

Two test positive for coronavirus at US conference attended by Pence

March 7 2020

Two people have tested positive for the new coronavirus after taking part in a pro-Israel lobby group's conference in Washington which Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and dozens of lawmakers also attended.

The influential American Israel Public Affairs Committee said in an email to attendees, speakers and congressional offices that the infected pair had traveled from New York to go to the March 1-3 event.

"We have confirmed that at least two Policy Conference attendees from New York have tested positive for the Coronavirus," AIPAC said in the message, posted to its Twitter account.

Officials said on Friday that 22 new cases had been confirmed in New York state, mostly in a Westchester County cluster north of New York City, bringing the total to 44.

"We have continued to remain in constant communication with the Westchester County Health Department and the DC Health Department which is coordinating with the New York Health Department, and national [health](#) authorities," AIPAC added.

AIPAC circulated a statement later Friday it attributed to Washington health authorities saying no immediate risk to attendees had been identified. DC Public Health was unavailable for comment.

The event attracted several high-profile attendees including Pence, Pompeo, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and Democratic former White House hopeful Mike Bloomberg.

Pence is leading the US response to the novel [coronavirus](#).

Lawmakers from all political stripes make an annual pilgrimage of sorts to AIPAC to pledge their support for the state of Israel on a grand stage.

About 18,000 people had been expected to travel from across the US to attend the conference, which typically attracts around two-thirds of the members of Congress.

Attendees swamped Capitol Hill in their hundreds during the event.

"If you test positive for Coronavirus, we urge you to inform your local health authorities so they can properly coordinate the response to this situation with the appropriate health authorities," AIPAC said.

The virus has now killed more than 3,450 people and infected more than 100,000 across 92 nations since the outbreak first emerged in China in December. Over 3,000 of those deaths have been in China.

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