would be no lack of Americans who would concur in that opinion.”

The governor said it’s only right that Tuesday, Sept. 22, was National Voter Registration Day.

Free Narcan available Sept. 24 to 26 in NJ

The Department of Human Services is providing naloxone for free at participating pharmacies for residents with no need for a name, appointment or prescription Sept. 24 through Sept. 26. To get the free injection, commonly known as Narcan, which can reverse the effect of opioid overdoses, more than 300 pharmacies statewide will have it available. Resident can check if their chain or local pharmacy is carrying it by going online to nj.gov/humanservices/stopoverdoes for a list of participants.

The governor noted this is the second annual Narcan giveaway and last year the state gave away 32,000 doses to help fight the opioid epidemic.

“I urge everyone to get your free Narcan this year so you can help us save lives and get folks on the path to treatment and recovery,” Murphy said. “Even as we have been battling the COVID-19 pandemic, our efforts to curb our opioid epidemic have not stopped.”

This effort, he said, “is about saving every life that we can.”

Child care tuition assistance

The Department of Human Services has opened the window for parents and guardians of children ages 5 to 13 to apply for the state’s new COVID-19 child care tuition assistance program.

Families with incomes up to \$75,000 can apply online at childcare.nj.gov. All they need is proof of income and a

remote learning notice from the child’s school.

The assistance will be available to eligible residents through Dec. 30. The state has set aside \$150 million to support this program.

It is meant to give working parents access to the support they need for paying for child care.

State tops 200,000 total COVID-19 cases

The governor and state Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli announced the state now has 200,154 cases of COVID-19, after 396 new cases were reported Monday, Sept. 21. The first case in the state was reported March 4.

The state’s daily positivity rate is at 1.81 percent. That rate had jumped above 2 last week.

Murphy said the state tests as much per capita as virtually any state in America. He said the state’s health team went “from hell and back” with a “pea-shooter” approach to testing when the pandemic began to one of the “most robust” testing anywhere.

He said some of the reason for the new cases is the state’s testing capacity but some also is community spread, in particular in Monmouth and Ocean counties.

“We owe you the facts, folks,” Murphy said. “We’ve been very clear, when you’re around 2 percent” testing positive, and with 396 positive tests in a day, residents can figure out how many people are being tested. That works out to almost 20,000 tests in a day.

The transmission rate is at 1.12 percent, meaning it remains just over one person is getting infected by each person already infected by COVID-19.

The state’s death toll is now 14,278, with 1,791 additional probable COVID-19 deaths. On Monday, the state reported two new deaths.

Murphy said even though people are fatigued by the pandemic and its restrictions, he urged residents to continue wearing masks and social distancing to keep the spread of the coronavirus in check as the weather cools and people start congregating indoors, where COVID-19 spreads more easily.

At 11:15 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 24, the governor is hav-

ing a live Facebook chat with Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, at facebook.com/governorphilmurphy.

ommended connecting with others because social support is vital to mitigating stress. Because the pandemic con-

tinues, she said to treat it like a marathon and to stay the course with masks and social distancing.

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DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
23	1:10	1:46	7:05	8:05
24	2:20	2:55	8:10	9:14
25	3:34	4:03	9:18	10:19
26	4:43	5:05	10:24	11:18
27	5:42	5:59	11:23	
28	6:32	6:46	12:09	12:15
29	7:15	7:28	12:52	1:02
30	7:53	8:06	1:31	1:44
MOON PHASES				
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