

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