

The Honorable Joe Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

February 26, 2021

To Help End the Pandemic as Quickly as Possible and Restore U.S. International Cooperation, Please End Trump's Blockade of the COVID-19 Emergency Waiver of WTO Rules So More Vaccines and Treatment Can Be Produced

Dear President Biden,

Congratulations on becoming President. We are encouraged by the administration's steadfast efforts to eradicate COVID-19 and in so doing save countless lives and livelihoods. Many Americans are hopeful that your administration will improve the pace of COVID-19 vaccine production and deployment in the United States. But, that alone will not hasten the end of the global pandemic.

We the undersigned organizations respectfully urge you to reverse a dangerous and self-defeating position taken by President Trump that threatens the prospects of ending the COVID-19 disaster. Namely, we urge your administration to lift the U.S. blockage of the "Waiver from Certain Provisions of the TRIPS Agreement for the Prevention, Containment and Treatment of COVID-19" supported by more than 100 nations at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

With global supply limited, many people in low- and middle-income countries around the globe will not have vaccine access until at least 2022, according to the British Medical Journal. Most of the world's poorest countries will have to wait until 2024 for mass immunization if current trends continue, reports the Economist Intelligence Unit. We are sure you agree this is unacceptable.

Such global inequity is not only a catastrophic moral failure that will lead to needless suffering and loss of life. Ongoing outbreaks anywhere mean greater risk of new variants developing against which vaccines are not effective and/or that can evade the antibodies developed by survivors. **There simply is no way to defeat the pandemic in the United States without bold action worldwide.**

The science is clear: People in developing countries need urgent access to vaccines and treatments to achieve herd immunity, just as people in the United States do. Without global action, the health crisis and resulting economic crisis here and worldwide will continue. A new International Chamber of Commerce report concluded that the current best-case scenario of wealthy nations being fully vaccinated by the middle of 2021 and poor countries largely shut out could cause economic losses exceeding \$9 trillion. Nearly half of those costs would be absorbed by wealthy countries like the United States, Canada and Britain.

The WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) requires WTO signatory countries to provide lengthy monopoly protections for medicines, tests and the technologies used to produce them. After a global campaign by public health and development groups, in 2001 the WTO issued a binding declaration about better balancing TRIPS intellectual property protections and public health needs. A temporary emergency COVID-19 waiver is in line with the WTO members' agreement that intellectual property rules cannot create barriers to health treatments that unnecessarily cost human lives and undermine the global economy.

Notably, governments, particularly the United States, provided billions in upfront payments, clinical trial support, and guaranteed purchase, so pharmaceutical firms did not bear risk. Many precursor technologies used in the new vaccines resulted from long-term U.S. government efforts, in collaboration with scientists in the United States and around the world. Yet now the corporations will control where and how much vaccine is made. Even as some firms holding vaccine monopolies have contracted others to manufacture, there is insufficient supply. Thus, while U.S. participation in programs like COVAX is important, unless production is quickly ramped up around the world to meet global demand, there simply will not be enough supply for COVAX to provide countries in need. The corporate monopoly rights and resulting supply shortages also threaten access for billions of people in the developing world, to the COVID-19 treatments that are bringing down mortality rates here. The TRIPS rules limit government options to gain access to vital COVID treatments at an affordable price.

Today, the many nations that cannot obtain the COVID-19 vaccines and treatments needed to cover their populations must attempt to negotiate the slow "product by product" and "country by country" compulsory license approach allowed under TRIPS. (And attempts to exercise these rights has led to fierce U.S. opposition in recent years, evidenced in the U.S. government's Special 301 Report.) In contrast, the TRIPS waiver would remove a key obstacle to governments and manufacturers worldwide accessing the technology needed to invest in making COVID vaccines and treatments as rapidly as possible, in as many places as possible, for the billions who still need them.

It is rare that one policy change can so significantly impact a global health effort that could save millions of lives. Supporting this waiver is the right thing to do in and of itself. But doing so would be not only altruistic. Ending the COVID-19 pandemic as quickly as possible worldwide is also necessary to reboot the global economy on which so much of the U.S. economy relies.

And, with so many of the world's nations supporting this emergency waiver already, you can also help restore America's moral and public health leadership in the world by siding with the majority to prioritize saving lives over protecting pharmaceutical corporation monopolies and profits. This new position would be widely noted, given U.S. officials' shameful attack on the waiver at a January WTO meeting.

We welcomed your promise "absolutely positively" to commit to sharing technology and access to any COVID-19 vaccine developed in the US, during an interview with Ady Barkan. At the time you said, "It's the only humane thing in the world to do. It's not only a good thing to do, it's overwhelmingly in our interest to do it as well." We are asking you to deliver on that promise.

Thus, we respectfully request that you break with the unconscionable policies Trump supported and, before the next WTO General Council meeting March 1-2, announce that the United States will no longer oppose the temporary, emergency COVID-19 WTO waiver of certain TRIPS provisions. We also request that your administration inform our trade partners that the United States will apply the same temporary, emergency waiver of the same intellectual property rules included in U.S. bilateral and regional trade agreements for COVID-19 vaccines, testing and treatments.

Sincerely,

Citizens Trade Campaign
Doctors Without Borders / Médecins Sans
Frontières USA
Health GAP (Global Access Project)
Oxfam
Public Citizen
A Well-Fed World
ActionAid USA
Agricultural Justice Project
AIDS Healthcare Foundation
Alliance for Democracy (US)
Alliance for Global Justice
Alliance for Retired Americans
Alter Terra
American Federation of State, County and Municipal
Employees
American Federation of Teachers
American Friends Service Committee
American Jewish World Service
American Medical Student Association
Americans for Democratic Action (ADA)
Americas Program-Mx
Amnesty International
Appetite For Change, Inc.
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA
Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers
Avaaz
AVAC
Backbone Campaign
Black AIDS Institute
Campaign for America's Future
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Digital Democracy
Center for Environmental Health
Center for Global Justice
Center for International Policy
Center for Justice & Democracy
Center for Popular Democracy Action
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Chronic Illnesses Advocacy & Awareness Group
Climate Crisis Policy
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Codepink
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Communications Workers of America (CWA)

Consumer Action
CPATH (Center for Policy Analysis on Trade &
Health)
Daily Kos
Dean's Beans Organic Coffee Co.
Debs-Jones-Douglass Institute
Demand Progress
Democratic Socialists of America, International
Committee, Economics & Trade Subcommittee
Disruption Project
Doctors For America
Drug Prices Are Too High
Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi)
Earth Action, Inc.
Earth Island Institute
EcoEquity
El Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc.
Environmentalists Against War
Ethix Merch
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Fair World Project
Family Farm Defenders
Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR-USA)
Fight for the Future
Focus on the Global South
Franciscan Action Network
Free Speech For People
Friends of Angola
Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict
Global Exchange
Greenpeace
Health Alliance International
Health and Development Consulting International
Hip-Hop Caucus
Holy Cross International Justice Office
Hope Border Institute
Human Rights Watch
Indivisible
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Institute for Policy Studies - Global Economy Project
Interfaith Service to Latin America
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace
Workers
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
International Center for Technology Assessment

International Federation of Professional and Technical
 Engineers (IFPTE)
 InterReligious Task Force On Central America
 Jamyang Foundation
 Jewish Voice for Peace Action
 Jewish World Watch
 Jobs With Justice
 Justice Is Global
 Knowledge Commune
 Labor Network for Sustainability
 Latin America Working Group
 League of Women Voters of the United States
 Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
 Moana Nui
 Move To Amend
 Movement Strategy Center (Climate Innovation)
 MoveOn
 National Association of Consumer Advocates
 National Association of Letter Carriers
 National Consumers League
 National Family Farm Coalition
 National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade
 Association
 National Lawyers Guild International Committee
 National Nurses United
 National Organization for Women
 Network for Environmental & Economic
 Responsibility
 Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala
 (NISGUA)
 NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
 New Rules for Global Finance
 Nicaragua Center for Community Action
 Nicaraguan Cultural Alliance
 Nigerian American Public Affairs Committee
 Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
 Ode to Earth/Echoes of Silence
 Other98
 Our Revolution
 Partners In Health
 Peace Action
 People Demanding Action
 People's Action
 People's Health Movement–USA
 Pesticide Action Network
 Physicians for a National Health Program
 Popular Resistance
 PrEP4All
 Presbyterian Church (USA)
 Pride at Work
 Progressive Change Campaign Committee
 Progressive Democrats of America
 Progressive Doctors
 Quixote Center
 R2H Action [Right to Health]
 Rainforest Information Centre

Revolving Door Project
 RootsAction.org
 Rural Coalition
 Serengeti Watch
 Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
 Sierra Club
 Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational
 Leadership
 Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team
 Social Security Works
 Society of Development and Care
 Sunrise Movement
 T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
 The Altai Project
 The Borneo Project
 The Democracy Collaborative
 The Episcopal Church
 The International Union, United Automobile,
 Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of
 America (UAW)
 The Oakland Institute
 The Rick Smith Show
 The United Methodist Church - General Board of
 Church and Society
 Trade Justice Alliance
 Transport Workers Union of America
 Treatment Action Group
 Treatment Advocacy and Literacy Campaign (TALC)
 Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic
 Community
 UNITE HERE
 United Brotherhood of Carpenters
 United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness
 Ministries
 United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of
 America (UE)
 United Steelworkers
 Veterans For Peace
 Washington Office on Latin America
 Wild Heritage
 Win Without War
 Witness for Peace Solidarity Collective
 Women's International League for Peace and
 Freedom US
 World Renew

350 Seattle
 Action Together Connecticut
 AFSCME Local 328
 AFT MA
 AFT Seattle Community Colleges Local 1789
 AFT Washington
 AFT-Oregon
 AHBLEZA Ranch
 Alaska Clean Water Advocacy
 Albany Labor Council

Allston Brighton Health Collaborative
 American Friends Service Committee, Colorado
 Americans for Democratic Action Iowa
 Asian Pacific Environmental Network
 Austin Tan Cerca de la Frontera
 Australian Human Rights Institute
 Baltimore, Maryland Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter
 Veterans For Peace
 Bay Area For Bernie
 Beacon of Light Ministry
 Beacon Presbyterian Fellowship
 Border Agricultural Workers Project
 Boston Workers Circle Center for Jewish Culture and
 Social Justice
 Boulder Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO
 Boulder Democratic Socialists of America
 Bronx River Bicycle Works
 California Nurses Association / National Nurses
 United
 California Trade Justice Coalition
 CancerFam
 Casa Baltimore Limay
 Cascade AIDS Project
 Center for Law, Innovation and Creativity,
 Northeastern University School of Law
 Central Florida AFL-CIO
 Central Maine Labor Council
 Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin
 America
 Chicago Women's AIDS Project
 Church Council of Greater Seattle
 Citizens' Environmental Coalition
 Climate Action Now!
 Coalition to Protect New York
 Colorado Young Democrats
 Columbia Postdoctoral Workers - UAW Local 4100
 Communication Workers of America (CWA) Local
 2205
 Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local
 1081
 Community Alliance for Global Justice
 Community Services Unlimited Inc.
 Congregation Beth El, Bangor Maine
 Connecticut Citizen Action Group (CCAG)
 Connecticut Fair Trade Coalition
 Conservation Congress
 Coulee Region Progressives
 Cross Border Network
 DC Jobs With Justice
 Defend Our Health
 Democratic Party of Wisconsin Progressive Caucus
 Democracy for Connecticut
 Denver Justice and Peace Committee
 DownRiver Alliance
 Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian
 Universalist Church
 Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
 Faith Action Network
 Faith Lutheran Church
 Family Action Network Movement
 Farmworker Association of Florida
 Filipino Community of Seattle
 First Unitarian - Economic Justice Action Group
 Florida Alliance for Retired Americans
 Florida Peace & Justice Alliance
 Food AND Medicine
 Food Shift
 Food for Maine's Future
 Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR)
 Fox Valley Citizens for Peace & Justice
 Ft. Myers Chapter of World Beyond War
 Future March
 Greater Boston Trade Justice
 Greater Brunswick PeaceWorks
 Greater Kansas City Coalition Of Union Women
 Health Care for All Oregon - Action
 Health Care For All Texas
 Health Care for All Washington
 Health Care Is a Human Right WA
 Hesperian Health Guides
 HIV + Aging Research Project - Palm Springs
 Holy Spirit Lutheran Church
 HomeBorn Health, PLLC
 Hometown Action
 IBEW L.U. 1253
 Idaho Alliance for Retired Americans (IDARA)
 Illinois Coalition for Clean Air & Water
 Illinois Single-Payer Coalition
 Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center
 Interfaith Community Services
 Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans
 Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
 IUE-CWA Local 84775
 Jefferson County Young Democrats
 Joint Council of Teamsters No. 37
 Judson Memorial Church
 Kate Mullany Chapter Coalition Labor Union Woman
 Kickapoo Peace Circle
 KyotoUSA
 Labor Dem Work Group
 Labor for Bernie
 Local Majority
 LULAC of Greater Cincinnati
 LULAC Ohio
 Maine AFL-CIO
 Maine Council of Churches
 Maine Fair Trade Campaign
 Maine Health Care Action
 Maine Labor Group on Health
 Michiana Peace and Justice Coalition

Milwaukee Fair Trade Coalition [Wisconsin, USA]
 MLK Labor Council
 MSEA-SEIU Local 1989
 Nature in the City
 New Jersey Tenants Organization
 New York State Alliance for Retired Americans
 New York State Nurses Association
 New York Trade Justice Coalition
 NH Citizens for Progress
 NH Conference United Church of Christ, Economic
 Justice Mission Group
 NJ State Industrial Union Council
 No Justice No Pride
 Northlake Lutheran Church
 Oakland Tenants Union
 Occupy Bellingham
 Occupy Bergen County
 Ohio Fair Trade Campaign
 Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
 Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans
 Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals
 Oregon Nurses Association
 Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility
 Oregon Progressive Party
 Oregon Steelworkers Legislative and Education
 Committee
 Our Illinois Revolution
 Our Revolution SCV
 Our Revolution Texas
 Our Revolution Western Maryland
 Pacific Green Party
 Park Slope Food Coop
 PAUSE - People of Albany United for Safe Energy
 Peace Action Bay Ridge
 Peace Action Maine
 Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine
 Peace House
 Peace, Justice, Sustainability NOW!
 Peninsula Peace & Justice Blue Hill Maine
 Pennsylvania Council of Churches
 Peoples Climate Movement-New York
 Physicians for a National Health Program Illinois
 Pima Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO
 Planting Justice
 PODER (People Organized in Defense of Earth & her
 Resources)
 Portland Central America Solidarity Committee
 (PCASC)
 Portland Interfaith Clergy Resistance
 Portland Jobs with Justice
 Portland Raging Grannies
 Portland's UnShul
 Power In Community Alliance (PICA)
 Professional Fire Fighters of Maine
 Progressive Democrats of America - Arizona
 Progressive Democrats of America - Calumet Region

Progressive Democrats of America - Tucson Chapter
 Progressive Democrats of the Santa Monica
 Mountains
 PROTEC17 - Professional & Technical Employees,
 Local 17
 Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action
 Radio Free Maine/Button ME
 Represent Us Pasco County
 Rochester Joint Board, Workers United, SEIU
 San Francisco Gray Panthers
 San Francisco Living Wage Coalition
 Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
 School Sisters of Notre Dame Atlantic Midwest
 Province
 Seattle DSA
 Seattle Education Association
 Seattle Fellowship of Reconciliation
 SEIU Healthcare Minnesota
 Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province
 Leadership
 Sisters of Charity, BVM
 Society of Professional Engineering Employees in
 Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE 2001
 Solidarity Committee of the Capital District
 South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and
 Training Inc (SAFEST)
 South Austin Coalition
 South Central Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
 South Florida LCLAA
 Southern Appalachian Labor School
 Southern Maine Labor Council
 Southern Maine Workers' Center
 Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development
 Sunrise Movement at Penn State Harrisburg
 Sunrise Movement, Greater Morgantown Hub
 Sustainable Tompkins, Inc.
 Terraza 7 / RACA
 Texas Alliance for Retired Americans
 Texas Alliance for Retired Americans Houston
 Chapter
 Texas American Federation of Teachers
 Texas Fair Trade Coalition
 The Enviro Show
 The Episcopal Church in Western Oregon
 The New 21st Century Movement Association
 The People's Lobby
 The Question Alliance
 The Walk for Mental Health Awareness - Houston
 The Wilson Center / MCA
 Toledo Area Jobs with Justice & Interfaith Worker
 Justice Coalition
 TradeJustice New York Metro
 Transformations CDC
 UAW 4121
 Unitarian Universalist Action New Hampshire

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Harford County
(UUFHC)
Unitarian Universalist Society of Bangor (Maine)
Social Justice Committee
UNITE HERE Local 5
United Campus Workers Colorado
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 2013
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555
United Steelworkers District 12
United Steelworkers District 13
United Steelworkers Local 1097
United Steelworkers Local 175
United Steelworkers Local 1852
United Steelworkers Local 2-248
United Steelworkers Local 4-00291
United Steelworkers Local 900
United Steelworkers Maine Labor Council
United Steelworkers SOAR Chapter 7-1
United Steelworkers Local 675
Urban Appalachian Community Coalition
UW United Students Against Sweatshops
Veterans For Peace, Spokane Chapter #35
Viva Sierra Gorda
WA 5th District Democrats

Washington Against Nuclear Weapons Coalition
Washington Biotechnology Action Council
Washington Community Action Network
Washington Fair Trade Coalition
Washington Federation of State Employees/AFSCME
Council 28
Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
Washington State 31st Legislative District Democrats
Washington State Alliance for Retired Americans
Washington State Labor Council
Wes Shore Farm
Wesley United Methodist Church
WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
Whatcom Peace & Justice Center
Whole Washington
Wild Oyster Project
Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition
Wisconsin Farmers Union
Wisconsin Grassroots Network
Women's Health Institute
Working Families Party (Upstate NY)
World Beyond War-Central Florida Chapter
WV Citizen Action Education Fund
WV Citizen Action Group