*Alexander Hamilton, Federalist #70, and the COVID 19 Crisis*

The Federalist Papers were written to defend the proposed Constitution after the Constitutional Convention. Alexander Hamilton wrote Federalist #70 to discuss and defend the proposed executive branch.

**Federalist 70 Excerpts**

THERE is an idea, which is not without its advocates, that a vigorous Executive is inconsistent with the genius of republican government. The enlightened well-wishers to this species of government must at least hope that the supposition is destitute of foundation; since they can never admit its truth, without at the same time admitting the condemnation of their own principles. Energy in the Executive is a leading character in the definition of good government. It is essential to the protection of the community against foreign attacks; it is not less essential to the steady administration of the laws; to the protection of property against those irregular and high-handed combinations which sometimes interrupt the ordinary course of justice; to the security of liberty against the enterprises and assaults of ambition, of faction, and of anarchy…
There can be no need, however, to multiply arguments or examples on this head. A feeble Executive implies a feeble execution of the government. A feeble execution is but another phrase for a bad execution; and a government ill executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad government.

Taking it for granted, therefore, that all men of sense will agree in the necessity of an energetic Executive, it will only remain to inquire, what are the ingredients which constitute this energy? How far can they be combined with those other ingredients which constitute safety in the republican sense? And how far does this combination characterize the plan which has been reported by the convention?

The ingredients which constitute energy in the Executive are, first, unity; secondly, duration; thirdly, an adequate provision for its support; fourthly, competent powers.

The ingredients which constitute safety in the republican sense are, first, a due dependence on the people, secondly, a due responsibility…

**Discussion Questions**

1. Do you agree with Hamilton that an “energetic” executive is essential in a republic? Why or why not?
2. What “ingredients” does Hamilton list as things that constitute energy in the executive?
3. Hamilton was conscientious about having an executive that could both be strong enough to uphold the law, but not so powerful that it could be a tyrant. Do you think the “ingredients” for safety from the executive are adequate? Why or why not?
4. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is part of the executive branch. The CDC was founded in 1946 and located in Atlanta. Conduct some research on the Internet to discover when the agency created and for what reason.
5. What actions is the CDC currently taking in the fight against coronavirus? Conduct some research on the Internet to assist in providing specific examples.