



March 9, 2019

**To: President Biden**

**From: Representatives of the Health Equity group at the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)**

**Re: US support to waive intellectual property protections for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments**

Dear Mr. President:

Nearly one year ago, members of the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility \(ICCR\)](#), a coalition of over 300 faith-based and socially responsible institutional investors, representing US\$2 trillion in assets wrote pharmaceutical companies a [letter](#) calling on them to consider “a collaborative approach to the design and delivery of health technologies” to prevent and treat COVID-19 and to “govern with financial prudence and a commitment to uphold your social license to operate by ensuring affordable access for all.” **To support and enable that request, we ask that you support the proposal to waive intellectual property protections for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments.**

We have seen development of vaccines in a time span that few could imagine and commend the unprecedented collaboration to develop and manufacture vaccines, antivirals and other treatments. However, as WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has stated: “We now face the real danger that even as vaccines bring hope to some, they become another brick in the wall of inequality between the worlds of the haves and have-nots.” Most countries have not yet received any vaccines.

According to the [Bloomberg COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker](#), as of March 7, 2021 the global vaccination rate is 7.9 million doses per day. At this rate, it will take nearly four years to cover 75% of the world’s population with a two-dose vaccine.

This daunting reality calls for a move beyond business as usual, and beyond the traditional pharmaceutical business model. It is time to recognize, in the words of UN Secretary General António Guterres, that “a COVID-19 vaccine must be seen as a global public good, a people’s vaccine.”

That is why ICCR is a signatory to a letter to you from hundreds of faith-based, labor, consumer, and other civil society groups urging you to support an emergency COVID-19 waiver of World Trade Organization (WTO) intellectual property rules, so that greater supplies of vaccines, treatments, and diagnostic tests can be produced in as many places as possible as quickly as possible.

We have a moral obligation to share with the global community the know-how, biological material and technology behind the vaccines that US taxpayers and citizens of other countries have funded in order to

hasten the day of global population immunity from COVID-19. Please support South Africa and India's proposal at the WTO to waive intellectual property protections for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments.

Most respectfully,

Lydia Kuykendal, Mercy Investment Services

Cathy Rowan, Maryknoll Sisters

Judy Byron, OP, Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment

Sister Barbara Aires, Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

Lauren Compere, Boston Common Asset Management

Tom McCaney, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

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Mary Beth Gallagher, Investor Advocates for Social Justice

Christopher Cox, Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investment

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