

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 2, 2020

The Honorable Michael R. Pence  
Vice President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Vice President Pence:

We write to you as head of the White House COVID-19 Task Force to request information on actions taken by the Administration to pursue a cooperative global framework to maximize efforts to develop, manufacture, and improve access to COVID-19 medical countermeasures. Such a cooperative effort is in our national economic and security interests, and we believe the United States is well positioned to provide the kind of global leadership the world looks to us to provide to defeat this global pandemic.

Global pandemics necessitate international coordination in the research, development and use of countermeasures, including diagnostics, vaccines, and therapeutics, in order to ensure the health and safety of Americans, both at home and abroad. Maximizing global cooperation against the pandemic is an essential part of protecting Americans against possible future spikes in COVID-19 infections or waves of infections.

As you know, the U.S. National Institutes of Health, the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, the Department of Defense, and other Federal agencies, along with the international cooperative efforts of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), academic institutions, and private sector biopharmaceutical companies, are working at an unprecedented pace to develop vaccines and therapeutics against SARS-CoV-2. We are optimistic that this impressive deployment of scientific public and private capabilities and resources will drive development of an effective vaccine faster than ever in history. However, we have no guarantee that the U.S. will be the first country to develop an effective vaccine and we must be prepared for that outcome.

In addition, the simultaneous, immediate need for billions of doses of countermeasures around the globe is truly an unprecedented challenge and one for which we must sufficiently prepare for. If an effective vaccine is produced first in the U.S., without global cooperation, manufacturers may face a risk of insufficient availability of the contract or partner production capacity in other countries. A breakdown in global cooperation on vaccine development, production, and distribution could be problematic for our domestic supply requirements.

Together, these factors demonstrate the value of U.S. leadership, and suggest that there are significant benefits to participating in global development efforts, including the ACT Accelerator among others. They also indicate the importance of establishing a global regulatory cooperation framework, which the U.S. would be well-positioned to lead. The United States has a proud history of international coalition-building and we in Congress stand ready to help drive and support that leadership with you. We are eager to support U.S. Government efforts to improve global access to vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics for COVID-19, and we respectfully request you consider the following recommendations for a whole-of-government COVID-19 response:

1. A national plan to collaborate with other countries on a strategy to improve global access, including specific objectives, realistic but aggressive timelines, and clear pathways for public and private sector action.
2. A comprehensive strategy to advise and assist developing countries with approval, adoption, and maintenance of new biotechnologies.
3. A clear cooperative plan among countries involved in vaccine manufacturing, vaccine input production, therapeutics and diagnostics aimed at ensuring any new vaccines can be produced quickly and in the greatest number of doses possible.
4. A cooperative framework for rapid and efficient distribution of vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics once they are developed.
5. An evaluation of the potential advantages of supporting the variety of global public-private partnerships globally, including Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) – all of which are working on innovative COVID-19 countermeasures and to improve accessibility to such countermeasures.

Strong international coordination is necessary to accelerate and manage the development of medical countermeasures globally and, by extension, to prevent future loss of life and overcome the destruction this virus has already caused. Therefore, we encourage the Administration to continue to work with international allies and partners and provide essential American leadership, ingenuity, and expertise during this time of global crisis. Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to working with you to protect Americans from COVID-19 and future pandemics.

Sincerely,



Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, DVM  
Member of Congress



David Trone  
Member of Congress



Brian K. Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary, U.S. Department of State  
The Honorable Alex M. Azar II, Secretary, U.S. Department of HHS  
The Honorable John Barsa, Acting Administrator, USAID