July 26, 2022

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

The U.S. Army’s Walter Reed Institute of Research is now developing a pan-coronavirus vaccine. If successful, it could fight not only the virus that causes Covid-19 but new coronaviruses.

The undersigned organizations urge you to maintain public control of the Walter Reed vaccine and share its benefits and technology openly with the world.

The public investments in coronavirus research, dating back nearly two decades and including the period after the origin of Covid-19, helped spur amazing inventions that have saved millions of lives. However, private, monopoly control over those vaccines contributed to shortages, rationing and excessive prices.

It is crucial that we learn from earlier mistakes in managing publicly funded vaccine technology. To date, development of the Walter Reed vaccine has been a triumph of government investment in public health. We ask for it to remain that way as the Army seeks partners for further trials and mass production.

We urge you to:
• Openly license the vaccine to qualified manufacturers on conditions ensuring fair pricing and equitable access.
• Share vaccine technology, data and know-how with the World Health Organization, including through the Covid-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP).
• Prepare to invest in government-owned production facilities.

If the Walter Reed vaccine proves effective against Covid-19 and its variants in further tests, it will be a vaccine wholly created by a public institution through use of public funds. Every aspect of the vaccine production process should be widely and freely shared to ensure globally distributed manufacturing. Widespread, equitable availability of effective vaccines at truly affordable prices would go a long way in achieving your stated goal of vaccinating the world. There is no compelling reason to offer this technology on a monopoly basis to a corporation, and a profoundly compelling reason to make the technology as open and readily accessible as possible across the globe.

Sincerely,

American Friends Service Committee
Be A Hero
Campaign to End COVID Now
Center for Economic Policy and Research's Revolving Door Project
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Demand Progress Education Fund
Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi)
Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR)
Health GAP
Initiative for Medicines, Access & Knowledge (I-MAK)
Islamic Relief USA
Jean-Michel Cousteau’s Ocean Futures Society
Justice Is Global
Knowledge Ecology International
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Oregonizers
Oxfam America
Physicians for Human Rights