

Support global vaccination efforts in reconciliation

Please join Reps. Malinowski, Krishnamoorthi, and Jayapal in the call for an ambitious global vaccination program in the upcoming reconciliation package. For more information or to sign on, please contact Rachel.sorensen@mail.house.gov.

The closing date for this letter is COB July 21, 2021

Dear Colleague,

We invite you to join Reps. Malinowski, Krishnamoorthi, and Jayapal in signing a letter to Democratic leadership supporting the inclusion of funding for an ambitious and necessary global vaccination program in the upcoming reconciliation package.

President Biden's recent announcement that the United States will provide 500 million mRNA vaccines to low- and middle-income countries around the world is a commendable and significant step toward ending the COVID-19 pandemic globally. However, the magnitude of the problem—with over 6 billion people worldwide who have yet to receive a single dose—necessitates an even greater commitment from the United States to provide vaccines and ensure their secure end-to-end delivery at global scale.

Based on research from Imperial College of London and the World Health Organization, we estimate it will cost up to \$25 billion to create enough vaccine manufacturing capacity around the world to produce an additional 8 billion doses by mid-2022, and we will need another \$8.5 billion to ensure end-to-end delivery of enough vaccines to vaccinate at least 60% of the populations in the 92 low- and middle-income countries targeted by the COVAX facility.

Recent polling indicates that the American people understand both the humanitarian need and the threat that low vaccination coverage in other countries poses to our own safety here at home, and they are ready to take up the mantle of global leadership in this crisis. I invite you to join Reps. Krishnamoorthi, Malinowski, and Jayapal in urging the inclusion of \$34 billion in the economic development and jobs package to achieve that reality.

Please reach out to Rachel.sorensen@mail.house.gov to be added to this letter.

Sincerely,

Raja Krishnamoorthi

Member of Congress

Letter text:

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer:

We write to ask that the budget reconciliation bill provide up to \$34 billion in funding to significantly accelerate the production of COVID-19 vaccines for global distribution, both to

save lives and to reinforce America's leadership in combatting the pandemic worldwide. We applaud President Biden's recent announcement that the U.S. government will purchase and donate to lower income countries 500 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine, as well as its financial contributions to COVAX, made possible by the American Rescue Plan. These steps have been extraordinarily generous and consistent with our national interest, because if the pandemic continues to rage in other countries, variants could emerge that defeat existing vaccines.

However, the magnitude of the problem—only 1% of people in low-income countries vaccinated and over 6 billion worldwide who have yet to receive a dose—necessitates an even greater commitment from the United States to provide vaccines and secure end-to-end delivery at a global scale.[1] Even if we set a relatively modest goal of vaccinating 60 percent of the population in the 92 lower-income countries eligible for assistance from COVAX, billions more doses will be needed. . To this end, we respectfully request that whatever is needed on top of unspent COVID-19 relief funds to get to \$34 billion be set aside in the upcoming economic development and jobs package to reach such a goal.

Part of the answer will be stepped up production of COVID-19 vaccines in developing countries. More must be done to make this possible, and the Biden administration is working with partners around the world to address the complicated challenges involved. Meanwhile, the most practical step the United States can take is to do our part in mass producing the vaccines our companies helped develop and enabling the most rapid and equitable distribution of those vaccines to the countries in greatest need. This vision is specifically outlined in the broadly supported Nullifying Opportunities for Variants to Infect & Decimate (NOVID) Act (H.R. 3778/S.1976), which details a plan for achieving these goals through a comprehensive production and distribution strategy.

The United States accounts for almost 25 percent of the global economy, and we control an even larger share of the manufacturing capacity for the uniquely effective vaccines that our companies have patented.[2],[3] As such, the 500 million doses we have already promised represent less than our fair share of the billions of doses needed to meet this global challenge. Recent COVID-19 outbreaks in countries that relied on the Chinese vaccine reinforce how dependent lower income countries will be on American assistance to defeat COVID-19. In rising to this challenge, we can show once again that in moments of great need, America does great things.

Estimates indicate that it will cost up to \$25 billion to create enough vaccine manufacturing capacity around the world to vaccinate 60% of the populations in the COVAX countries, plus another \$8.5 billion to ensure end-to-end delivery of the vaccines.[4] We therefore urge Congress to provide whatever funds are needed in the reconciliation bill, in addition to any unspent ARP funds that may exist, to achieve this goal.

No investment in the fight against COVID-19 is more urgent and cost-effective now than an investment in getting the world vaccinated as quickly as possible. Even assuming wealthy countries will be fully vaccinated by mid-2021, the global economic cost of not vaccinating lower-income countries is estimated to be \$9 trillion per year, or nearly ten percent of global

GDP. [5] \$34 billion is a small price to pay to help return the U.S. and global economy to normalcy, and we request that such an amount is included in the upcoming spending package.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

CC: Chairman John Yarmuth, U.S. House of Representatives Budget Committee; Chairman Bernard Sanders, U.S. Senate Budget Committee

[1] T.V. Padma, COVID vaccines to reach poorest countries in 2023 — despite recent pledges, Nature (July 5, 2021). <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01762-w>

[2] Congressional Research Service. (December 3, 2018) U.S. Trade Trends and Developments. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R45420.pdf>

[3] Estabn Ortiz-Prado, et al., Vaccine Market and Production Capabilities in the Americas, Trop Dis Travel Med Vaccines 7, 11 (April 13, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40794-021-00135-5>

[4] Public Citizen. (February 18, 2021). \$25 Billion to Vaccinate the World. <https://www.citizen.org/article/25-billion-to-vaccinate-the-world/>

[5] Peter S. Goodman, If Poor Countries Go Unvaccinated, a Study Says, Rich Ones Will Pay, The New York Times (January 23, 2021). <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/business/coronavirus-vaccines-global-economy.html>