

TIME

CORONAVIRUS BRIEF • YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED • WEARING MASKS • MEAT SHORTAGES • NEWSLETTER

Eric Trump Claims Social Distancing Is a Democrat 'Strategy' and COVID-19 Will 'Magically' Disappear After Election



Eric Trump at the 45th President Donald J. Trump's address of the crowd for the opening ceremony of the New York City 100th annual Veterans Day Parade and wreath-laying at the Eternal Light Flag Staff in New York on Nov. 11, 2019. Ira L. Black—Corbis

BY **TARA LAW**

UPDATED: MAY 18, 2020 10:26 AM EDT | ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED: MAY 17, 2020 4:37 PM EDT

On Saturday, Eric Trump declared that COVID-19 social distancing measures are part of a “cognizant strategy” for Democrats to win the

2020 Presidential election, and that the novel coronavirus will “magically” disappear after Nov. 3.

In [an interview with Fox News' Jeanine Pirro on Saturday](#), the President's son cast doubt on social distancing measures aimed at curbing the spread of coronavirus, which has claimed the lives of more than 89,000 Americans. Trump declared that Democrats are “trying to milk” the pandemic by temporarily closing businesses and implementing other social distancing measures, and that they aim to undermine President Donald Trump's ability to win reelection.



“They think they’re taking away Donald Trump’s greatest tool, which is being able to go into an arena and fill it with 50,000 people every single time...,” Trump said. “And you watch, they’ll milk it every single day between now and

Nov. 3. And guess what, after Nov. 3 coronavirus will magically, all of a sudden, go away and disappear and everybody will be able to reopen.”

Trump added that Vice President Biden “loves this” because he is not able to draw comparable crowds to his campaign events. He said that Democrats are trying to take away the President’s “greatest asset”— his ability to connect with the American people, and appear at campaign rallies.

Trump’s comments echoed his fathers’. **In February**, President Trump said that Democrats’ criticism of his administration’s response to COVID-19 is “their new hoax.”

Several Fox News hosts have faced criticism for downplaying the threat of the COVID-19, especially early in the American outbreak, including Pirro and Sean Hannity. **Research** released in April by the Becker Friedman Institute for Economics found that viewership of Hannity’s show, compared to a Fox News show which warned viewers of the virus’ threat, is “strongly associated with a greater number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the early stages of the pandemic.” In a statement, a Fox News spokesperson called the study “factually wrong.” “The ‘study’ almost completely ignores [Hannity’s] coverage and repeated, specific warnings and concerns from January 27-February 26 including an early interview with Dr. Fauci in January,” the spokesperson said.

MOST POPULAR ON TIME

- 1** [How Did Japan Beat Coronavirus Without Lockdowns or Testing?](#)
- 2** [Brazil Is Starting to Lose the Fight Against Coronavirus—and Its President Is Looking the Other Way](#)
- 3** [What We Know About the Effects of COVID-19 on the Body](#)

WRITE TO TARA LAW AT TARA.LAW@TIME.COM.

TIME