

November 24, 2020



Open Letter to President-Elect Biden: A People's Vaccine—Free and Fair for All—to End the COVID-19 Crisis

A safe, effective and accessible COVID-19 vaccine is vital to bring an end to today's dual economic and health crisis – so our families are safe, so people can get back to work, so we can live our lives again. No one anywhere is safe from this disease until everyone everywhere is safe.

As a cross-section of leaders from public health, business, faith-based, racial justice and labor organizations, public service, entertainment and economics, we join our voices to call on the next President of the United States to commit to a People's Vaccine, which provides protection as a global public good, freely and fairly available to all, prioritizing those most in need worldwide.

The next US President will have tremendous power to help decide who gets access to protection from this virus, when and at what cost. With this power comes an historic opportunity for America to lead again by leveraging the strength, know-how and generosity of our people to combat this disease here at home and wherever it resides.

A People's Vaccine is a medical necessity, an economic priority, and a moral imperative. The COVID-19 virus ruthlessly exploits existing inequalities, disproportionately affecting seniors, frontline healthcare and other essential workers, communities of color, people living in poverty, and people at more risk due to pre-existing conditions. Conflict over access to a vaccine that is distributed based on one's wealth or nationality - rather than on need - will risk millions of lives, delay our economic recovery and exacerbate the crisis. A safe, effective, free and fairly distributed People's Vaccine is the fastest and most effective way to fight this pandemic, reopen our businesses and schools, protect Americans and our interests, and save lives here in the US and around the world. At a time when millions of Americans and people around the world face the dual-ills of health and economic insecurity, with communities of color facing disproportionate burdens, and where too many households stand only one health crisis away from poverty, it has never been more important to deliver a vaccine that can serve to protect working people.

Toward this end, the technology and know-how to make a COVID-19 vaccine should be shared with the world. Patents should be licensed, data published, and technical assistance provided to teach appropriate vaccine production, so that qualified manufacturers everywhere can help expand the world's supply and prevent the type of artificial scarcity which will cost lives and livelihoods at home and abroad.

US taxpayers have already committed more than \$10 billion in public money towards a COVID19 vaccine. A vaccine paid for by the people should work for the people and remain of the people.

We call on President-Elect Biden to:

1. Empower scientists to independently determine - without fear or favor - if each vaccine is safe and effective for approval. Neither politics nor profits have a place in the vaccine approval process.

2. Ensure full transparency and accountability over US funding for the development of COVID-19 vaccines.
3. Guarantee all vaccines are sold at affordable prices, as close to cost as possible, to ensure that the US and other governments can provide protection to people for free.
4. Ensure that companies and research institutions share vaccine technologies and know-how nationally and globally to overcome price and supply barriers, especially for those vaccines developed with taxpayer money.
5. Prevent monopoly control of production in order to mobilize large-scale and decentralized manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines to adequately supply safe and effective vaccines for people here and around the world.
6. Work collaboratively with world leaders and health authorities worldwide to deliver and implement a fair and equitable global distribution plan for the vaccine and all COVID-19 products and technologies.
7. Prioritize protection for those people most in need and most at risk, including frontline healthcare and social-care workers, essential workers, older people, people with preexisting conditions at higher risk, and high-transmission communities here and around the world.

Signed (Alphabetical),

Frederick Abbott - Edward Ball Eminent Scholar Professor at Florida State University College of Law; Co-Chair of the Global Health Law Committee of the International Law Association

Sharif Aly - CEO of Islamic Relief USA

Nancy Altman - President of Social Security Works

Hale Appleman – Actor

Shahzeen Attari, PhD - Associate Professor at the O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University Bloomington

Luke Baines - Actor

Brook Baker - Professor at Northeastern University School of Law; Senior Policy Analyst for the Health Global Access Project

Robert Bank - President and CEO of American Jewish World Service (AJWS)

Ady Barkan – Co-founder of the Be a Hero PAC; Organizer for the Center for Popular Democracy

Donna Barry, MSN, MPH - Director of Global Nursing and Assistant Professor at Regis College

Rania Batrice - Interim Executive Director of March for Science

Sister Ruth Battaglia - Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes

Paul Bland - Executive Director of Public Justice

Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, PhD – Chairperson of Buddhist Global Relief

Sister Pegge Boehm - Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Aberdeen, South Dakota

Ali Bokhari, DO, MPH - President of the American Medical Student Association

Rabbi Sharon Brous - Senior and Founding Rabbi of IKAR

Rev. Jennifer Butler - Founding Executive Director of Faith in Public Life; Author of *Who Stole My Bible?*

Melanie Campbell - President and CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation; Convener of the Black Women's Roundtable

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS – Executive Director of NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

Sharon Carpenter - TV Personality and Host

R. Alta Charo, JD - Warren P. Knowles Professor of Law & Bioethics, University of Wisconsin Law School

Noam Chomsky - Institute Professor (Emeritus) at MIT; Laureate Professor at the University of Arizona

Chelsea Clinton, DPhil, MPH - Vice Chair of the Clinton Foundation; Board Member at the Clinton Health Access Initiative; Board member at Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Jonathan Cohen - Director of the Public Health Program at Open Society Foundations

Ronald Coleman - President of the New Orleans Chapter of the NAACP

Christopher Cox, M.Div. - Associate Director at Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investment

Ophelia Dahl - Co-founder and Chair of the Board at Partners in Health

Sheila Davis, DNP – CEO of Partners in Health

Marie Dennis - Senior Advisor at Pax Christi International

Abigail Disney - Documentary Film Producer, Philanthropist, and Social Activist

Yacine Djibo - Founder and Executive Director of Speak Up Africa

Malu Fairley-Collins, Rev, BCC, ACPE Certified Educator - Vice President of the Alliance of Baptists

Paul Farmer, MD, PhD - Co-founder and Chief Strategist of Partners in Health; Kolokotronis University Professor and Chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School; Chief of the Division of Global Health Equity at Brigham and Women's Hospital

Latanya Mapp Frett - President and CEO of Global Fund for Women

Sakiko Fukada-Parr - Professor of International Affairs at The New School and Director of the Julien J. Studley Graduate Programs in International Affairs

Martha Gaines, JD, LLM - Distinguished Clinical Professor of Law at University of Wisconsin Law School; Founder of the Center for Patient Partnerships

Daniel Gillies - Actor

Gregg Gonsalves, PhD - Assistant Professor in Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases at Yale School of Public Health; Associate Professor of Law at Yale Law School; Co-director of the Global Health Justice Partnership and the Collaboration for Research Integrity and Transparency

Genevieve Gorder - Designer, Television Personality, Activist

Lawrence Gostin, JD – Professor of Global Health Law at Georgetown University; Founding O’Neill Chair in Global Health Law; Director of the WHO Center on Public Health Law and Human Rights

Rebecca L. Gould - Executive Director of Nebraska Appleseed

Sharon Groves, PhD - Vice President for Partner Engagement at Auburn Seminary

Rhiana Gunn-Wright - Director of Climate Policy at the Roosevelt Institute

Arjun Gupta – Actor

Darrick Hamilton - Henry Cohen Professor of Economics and Urban Policy and University Professor at The New School

Rosa Handelman - TV Writer and Producer - *Little Fires Everywhere*

Mary Anaise Heglar - Climate Justice Writer; Co-creator and Co-host of the Hot Take podcast and newsletter

Rev. Katharine Henderson, PhD- President of Auburn Seminary

Claire Holt - Actor

Margaret Huang - President and CEO of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) Action Fund

Eddie Iny - Director of the Corporate Accountability Program at United for Respect

Frederick Isasi - Executive Director of Families USA

Saru Jayaraman - President of One Fair Wage; Co-founder of the Restaurant Opportunities Centers (ROC) United; Director of the Food Labor Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley

Martha Jeffries - Film and Television Director, Producer, and Writer; Founding Member of Ocean Collectiv

Maz Jobrani - Comedian and Actor

Robert Johnson - President of the Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET); Senior Fellow at the Roosevelt Institute

Amy Kapczynski, JD - Professor of Law at Yale Law School

Vanessa Kerry, MD, MSc - Co-founder and CEO of Seed Global Health; Director of the Program in Global Public Policy and Social Change at Harvard Medical School; Physician at Massachusetts General Hospital

Aaron Kesselheim, MD, JD, MPH - Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School; Faculty Member at Brigham and Women's Hospital

Mary Jo Kilroy - Former Representative for Ohio's 15th District

Kendall Kliewer - Treasury Director at Avera Health

Sander Levin – Former Representative for Michigan's 9th District and Former Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; Professor of Practice at the University of Michigan's Ford School of Public Policy

Natalia Linos, MSc, ScD - Executive Director of the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University; Member of Poor People's Campaign COVID-19 Health Justice Advisory Committee

Sean Maguire - Actor

Kate Marvel, PhD - Climate Scientist and Science Writer; Associate Research Scientist at NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) and Columbia Engineering's Department of Applied Physics and Mathematics

Abby Maxman – President and CEO of Oxfam America

Mariana Mazzucato, PhD - Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at University College London (UCL) and Founder/Director of UCL's Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose

Benjamin Mason Meier, JD, LL.M, PhD - Associate Professor of Global Health Policy in the Department of Public Policy at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

David Michaels, PhD, MPH - Epidemiologist and Professor at the Milken Institute School of Public Health at the George Washington University

Alyssa Milano – Actor, Producer, and Political Activist

Harriet Jane Olson – General Secretary/CEO of United Methodist Women

Morris Pearl - Former Managing Director, BlackRock; Patriotic Millionaires Chairperson

Robert Reich - Chancellor's Professor at University of California at Berkeley; Former U.S. Secretary of Labor

Arthur Reingold, MD - Professor in the School of Public Health and Division Head of Epidemiology at UC Berkeley

Henry S. Richardson, PhD - Professor of Philosophy at Georgetown University; Senior Scholar at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics

Emily Robinson - Actor

Dani Rodrik, PhD – Ford Foundation Professor of International Political Economy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; President-Elect of the International Economics Association; Co-director of Economics for Inclusive Prosperity

John Ruggie, PhD – Berthold Beitz Professor in Human Rights and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and former UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Business and Human Rights

Claudine Schneider - Former Representative for Rhode Island's 2nd District

Bill Schultz, JD - Former General Counsel of the Department of Health and Human Services; Former Deputy Commissioner of the FDA; Board of Trustees at Partners in Health; Leadership Council at Yale School of Public Health; Board Co-chair of the National Health Law Project; Board Member at the Center for Science in the Public Interest

Sekou Siby, DBA - Executive Director of Restaurant Opportunities Center (ROC) United

Gayle Smith - President and CEO of the ONE Campaign

Rev. Jason Smith - Congregational Engagement Specialist at the Alliance of Baptists

Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea, DMin - Director of Refugee & Immigration Ministries (RIM) for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Joseph Stiglitz, PhD - Nobel Laureate in Economics; University Professor at Columbia University; President of Columbia's Initiative for Policy Dialogue; Chief Economist and Senior Fellow at the Roosevelt Institute

Eric Stover - Faculty Director of the Human Rights Center and Adjunct Professor of Law and Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley

Cheryl Strayed - Award-winning author of 4 books, including #1 New York Times bestselling memoir *Wild*; Podcast host

Rev. Cathy Tamsberg - Secretary of the Alliance of Baptists

Rev. Adam Russell Taylor - Executive Director of Sojourners

Bishop Efraim Tendero – Secretary General and CEO of the World Evangelical Alliance

Rev. Liz Theoharis - Co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival; Director of the Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice at Union Theological Seminary

Liz Tigelaar - TV Writer, Producer, and Author - *Little Fires Everywhere*

Aisha Tyler - Actor, Comedian, Director, and Talk show host

Kristin Urquiza, MPA - Co-founder and Chief Activist of Marked by COVID

Sten Vermund, MD, PhD - Pediatrician and Infectious Disease Epidemiologist; Dean and Professor at Yale School of Public Health

Randi Weingarten - President of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

Robert Weissman - President of Public Citizen

Amy Westervelt - Environmental Print and Radio Journalist; Founder of the Critical Frequency Podcast Network; Host of the popular podcast “Drilled”

Forest Whitaker - Artist, Social Activist, Founder/CEO of the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative

Katharine Wilkinson, DPhil - Climate Author, Strategist, Teacher; Principle Writer and Editor-in-Chief at Project Drawdown

James Winkler - President of the National Council of Churches (NCC)

Lynn Woolsey - Former Representative for California’s 6th District

Jane Zelikova - Co-founder of 500 Women Scientists; Chief Climate Scientist at Carbon180; Researcher at the University of Wyoming; Co-founder of Hey Girl Productions

Josh Zinner - CEO of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)