

'We will not back down,' Florida's governor addresses lockdown talk



FILE PHOTO: Governor Ron DeSantis held a press conference outside of a Panama City Beach Publix on Jan. 12, 2021. (WJHG/WECP)

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PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla (WCTV) - Florida's governor says he'll "respond very swiftly" to any federal attempts to impose restrictions or lockdowns in the state.

Gov. Ron DeSantis rebuffed reports that the Biden administration is considering imposing travel restrictions in Florida, saying the state has fared better in the pandemic than many states on lockdown.

"Since Dec. 1, well over half the country has seen much worse COVID results than here in Florida," Gov. DeSantis said.

He cited stats that show Florida as 28th in the nation in the number of COVID cases, 30th in the nation in COVID hospitalizations and 42nd in the nation in COVID fatalities.

"Any attempt to restrict or lockdown Florida by the federal government would be an attack on our state done purely for political purposes," Gov. DeSantis said at a press conference in Port Charlotte Thursday. "We will not back down, and if anyone tries to harm Floridians or target us, we will respond very swiftly."

DeSantis said Florida has vaccinated more seniors than any other state, with approximately 35% of its 4.5 million seniors getting vaccines.

The governor issued the strong words as he discussed the expanded retail rollout of vaccines in Florida this week and a new pilot program to help homebound veterans who cannot travel to vaccine sites.

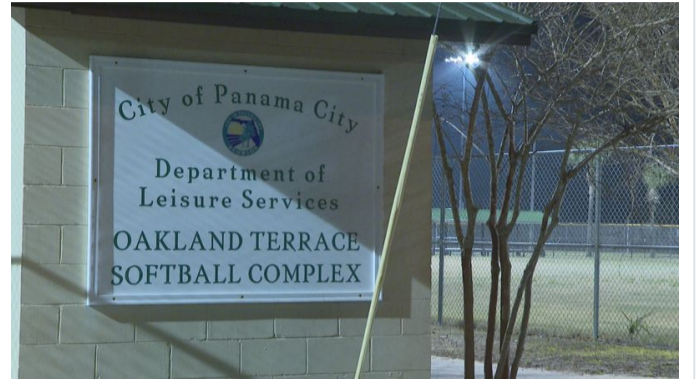
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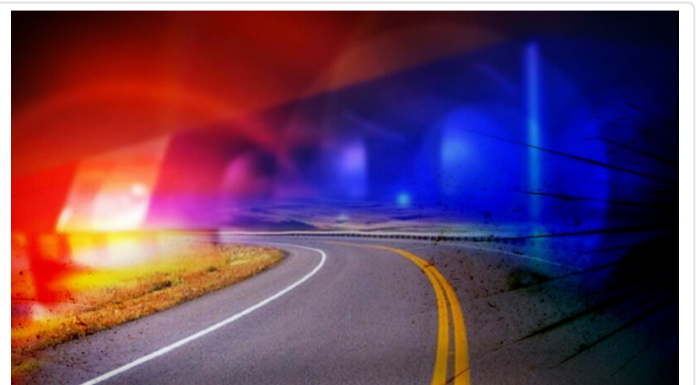
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