Results

Monthly National Webinar

Saturday, October 2, 2021

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Michael: Hi, everyone. I'm senior policy associate with Results based in Washington D.C. Thanks so much for joining us and happy October.

We have a lot of things to cover, and before we do, I wanted to cover our anti-oppression values as you can see on the slide. We agree to help make Results a respectful and inclusive space, and if you need more information, you can find it at the link on this slide.

I'm very excited to introduce our speakers for today. The first is Representative Maxine Waters. Unfortunately there's been a schedule change so she won't be able to make it live, but she has a recorded message for us.

You'll hear about the Recovery Package today, which is also known as the Build Back Better Act, the budget reconciliation bill, the American families plan. All of this is the same bill or package that we will be covering.

Because we have a lot to cover, I encourage everyone to put all your questions in the chat box, and we'll save those for the end.

Many of you know Representative Waters as the chairwoman of her committee. She's been an integral member of the Democratic Leadership and past chair of the congressional black caucus. She's been a strong champion for housing issues, particularly for low-income families.

With that, I'm going to have our staff play a video from Representative Waters.

Representative Waters: Good afternoon. I am so pleased to join for this event. This is very important. I'd like to thank Michael Stanton for his kind introduction. I want to work with you to address housing policies that will close the wealth gap. Most recently you played an important role in making sure that families did not fall victim to eviction and other hardships. Pre-pandemic America, a fulltime job did not mean being able to afford housing. That's why it's very important that the housing provisions of the Build Back Better Act are passed through congress. We defied the odds. Moderates and progressives came together to pass the biggest housing package in this country through my committee. This investment is monumental and would provide resources that are long overdue. This should have taken place decades ago. If enacted, it will close the gap between millions of renters, begin to close the racial wealth gap, and turn the tide on ending widespread homelessness.

I'd like now to go over the budget reconciliation details. My colleague Senator Brown and I are in agreement on all of these long overdue investments. It provides rental assistance in the form of housing vouchers and projected based rental assistance. It will be used to preserve or create affordable housing units. It will fund 750,000 new vouchers, helping 1.7 million people to live in safe, affordable housing. Of this amount $24 billion is provided for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness as well as survivors of things like sexual assault and human trafficking.

We are addressing the backlog to our nation's public housing. $80 billion in housing supply investments, which include over $30 billion for home investment partnerships program, more for the housing trust fund and the housing investment fund. CDBG funding, including funding for manufactured housing communities. $6 billion for improving energy efficiency and improvements on our nation's housing stock to meet the challenge of climate change. This will update many homes to meet these things.

Funding to alleviate the deplorable housing communities across Native communities. Assistance for first time, first generation home buyers. More than $1 billion to expand the fair housing act and enforcement across the country to ensure these investments help undue historic patterns of segregation and advance fair housing.

These funds will ensure that affordable housing is accessible and available in every community, that money is flowing to neighborhoods that have been ignored for too long, and that anyone experiencing homelessness has somewhere to turn for resolution.

The median white household has more than eight times more wealth than the median black household. The pandemic has made the number of people at risk of homelessness worse. Unsheltered homeless people live in cars, tents, on highways and on streets. It has grown for years. Tent cities have popped up across our countries. And people are looking for an answer. We cannot let this stand. This is our opportunity to improve life for so many.

So I look forward to continuing to work with Results, to take bold action and enact the build back better act. The opportunity is here to finally turn the tide on homelessness and the racial wealth gap. Thank you so much for having me today, and I look forward to working with you.

Michael: All right, thank you so much, Representative Waters. You'll here more in this webinar on the important work you can do to make sure that these important investments are protected as we push for the passage of the build back better act.

I'm excited to introduce our next guest speaker, who was actually one of the very first people I met when I started at Results and is a respected colleague, Sarah Hassmer. Sarah has been advocating for policies to increase economic security for low income women, child, and families. Before joining the NWLC, she worked in the Office of Personal Management. Now she elevates issues experienced by women of color, LGBTQ people, disabled people, immigrant women, and survivors of domestic and sexual assault.

Sarah, the floor is yours.

Sarah: Thank you so much, Michael. We have a number of priorities at the NWLC today. I'm going to focus on our tax and housing issues.

We did research in 2019 and found that even before the pandemic, single women who rent are more likely than male renters to be spending the majority of income on housing. For single mothers and women of color, that stat raises to twice as likely.

When women, particularly women of color, lost a lot of income during the pandemic, it's no surprise that women of color were disproportionately behind on rent. 26.4% of black non-Hispanic women were behind on rent in late 2021. These are just two snapshots of our data calculations. We'll provide links to those later.

Decades of misguided concerns about the deficit and narratives about who is worthy of assistance have unfortunately resulted in assistance that has never come close to meeting the need. Our government has made monumental investments in housing, but unfortunately they support largely white, largely middle and upper class homeowners. Policies for renters and low income people underscore racism.

Housing policy that meets people's need is popular and essential to addressing economic inequality as a whole. We must prioritize large scale investments in housing. We can't go back to those pre-pandemic days. That's why we need strong long-term investments for low income renters, including these three priorities. $90 billion on long term rental assistance, including $75 billion for housing choice vouchers. Then $80 to preserve public housing, and the $37 billion to build about 300,000 homes available to people with the lowest incomes.

We also know that cash assistance in the form of tax credits can have great anti-poverty impacts. We support three of these: the EITC, the CTC, and the CDCTC. I know you might be familiar with the first two, but the CDCTC provides a tax credit for a portion of the out of pocket childcare costs a family pays in a year. Before it was a nonrefundable tax credit. The rescue plan made it refundable for the first time, along with other improvements. And we advocate for making those improvements permanent.

This slide shows some of our analysis of the census household survey and how the monthly child tax credits were used by women of color and their families. This is based on the July 15 payment. We know that women of color were much more likely to use it for food. Data shows how it helped reduce food insecurity. We also see that black non-Hispanic women and Latinas spent their CTC payment on rent as well.

We also note that equitable investments plus equitable tax policies equals an equitable recovery. The investments we need for equitable recovery include things like these. [On screen.] They're all infrastructure and interconnected, and we want to advance all of them. We know that new revenue sources can help support these investments and make the tax code more equitable by taxing corporations and the very rich.

Here are just a few examples of potential revenue raisers that can help pay for these investments. We can make corporations pay their fair share by raising the corporate tax rate. We can make the wealthy pay their fair share like taxing things like income from wealth. Poor people are disproportionately audited for claiming an income tax credit while the wealthy get away with not paying taxes.

We look forward to these negotiations in the coming day and know we can do better. For those interesting in some talking points on these narratives to support housing investments, there's a link I forgot to put on the resource slide. I put those talking points in the chat, and I can also put the links from the slide into the chat.

That's all I have. I'm going to stay for another 10 or so minutes. If you have questions, feel free to put them in the chat and I will work on answering them.

Michael: Thanks so much, Sarah. Now that you've heard about the importance of these investments, I'm going to turn it to Meredith to talk about the current state of these things.

Meredith: Thanks, and Sarah, thank you for breaking it down and highlighting intersectionality.

I know things are hard to follow in Washington D.C. I'm the director of Results US poverty policy. And I want to acknowledge that things are chaotic and intense. Going into these next few minutes of questions, we wanted to make sure we grounded ourselves. We are still very much in a unique historic moment. This kind of opportunity we have right now over the next 8 weeks to pass large scale recovery legislation is the kind of opportunity we may not see for another generation. We'll continue to keep our blog and other resources updated on that. I briefly wanted to highlight the policies as it relates to our asks.

There's now still a negotiation happening in the White House and Senate moderate Democrats and congressional leadership on the size and scope of the package. We've got proposals through the Ways and Means Committee and the Financial Services Committee. So we have a blueprint passed on the committee level that makes the CTC fully refundable. It restores eligibility for immigrants through ITINs. It makes the EITC provisions you all helped lock in place for this year for 2021. It makes it permanent and puts forward $90 billion in rental assistance. You got to hear more about that from the chair of the committee who wrote the bill.

The likelihood of these things happening are very dependent on a final agreement over the scale of a package. And then Congress still has to write and combine the legislation, so we still have the opportunity to make a case.

I wanted to highlight a couple key numbers. The first is the number 27, circled here. That is how many million children were left out of the CTC until this year. This is roughly half all black children and Latino children and some white children. When we're thinking about reducing child poverty, it's these families getting access to the CTC.

Similarly, the number 17 is how many million low wage workers were impacted by the expanded CTC.

Sarah showed some of the analysis that NWLC is doing about the impact of the CTC, and now we have moe evidence just released by Columbia University looking at the impact the CTC is having in reducing child poverty. This is an analysis that just came out looking at the August payment. That's a couple key things we wanted to quickly highlight. Michael, back to you.

Michael: Thanks, Meredith. I know Meredith talked about the CTC. I'm going to talk briefly about our housing asks. So you see the chart. We're all aware of the need for more, long term rental assistance. This is a question I've gotten from our grassroots advocates. How does build back better compare to previous funding for housing choice vouchers? Just to give you a sense of how far behind and how underinvested the program is.

In the year 2000, the program only covered about 2 million households. Fast forward to today, and we have only covered about 2.7 million. The current proposal creates vouchers to create many more households. Just to show you why we can't let any more deep cuts happen on housing investments.

The funding also includes funding on mobility services. We want to make sure that these investments are preserved, particularly given the article that just came out about how housing investments may be the first thing on the chopping block if Congress decides to scale back investments in the build back better act.

We just want to remind people, we want you to urge your members of Congress to tell their bosses to pass a large scale recovery package that makes the EITC and CTC refundability permanent. We also want to make sure the package includes investments in rental assistance targeting the lowest income households.

If you need additional information, we have a plethora of resources on our websites, and it's also available on this slide. I'll be happy to answer any questions you have over chat. I'm going to turn it over now to Ken Patterson.

Ken: Thanks so much, Michael. Really appreciate it. Happy October, advocates.

We're going to move into the grassroots cafe section of our meeting. For those who have not been on this before, we focus on strengthening our powerful grassroots network. We're going to hear from our president and then our expansion team. This will be a huge opportunity to grow your group and your influence with members of Congress.

We'll also have new advocates talk to us about creating an inspiring and meaningful experience for new advocates. We want them to stay with us and create change. Excited to hear from those new advocates.

Before I hand this over to Joanne, I want to take a moment to acknowledge all of your sense of purpose and your resilience. It was a busy and confusing September. Frankly, most of 2021 has been that. Yet you stayed in action. You all remind me of the captain of a ship navigating a violent storm. No matter what comes your way, you remain laser focused on taking the actions that matter, that will reduce poverty and that call attention to the embarrassing immorality of leaving so many people in the world without access to COVID-19 vaccines. I can't think of a better group of people to be on this mission with.

I want to turn this over to our president, Joanne Carter.

Joanne: Thanks, Ken, and hello, everyone. I would just echo what Ken said about your resilience and commitment at this time. It was great to hear from Chairman Maxine Waters. She's also been a long-time champion and partner on the reforms of the world bank.

I'll be really brief because I want to get to hearing from grassroots folks. As you just heard and you know in the news, we are potentially on the brink of a historic breakthrough against poverty. It is literally a once in a generation opportunity. But we also realized that things are precarious on capitol hill and this process could be long and protracted, or it could really start to move.

Building on when Ken said, I'm so grateful for your part in getting us to where things are right now. You've taken so much action this year, and sometimes for years or decades and the relationships you've built. When the news focuses so much on the politics or counting votes, I think too often that story misses that these are policies and investments that really affect people's lives. These policies are a means for families to keep roofs over their heads, food on the table, address medical emergencies, and so much more. And also an opportunity to give people in low and middle income countries a chance at the vaccines they deserve and have been unjustly kept from them.

Thank you for continuing to address Congress and the media on these priorities and keeping them in the center so the things we know matter don't get lost in these negotiations. And your advocacy work and anti-oppression work is also helping shape the long term future we need. Because the opportunities of this moment are building on your past work, but also the opportunities of the future will be built on what you're doing right now. Also, through all of this, our network is growing. We're going to hear from some new advocates to Results, but first I wanted to give a couple quick shoutouts. A particular welcome to anyone joining us for the first time. Welcome Julia and Felicia from Vermont and all the other new folks today.

I want to celebrate our newest chapter in Oklahoma. These folks jumped right into advocacy this year, secured I think two face to face meetings and got media published. So thanks to their members. It's really inspiring to all of us. And now I'll hand things over to Amanda Beals.

Amanda: Hi, everyone. I'm on the grassroots expansion team here at Results. We're here to help your group recruit and support new advocates. So please feel free to reach out to us anytime if you have questions or needs.

We're excited to be with you today to share tips and ideas on how to welcome new advocates. We just launched a recruitment campaign. If you have dreams of growing your group and need help doing that, reach out to your regional coordinator. We're already following up with over 150 leads with people across the country. What we want to do today is give some space to some of our newest advocates to share what's been helpful to them. We're also going to share some tips you can consider in welcoming new people.

If you have an idea or a tip or something you've done to welcome and support new advocates that you want to share, please put those in the chat box because we'll be collecting them and using them to create best practices that can be shared later.

With all that being said, it's my pleasure to introduce our first share, which will be from Tiffany from our newest group in Oklahoma. Tiffany joined Results in June of this year. Tiffany, go ahead and unmute yourself and share what's been helpful for you.

Tiffany: What's really been helpful for me during the meetings of the personal shares in all the topics we're covering and meeting with our legislators with. A couple weeks ago, our group held a meeting on COVID-19 vaccines. Hearing their stories drove home the point that the work we do at Results is necessary and not in vain. We were each able to put aside our personal convictions about vaccines and help our legislators understand that vaccine equality is a basic human right, and we're fighting to give families across the globe access to vaccines and the privilege to decide whether it's right for them or not.

This drove me to want to continue volunteering with Results, just knowing that the work we do impacts families here in Oklahoma and across the globe.

Amanda: Thank you so much for that really powerful share. I think it reminds us that a lot of times when things are moving fast, we want to jump right into the policies and the asks, but it's really important to connect on those shared values that can help people get to know each other and feel that connection with their team. Thank you so much for sharing that.

Now I want to introduce our next share from our new advocate in New Hampshire, Julia. Julia joined Results this June as well and came on board right as her local group was taking a break for the summer. Julia jumped right into action making sure her senators were still hearing from Results while the rest of her team was resting. Julia, you're on.

Julia: Hello, everyone. When I joined Results, I was brand new to advocacy. I knew I wanted to take action. What really helped me take my first step was my one on one meetings with Amanda. She was able to educate me on a bunch of the issues. She was also just a great person to bounce ideas off of. When I ultimately joined up with the rest of my team, that was also a wonderful forum to bounce ideas off of and highlight my personal feelings on these issues. We had an entire conversation last meeting about our subject line to an email to our Senate office. It's just so helpful to share ideas and get different perspectives on things. I think that's been my main drive to feel comfortable to take action. Just that overwhelming support and that ability to share ideas.

Amanda: Thank you for that, Julia. I think it's so important to make that space to take action together. We can feel rushed to go through the agenda. But we have the passion and the words we want to say to our members of Congress, but a lot of times we can get held up not knowing if we're saying the right thing. When you make space in your meetings to take those actions together, to talk about it and share, it's really helpful to build the confidence of new advocates. Thank you so much for being part of that, Julia.

Now I'll turn it over to Alicia, who will share tips for things you can do to welcome new advocates and get them engaged and connecting and building relationships right away.

Alica: Hi, everyone. I'm senior associate on the expansion team. Thank you so much for sharing your experiences, Tiffany and Julia. We're going to go over some quick tips on things you can focus on for new members joining this fall. We've broken it down into strategies that can be implemented by your chapter's new advocate mentor.

Before the first meeting, we want to make sure they have the information they need. In your very first email response to them, include information about attending your next meeting. Something else we strongly suggest is sending a quick text message to your new volunteer the day before the meeting. This makes a huge difference and lets them know you're excited to have them join.

As I'm sure some of you can imagine, Results meetings can be overwhelming for new people. There are a couple things to keep in mind. One of the most important things you can do is carve out time for introductions and help new advocates get to know each other. We have to be more intentional on Zoom about connecting people.

You should also have someone take a few minutes to give a short recap of what your chapter's been up to this year. You can share recent accomplishments, events, and lobbying meetings. This will help your advocate feel informed.

Make sure you check in on the new advocate during the meeting. You can intentionally call them in by saying things like, "Do you feel comfortable with this? Is this making sense to you?"

Most volunteers are coming to Results with little or no advocacy experience. It can be overwhelming and intimidating. You can help alleviate barriers or questions that make new advocates feel stuck.

Our last tip for during your meeting is strive to have your new volunteer leave the meeting with a committed next step. This helps build accountability for your new member.

Finally, after your meeting, it goes a long way to send another quick check-in and see how things went. Thank them for joining, acknowledge their contributions to the meeting, and see if you can help with next steps. Julia shared how critical those meetings were for her. We really want to be there to support and mentor these new folks.

If you're interested in diving deeper into these best practices, want to know how to create a welcoming environment, and help folks take action, we invite you to join our webinar in November. We hope to see many of you there. The entire expansion team are always here to support you. We are so excited to be welcoming the many new volunteers who will be joining soon. Thank you for your energy and support. It's been so great to work with you all, and I really look forward to what's to come.

Ken: Thanks, Alicia, and thanks to the expansion team and Tiffany and Julia for giving us some great thoughts and advice on welcoming new people.

I want to do just a real quick reiteration of actions we covered in the first section of the webinar and also what our global requests are. It's critical that your members of congress hear from you and as many constituents as possible about what's important to include in the final reconciliation bill. Congress is looking for cuts, and hearing from us and our networks is the best shot we have at protecting our priorities.

People should call and write tax and housing aides and let them know that constituents would like to meet with their senator to pass a large scale recovery package that addresses issues of poverty and particularly that they make the tax credits permanent and include rental assistance.

Others in your group and in your network can use our online action alerts to write directly to congressional offices and also submit letters to the editor calling on Congress members to support these efforts. Everybody should be in action on this.

In our global requests, point people should call Senate aides in charge of health and the aide with which you have the best relationship in those offices and ask them to have their bosses speak to the HELP committee and to leadership and urge them to include at least $2 billion to ramp up vaccine manufacturing so we have the possibility of having enough vaccines for everyone. And everyone in your network can take the online actions directed toward the White House and also to your members of Congress. Also submitting media, letters to the editor for increased vaccine access around the world.

Some of you might be thinking, I have Republican members of Congress. What should I do. You know they will likely not vote on the bigger reconciliation view. But you can convince them that they should be shaping that to help constituents with housing and finding a way out of this pandemic. They should be actively shaping the bill. And every time you talk to them, they're learning more about the issues, and you are building relationships.

I want to thank everybody for the actions you'll be taking, and I'm going to hand this over to Sarah.

Sarah: Thanks, Ken. We're going to talk about some events that'll be happening this month going into November. First we wanted to announce that the Bob Dickerson grassroots leadership award is now open. The nominees will be announced in December, and the link to nominate is on the slide.

Next we have our discovering yourself as a leader using the GALLUP CliftonStrengths tool. You will have the opportunity to dig deeper and learn to leverage in leadership roles. Everyone's encouraged to join. The link to register is on the screen.

Next we have our global allies program. This is a chance for you to connect returned Peace Corps volunteers with grassroots networks to end global poverty. If you want more information, you can connect with the grassroots impact team.

Next we have getting unstuck with our members of Congress using motivational interviewing techniques. We've heard your pleas for support and have answered. This is to teach you to have effective dialogue with members of Congress that you struggle to move to action. If you are having a lot of issues, this is the training for you. I really encourage all advocates to register. Anybody is welcome to join, and our leader teaching this webinar has asked you to bring your toughest questions.

We have our Action Network monthly webinars on October 20. The next day is our US poverty and global poverty forums. And more information can be found on the Results website.

Next we have new advocate orientations going on. You can register online. Next we have our US poverty free agents webinars. We'll have our global poverty free agents webinar. And you can check the events calendar for more information.

As Alicia mentioned, cultivating relationships through action is more new advocate mentors, group leaders, anyone who wants to create an inclusive environment in moving new advocates to action.

If you're interested in being a regional coordinator, please reach out to Lisa. We're looking for folks to join our family.

And lastly we have our Results advocacy in organizing fellowship. Please be sure to invite folks. I was a fellow in 2016 and it changed my life for the better.

I'm going to pass it over to John on our policy team.

Ken: John's having some problems here. One second.

Joanne: Has Tom joined yet?

Ken: I have not yet seen him. John, you should be good now.

John: Hi, everyone. I lead our policy and advocacy team here at Results. We are waiting for Dr. Frieden to join us. I wanted to build a bit on the actions we have going forward with addressing the COVID crisis globally. The direct impact of the disease, the secondary impact on so many of the issues we care about, as well as the stark gap in access to vaccines for COVID globally.

If you can go to the next slide.

As many of you know, the White House convened a summit to talk about the global situation with COVID. They had a number of areas they wanted to explore and get commitments from. They set these targets of 70% vaccination for every country in every income category, as well as a benchmark of 40% of countries reached by the end of 2021.

This is the snapshot of where we actually are and where we're on track to be. Very few countries in Africa have hit the target of at least 10% of their populations vaccinated by the end of September. It is very clear from this map who is being left out of this equation.

Joanne, I'm going to turn it to you to introduce Dr. Frieden.

Joanne: Thanks, John. I'm really glad to be able to welcome a national and global leader and a committed advocate, Dr. Tom Frieden. Over the last two and a half decades, he has played such a critical role in improving things around the world. He led CDC's work that ended the Ebola epidemic. He raised the alarm on the opioid epidemic. Talking to a group of advocates who have worked for two decades on TB as an issue in poverty, he has been a champion on many campaigns.

We asked Tom Frieden to come on today because we so appreciated his frank, clear advocacy in the COVID response. On the line today with you, Tom, are folks from all over the US who have had nearly 600 meetings with members of Congress this year, published close to 400 media pieces, and we are continuing advocacy on vaccine equity.

When you look at the catastrophic vaccine inequity right now, can you talk us through how we got here and what urgent steps the US can and should take to address it.

Dr. Frieden: Thanks, Joanne, and thanks to all of those on the call who have been advocating.

I'll talk for about ten minutes and then answer questions for ten or fifteen minutes. And I just posted a thread on this in the chat. First off, it may seem that there's plenty of vaccine because we're awash with it in the US. But we're getting thirds before others get firsts. You can talk about the booster decision, but there's a lot we don't know about benefits of boosters. I do believe the recommendations are sensible. The problem is that we are truly living in a zero sum world. So scaling up production is the single most important thing we can do to address the pandemic globally. At the current rate, there's not enough production of vaccines to vaccinate the world until at least 2023. There's a myth floating around that there will be a glut of vaccines in 2022. This is if you count vaccines that don't work very well and projections that have consistently been far off. Vaccine manufacturers in the west are missing their 2021 targets by more than half.

Plus there's a huge need. Maybe boosters, maybe revaccination of people who were vaccinated with less effective vaccines. Maybe a tweaked vaccine against variants.

There's also a horrific and frankly racist narrative that countries in Africa won't be able to use the vaccine. It's certainly true that if you dump seven different vaccines with short expiry, no planning, then yeah, you'll have problems. Frankly, countries in Africa have less vaccine hesitancy than most Western countries and ability to run vaccine campaigns. It's something they do regularly. My group has supported countries in Africa on this.

I don't think I need to tell anyone here, but it's not just about doing the ethically right thing. It's also in our self-interest. Global travel and trade will not recover fully until the pandemic is under control, and global instability will increase. Global economic growth will not resume fully until then. And the risk of more dangerous variants emerging, spreading, and harming us here is greater the more uncontrolled spread there is.

I do think that the mRNA vaccines are our most promising vaccines. It's a strong victory for humanity against a deadly virus, and it's stunning that the companies have been able to produce as much as they have. They're safer and more effective than previous vaccines, and they can be scaled up quickly. They're less susceptible to delays. Even companies that are quite good and responsible, like Johnson & Johnson. I worked with them on Ebola, and they behaved responsibly. They're having trouble because the manufacture is cumbersome and susceptible to delays. So the mRNA vaccines have the potential to be our insurance policy against new variants because the mRNA vaccines are must easier to tweak. They can be tweaked much more quickly.

So it's crucial to scale up mRNA manufacturing. I think the approach is to use a hub approach, rather than one company that the organization chooses to work with on a one-off approach. It's a one to many transfer of technology. Rather than a closed loop, it's an open loop. Regional manufacturing in the US and globally can be a global resource.

It can be important for future pandemics also, but let's focus on this one.

Manufacturing can be scaled up, and there are ways to do it that are not bad for the companies. You can respect their intellectual property. You can let them benefit from tweaks from other entities. The problem is that unless we use a Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, we'll have to go through trials again. One result is to force Moderna to function responsibly. And the other is to compete and figure out which companies can make an mRNA vaccine. There are a lot who claim they can't. But this was tried already in the European Union and it did not work well. So I think we need a two track policy here.

There are certain things these companies are saying that are just lies. They've chosen not to have the staff. They say we can't transfer technology because it would take 18 months to scale up. It took one of their partners by three and six months. The world will have enough vaccine in 2022. Lie. They say Africa can't use vaccine effectively. Lie. So it's a challenge.

The other thing to remember is that not only did the federal government do the research that led to Moderna's product, but there's been a compact with vaccine manufacturers. Companies like Johnson & Johnson have been fairly responsible. The government trains physicians, does the supply chain, educates the public. In exchange, these companies are supposed to act as responsible citizens, and what they've done has been morally indefensible.

Going beyond vaccines, the world has to be better prepared. We've gone through so many cycles of panic and neglect, and we need to break that cycle. We think the way to do that is having a new way of doing budgets for health defense. What we've proposed would give Congress the ability to do that. And this is an area where we'll share information on advocating for that. And then globally, we really need a persistent approach to address the challenges. We've suggested something called the 717 target. We think 717 could be the target for preparedness globally. Within 7 days, have effective control measures in place. We suggest the details of this in the Lancet piece a couple months ago. I've been encouraged that many countries in Africa are trying this out.

We can't afford another multi-trillion-dollar pandemic. There are ideas for new mechanisms. I'm not sure how that's going to work out. We have one institution that is multilateral. It would have to be paired with technical and operational expertise.

If there are three major lessons from this pandemic, we need a robust public health system. We need to make primary health care the center of our system. And we need more resilient populations and communities, and there are ways to do that through public health and public policy.

I did want to be clear about the importance of scaling up vaccine manufacturing and thinking of alternatives that doesn't let Moderna off the hook and thinking about longer term support in the US.

Joanne: Thanks so much for the clarity on that and the sort of misinformation that's being put forward. I'm seeing some questions in the chat. One is, we've been pushing to get more resources potentially in the reconciliation package for manufacturing. I'd be interested in your thinking about how those resources can be used to build vaccine capacity around the world, and the need for advocates in terms of moving those companies.

Dr. Frieden: I think all pressure should be put on Moderna. We have very little leverage on Pfizer because we didn't fund their research. We paid for the development of the product and then to buy the product, and they can't make enough for the world, and they won't let other people do that. Like the most dangerous liars, they tend to believe their own rhetoric. So dealing with the company directly is important.

I think in Congress, there should be oversight hearings and they should be challenged on the lies they're telling. I think Congress should also be asking the administration why they haven't moved faster on this. I put into the thread what I suspect is happening, that the companies are essentially blackmailing the US government. They're saying, if you push us on this, we won't sell vaccines in the US. That's essentially war profiteering.

On the one hand, there are some good things the companies have done. They worked really fast and scaled up production enormously. Moderna had less than 1,000 employees last year. It's a little company, and the safety and stability of the world is hanging by a thread. And transferring technology isn't easy. It's not as simple as opening up intellectual property. You have close to 200 manufacturing steps. For every step, you have a detailed book of quality assurance and control and testing to validate that the product at the end will be safe. That has to be shared, and there has to be hands on training. I think that should be done with vaccine hubs to bring multiple manufacturers together to address challenges.

My group looked around the world at many different countries, and I think the one that's ready to move quickest is South Korea. They have a large chemical manufacturing facility. I just think maybe politically it has to be done in the US first or at the same time at other factories.

Why is Pfizer charging double? Because they can. I'm looking at the questions in the chat. That longer issue is how we control or don't control the healthcare costs here. I'm not sure what can be done because both of these companies have shown themselves to be shameless. You can't shame an entity that's shameless. Unless there's pressure from the US government on them, I don't see them coming along.

How are they getting away with it? Because they can. There's a good point that J&J can be stored more easily. J&J is a really good product. We may not need all the mRNA vaccines we're asking for. It's possible we'll get lucky and the other vaccines will be good enough and plentiful enough. But do you really want to depend on luck for the protection of millions of lives and the return of global stability? I don't think so.

By the way, it has gotten easier to store vaccines. And there are very good long term storage capacities that are really important.

Manufacturing of the J&J vaccine is not simple. None of this manufacturing is simple. It's easy to have problems, and that's why it's important that there is hands on technology transfer. The WHO technology access pool is a nice theory, but in practice it's going to be very hard to get it done. We need to think about not just saying things to make ourselves feel good but actually make a difference.

Joanne: I think the congressional oversight and the media work that Results can do. What could the President do right now? Not only resources for manufacturing, but what else?

Dr. Frieden: I think there's a lot to like in the White House plan. So a lot of it is sticking with those commitments over time and identifying a way to use the reconciliation funding for some of this. There are some ways that the administration can work fairly quickly. For example, they're already working with Lonza, which is a very large company and can probably do more if they're focused on doing that.

A hub in the US and globally is another route. You really want to have public health funded, not just some of the ways to do really important research, but it's reconciliation money that's going to be scarce.

I think in terms of the global south and the companies, I don't know which countries have the best capacity. Certainly India has phenomenal capacity for manufacturing vaccines. Brazil and other countries in Latin America do as well. Indonesia and Thailand also have manufacturing. Many countries in Africa are eager to start this. But it is tough, and I don't think anyone should underestimate the challenge of manufacturing well. In this the companies are not lying. This is hard. And an entity that has done mass manufacturing is more likely to succeed. That's why we think the US and South Korea could probably produce the fastest. In the medium term, I think we need multiple hubs around the world. And with platforms such as the mRNA platform that can be repurposed for a deadly flu virus and can be used in peacetime when there's not a pandemic can be used for other diseases. But right now the focus is stop the pandemic.

Joanne: I want to continue to work with you more closely on this, but maybe to close, to get back to the other point that felt so essential. But the link in global health security to actually driving increased access to primary health care and not a narrow interpretation of global health security. How do we use the structures like the global fund replenishment that tackles TB and the pandemic? How do we ensure that this response is actually an equitable one that sort of drives response to old pandemics as well as new ones?

Dr. Frieden: I've just put into the chat two links to the stabilization concept. The US needs to support the global fund to have a broader mandate. And it needs to keep the global fund accountable. And we think that the route to preparedness is what we call the 717 approach. I'll put a link to that project there as well.

I think we really do need global accountability for what we're going to do, and global accountability for making rapid progress. And I think it's possible.

I'll just end on a positive note, that we have a unique opportunity to scale up protection. We have a unique opportunity to make sure that this is a teachable moment. We have a unique opportunity to fund public health, primary healthcare initiatives to increase resilience in the population. I think it'll only happen with persistent pressure from advocates such as yourselves.

So thank you very much for your interest and the time you're spending. Let's stay in touch.

Joanne: Thanks so much for your leadership and partnership. We will make all these links available.

John: Thanks, Joanne and Dr. Frieden. I just want to summarize some of the requests we have available. We may need to broaden our advocacy a little on the Hill. Where we are now is that the House has a number that will support the scale of manufacturing. We want to make sure the Senate includes that as well and that it's specifically allocated to expanding manufacturing capacity. That would give the administration the resources it needs. And we want to keep attention and pressure up on the White House with media. There are things Congress can be doing. Oversight hearings, potentially additional legislation. Raising this as a priority. We don't have the perfect legislative vehicle to express this. But on a bipartisan basis, you do see a lot of support from a lot of perspectives that really understand that we have to address this vaccine equity crisis.

In addition, very soon we'll be looking at other elements related to the pandemic but beyond vaccines. For example, the impact the COVID crisis has had on young child nutrition. We'll have future webinars on actions to take with Congress. And next year will be a replenishment of the global fund. We know we need a strong replenishment, not only to recover some of the lost ground on AIDS, TB, and malaria, but to strengthen pandemic preparedness as well.

I'm really grateful to you all for tuning in to listen.

Ken: Thanks, John. Thanks everyone for joining today and remaining committed to these actions. If there's anything that will make a difference, it's your advocacy and the mobilization of your networks.

You're all able to unmute yourselves. I encourage you to give us your best advocacy battle cry and wish each other a happy Halloween.

[End of webinar]