

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to encourage your administration to build on COVID-19 treatment and vaccination progress by bolstering supply chains to support U.S. preparedness and improve international vaccine delivery efficiency.

The Food and Drug Administration granted its first emergency use authorizations for COVID-19 vaccines in December 2020 and by June 2021, domestic vaccinations increased significantly allowing the United States to increase its commitment to helping countries around the world address the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. The United States has shipped more than half a billion vaccine doses¹ and over 60 percent of the global population has received at least one vaccine shot.² However, many lower- and middle-income countries still lag behind in COVID-19 vaccination rates and lack the therapeutics necessary to effectively treat those infected with the disease.

From the success of Operation Warp Speed to the continuing efforts of the White House COVID-19 Response Team, the United States and partner nations have successfully increased vaccine production to address a global need. Almost 11 billion doses of vaccine were produced through 2021³ and total vaccine production capacity is forecast to reach more than 20 billion doses in 2022.⁴ This is a testament to U.S. leadership, both in scientific innovation and global health. This increased production will pay dividends over the coming months; the administration must now focus on delivering the fruits of U.S. innovation by ensuring robust supply chain support, utilizing our existing COVID-19 authorities and resources efficiently, and working to identify where the global need truly lies.

In many countries, the supply of vaccines has outstripped the ability of authorities to administer this lifesaving resource.⁵ The United States must now focus on eliminating the

¹ Pg.1; <https://www.state.gov/covid-19-recovery/vaccine-deliveries>.

² Pg.1; <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>.

³ Airfinity, Global Commission for Post-Pandemic Policy; Pg.1; <https://globalcommissionforpostpandemicpolicy.org/covid-19-vaccine-production-to-december-31st-2021/>.

⁴ “Weekly Trade,” Politico, Feb. 22, 2022, available at <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/weekly-trade>

⁵ See, e.g., “COVID vaccine supply for global programme outstrips demand for first time,” Reuters, Feb. 23, 2022, available at <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/covax-vaccine-supply-outstrips-demand-first-time-2022-02-23/>; “Africa CDC to ask world to pause Covid-19 vaccine donations,” Politico, Feb. 22, 2022, available at <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/02/22/africa-asks-covid-vaccine-donation-pause-00010667>; “South Africa delays COVID vaccine deliveries as inoculations slow,” Reuters, Nov. 24, 2021, available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/exclusive-south-africa-delays-covid-vaccine-deliveries-inoculations-slow-2021-11-24/>; “Namibia to start destroying expired vaccines due to slow uptake,” Reuters, Nov. 25, 2021, available at <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/namibia->

remaining, complicated barriers that are causing delays in ongoing global vaccination efforts that will not only prevent against further transmission of the COVID-19 virus, but allow for the recovery of the global economy.

Such barriers include a lack of health care infrastructure; logistical challenges in distributing vaccines; or supply chain limitations for personal protective equipment, medical devices, and other necessary equipment.⁶ While these issues may be particularly pronounced in poorer countries, time has shown that any failure to address disease in one part of the world will eventually be felt internationally. These are global problems that political leaders around the world must work together to address so that we can move past the pandemic and grow the global economy.

The United States has a long and proud tradition of leading on global health challenges. U.S. efforts were critical in developing and distributing penicillin, administering the polio vaccine, and eradicating smallpox. We urge you to reassert U.S. leadership in this area, and specifically ask that you:

- Prioritize strategies that support a robust U.S. economy and global supply chain—including maintaining testing, therapeutics, PPE, ventilators, cold chain capacity, and training of healthcare workers;
- Support policies that advance further U.S. innovation;
- Continue to identify and address ongoing barriers to vaccine production and distribution;
- Utilize our existing COVID-19 resources efficiently; and
- Work with Congress to meet these critical goals.

We believe support in these areas will save lives globally, protect the United States from any future variants, and help the world to move forward from the COVID-19 pandemic. An investment to maintain vaccination efforts in lower-income countries now will eliminate the need to spend trillions later in responding to successive waves of COVID variants. We are ready to engage with your administration further to support U.S. leadership in ending the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress

[start-destroying-expired-vaccines-due-slow-uptake-2021-11-25/](https://www.dw.com/en/kenyas-stalled-vaccination-campaign/a-59854244); “Kenya’s Stalled Vaccination Campaign,” DW, Nov. 19, 2021, available at <https://www.dw.com/en/kenyas-stalled-vaccination-campaign/a-59854244>; “As more vaccines arrive, Jamaica dumps expired AstraZeneca doses,” Loop News, Nov. 1, 2021, available at <https://jamaica.loopnews.com/content/more-vaccines-arrive-jamaica-dumps-expired-astrazeneca-doses/>; “India Likely to be Left With Surplus Covid-19 Vaccines in December,” CNN-News18, Nov. 23, 2021, available at <https://www.news18.com/news/india/india-likely-to-be-left-with-surplus-covid-19-vaccines-in-december-4475828.html>.

⁶ See, e.g., “WHO: Vaccine hesitancy persists among Africa health workers,” Associated Press, Nov. 25, 2021, available at <https://www.cbs17.com/news/who-vaccine-hesitancy-persists-among-africa-health-workers/>.



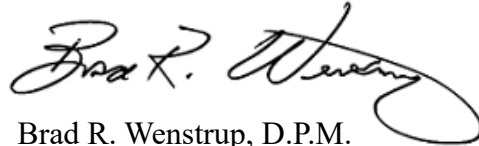
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