



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

COVID-19 Press Briefing

January 5, 2022



Daily Change in COVID-19 Cases, US

January 22, 2020 – January 03, 2022

TOTAL Cases Reported Since 1/22/20

56,310,718

NEW Cases Reported to CDC on 1/3/22

828,417

Change in 7-Day Case Average

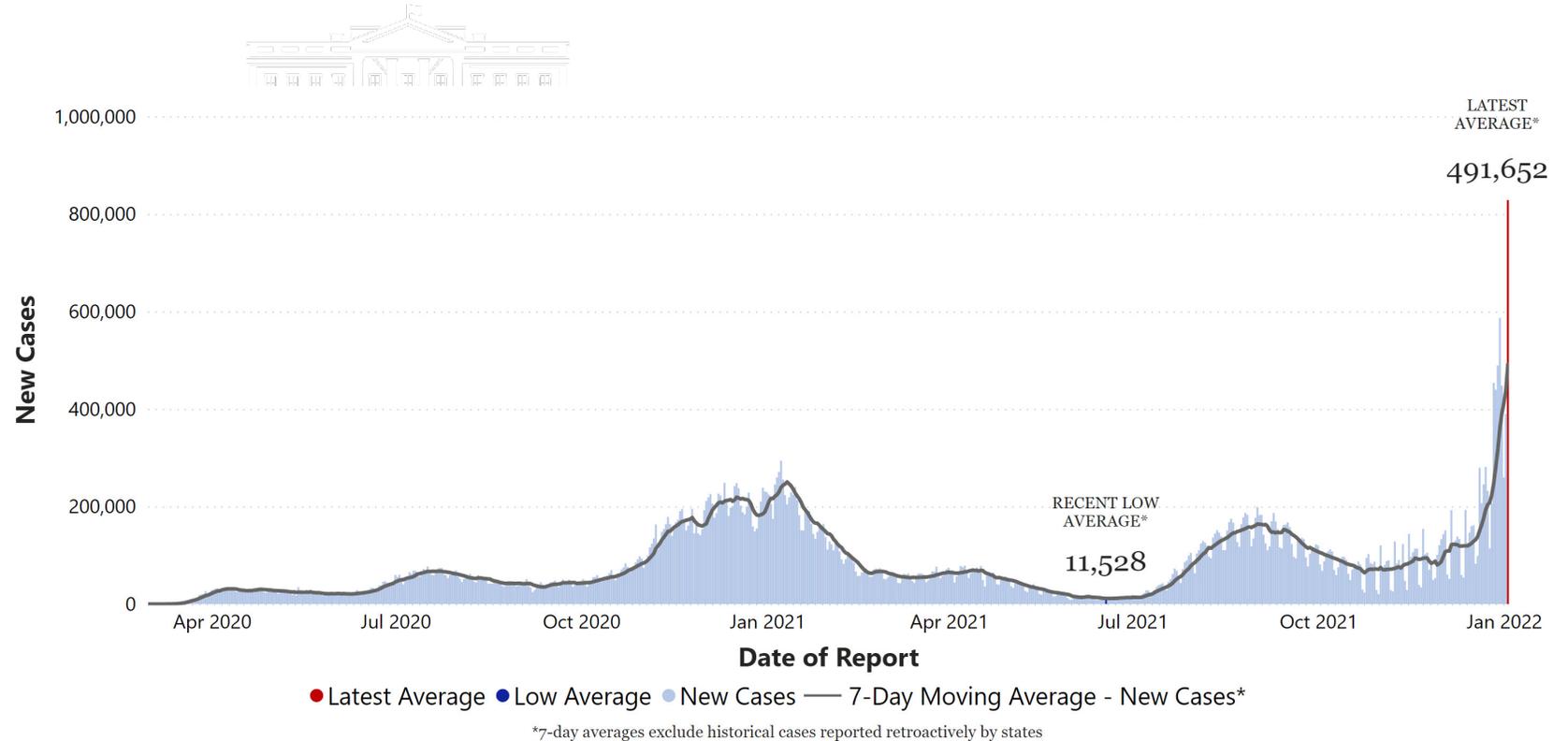
+97.8%

Current 7-Day Case Average (12/28/21 - 1/3/22)

491,652

Prior 7-Day Case Average (12/21/21 - 12/27/21)

248,572



New Admissions of Patients with Confirmed COVID-19, US

August 1, 2020 – January 02, 2022

Patients Currently Hospitalized with COVID on 1/2/22

96,677

New Admissions on 1/2/22

15,715

Peak in New Admissions (1/5/21)

17,965

Change in 7-Day Average of New Admissions

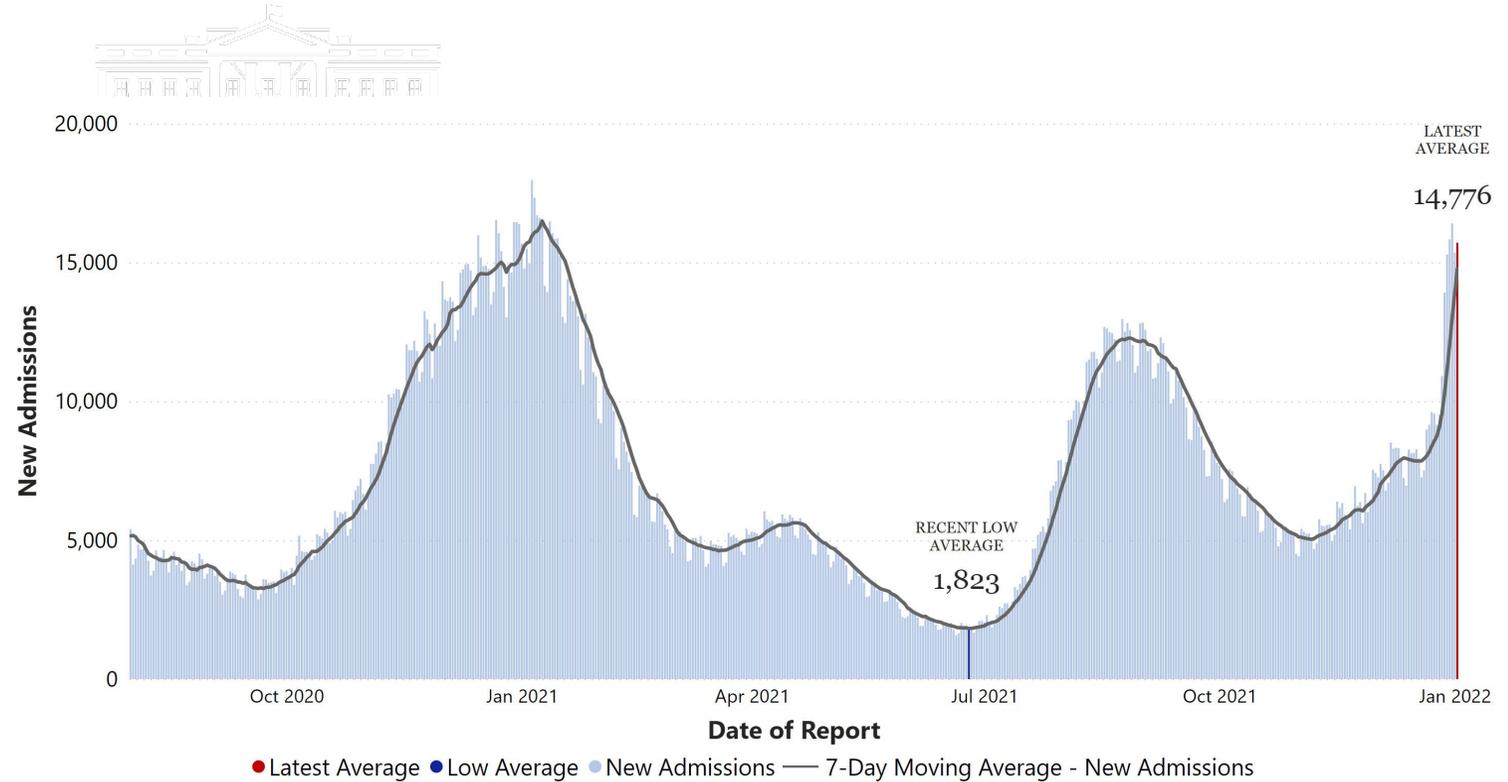
+62.9%

Current 7-Day Average of New Admissions (12/27/21 - 1/2/22)

14,776

Prior 7-Day Average of New Admissions (12/20/21 - 12/26/21)

9,071



Daily Change in COVID-19 Deaths, US

January 22, 2020 – January 03, 2022

TOTAL Deaths Reported Since 1/22/2020

825,106

NEW Deaths Reported to CDC on 1/3/22

1,559

Change in 7-Day Death Average

+5.4%

Current 7-Day Death Average (12/28/21 - 1/3/22)

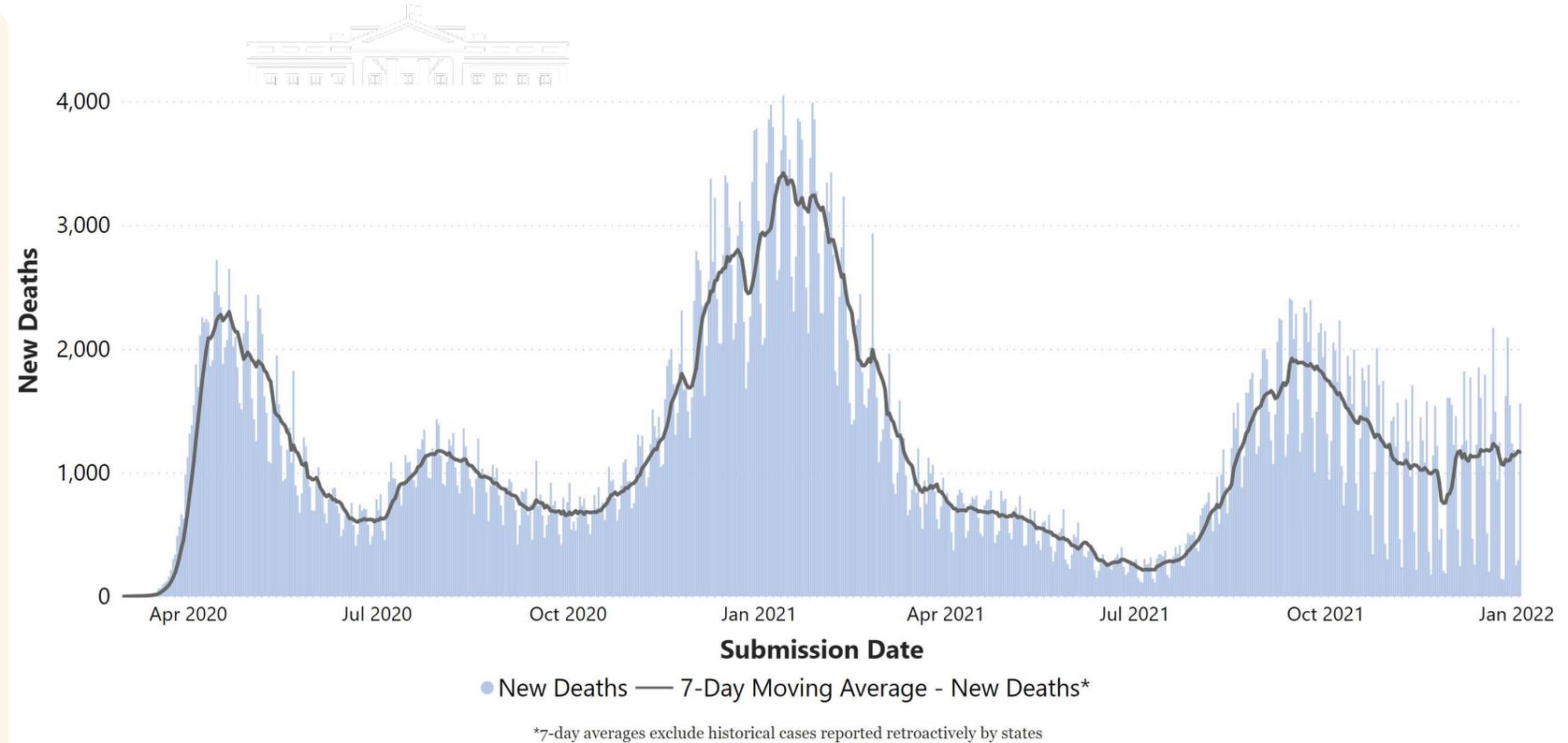
1,166

Prior 7-Day Death Average (12/21/21 - 12/27/21)

1,106

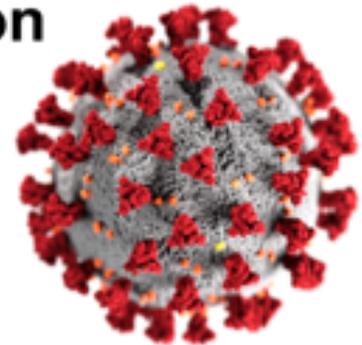
Forecasted Total Deaths by 01/22/22

860,000 to 866,000

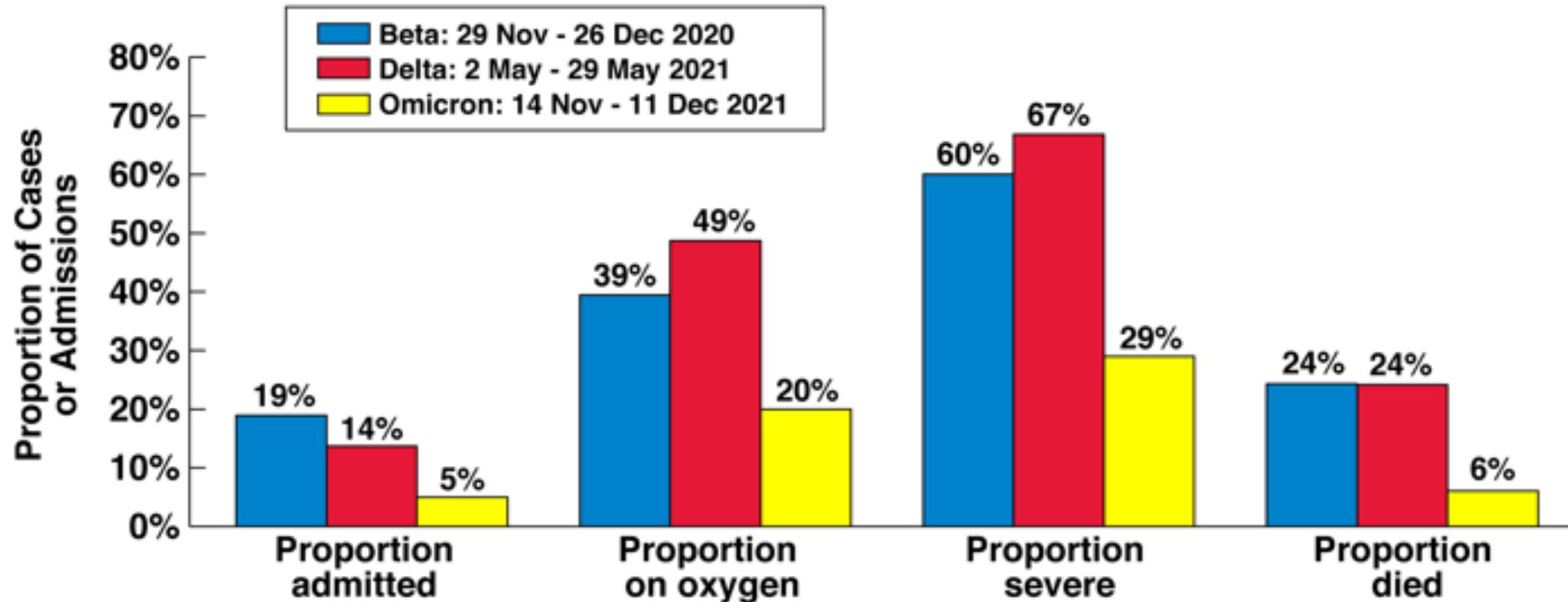


SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant: Key Concerns

- **Transmissibility**
 - Omicron is a highly transmissible variant that spreads rapidly
- **Immune evasion and vaccine effectiveness**
 - Omicron evades vaccine protection against symptomatic disease and to some extent severe disease
 - Laboratory and clinical data indicate that booster shots reconstitute vaccine protection against Omicron
- **Severity of disease**
 - Omicron appears less likely to cause severe disease than previous variants



Gauteng Province, South Africa: Outcomes of SARS-CoV-2 Cases During Beta-, Delta- and Omicron-Dominated Waves



Source: W Jassat et al. *SSRN (preprint)*, 12/29/2021



Recent Observational Studies on Omicron Severity from the United Kingdom

UK Health Security Agency – 12/31/21

- Risk of presentation to emergency care or hospital admission ~50% lower with Omicron than with Delta

University of Edinburgh (Scotland) – 12/22/21

- Risk of COVID-19 hospitalization ~2/3 lower with Omicron than with Delta

Imperial College, London – 12/22/21

- Risk of hospitalization lasting 1+ days ~40-45% lower with Omicron than with Delta



Early Signals of Significantly Increased Vaccine Breakthrough, Decreased Hospitalization Rates, and Less Severe Disease in Patients With COVID-19 Caused by the Omicron Variant of SARS-CoV-2 in Houston, Texas

PA Christensen, JM Musser et al.

- Compared to patients infected with either Alpha or Delta variants, Omicron patients (n=862) were significantly younger, had significantly increased vaccine breakthrough rates, and were ~2/3 less likely to be hospitalized
- Omicron patients required less intense respiratory support and had shorter hospital stays

Early Estimates of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant Severity Based on a Matched Cohort Study, Ontario, Canada

AC Ulloa, KA Brown et al.

- **The risk of hospitalization or death was 65% lower among Omicron cases compared to Delta cases, while risk of intensive care unit admission or death was 83% lower**

Multiple Laboratory Studies Suggest Omicron is Less Likely to Cause Severe Disease

- Examples of papers showing decreased lung infectivity, replication, inflammation and pathology for Omicron compared to previous variants

 Research Square Preprint
December 29, 2021

The SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.529 Omicron Virus Causes Attenuated Infection and Disease in Mice and Hamsters

M Diamond, V Simon et al.

 Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory December 30, 2021

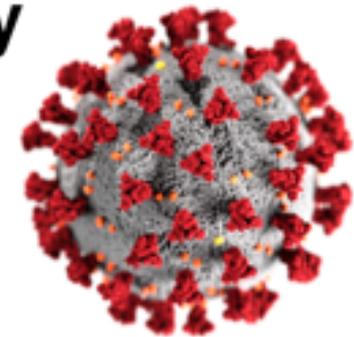
bioRxiv THE PREPRINT SERVER FOR BIOLOGY

SARS-CoV-2 Omicron-B.1.1.529 Variant Leads to Less Severe Disease than Pango B and Delta Variants Strains in a Mouse Model of Severe COVID-19

EG Bentley, JP Stewart et al.

Current Assessment of Omicron Disease Severity – Bottom Line

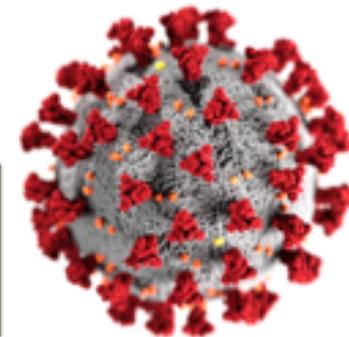
- Multiple sources of preliminary data indicate decreased severity with Omicron
- More definitive assessment of severity will be possible with longer-term follow up in different nations
- **We should not be complacent** since the increased transmissibility of Omicron may override positive impact of reduced disease severity, and severely stress our hospitals with large numbers of COVID-19 patients



COVID-19 in Children and Vaccine Status

- For children, the Omicron variant so far appears to be less severe than the Delta variant
- **However**, with rapid community spread of Omicron, child hospitalizations are increasing, mostly among the unvaccinated
- Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine authorized and recommended for children 5-17 years
 - Children 12-17 years can get a booster shot (FDA authorization for 12-15 years on 1/3/2022; ACIP meeting pending)

■ **Clinical trial of Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for children 6 months to <5 years ongoing**





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