

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 23, 2021

The Honorable Gayle E. Smith
Coordinator for Global COVID-19 Response and Health Security
United States Department of State
Harry S. Truman Building
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ms. Smith:

As our nation begins to approach herd immunity and emerge from the pandemic, we respectfully request that the Administration provide us with its plans to distribute Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccines to the global community.

Following the administration's announcement in February, we expect Pfizer, Inc. and Moderna, Inc. to deliver more than enough doses of COVID-19 vaccines to inoculate the entire United States adult population by the summer.¹ Barring any changes to its' Food and Drug Administration (FDA) emergency use authorization, we expect Johnson & Johnson to deliver additional doses of their one-shot vaccine that would further increase the U.S. supply of COVID-19 vaccines. By the end of the summer, we will most likely experience a significant surplus of COVID-19 vaccine doses in the U.S.

Under the previous administration, the United States chose to abdicate its global leadership on international efforts to promote human health. Russia and China mounted vaccine diplomacy efforts to advance their own geopolitical interests. It is critical that the United States recapture our historic and leading role in global health and distribute excess COVID-19 vaccines abroad until there is global herd immunity.

Given the robust pipeline of vaccines produced in the United States, the federal government has an opportunity to bolster global vaccine distribution efforts, regain international confidence in U.S. global health leadership, and equitably protect billions of people from COVID-19. Furthermore, by distributing vaccines around the world, particularly to low- and middle-income countries, the U.S. would help curb the pandemic and help mitigate the pandemic's devastating effects on the global economy. This includes continued and increased support for the World Health Organization's Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator's COVAX pillar which aims to provide global, innovative and equitable, access to COVID-19 vaccines.

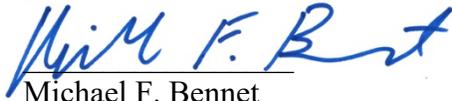
In light of the global need, we ask that you respond to the following questions or provide our staff with a briefing to cover the following:

¹ <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/02/11/biden-administration-purchases-additional-doses-covid-19-vaccines-from-pfizer-and-moderna.html>

- Will you plan on using existing authorities, including those under the Defense Production Act, to increase the supply of COVID-19 vaccines for the global community?
- In addition to announced financial support of COVAX, how will the administration engage with the global community, such as through bilateral efforts or COVAX, to support and accelerate the global distribution and administration of the COVID-19 vaccines?
- What other actions does the administration plan to take to increase global access to vaccines?

While vaccinating as many Americans as quickly and equitably as possible is a top priority, the U.S. must consider its role in helping others around the world receive the COVID-19 vaccine. We ask you to respond as soon as possible with how you plan to engage globally and support our international partners with COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

CC: Jeffrey D. Zients, Coordinator of the COVID-19 Response and Counselor to the President
Jacob J. Sullivan, National Security Advisor, National Security Council
Elizabeth E. Cameron, Senior Director for Global Health Security and Biodefense, National Security Council
Susan E. Rice, Director, Domestic Policy Council