Open Letter to President 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 President Biden 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.

President Biden has 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 COVID 19 vaccine. A vaccine paid for *by* the people should work *for* the people and remain *of* the people.

We call on President 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 pre-existing conditions at higher risk, and high-transmission communities here and around the world.

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Signed,

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