

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

May 1, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo,

We are writing to urge the United States to participate and help lead international efforts to coordinate the distribution of a vaccine for the virus that causes COVID-19. These efforts are critical to ensuring the health and safety of all Americans, as well as the return to a smoothly functioning economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has touched countless Americans and citizens around the world. It has taken far too many lives and devastated our economy. While increased testing and contact tracing will enable us to relax physical distancing measures, Americans will not be able to truly return to normal until the development of a safe and effective vaccine. In particular, our health care workers and other essential workers will remain at acute risk until they are able to be immunized.

The pandemic is also demonstrating the ingenuity and resourcefulness of our entire country. American workers and companies, academia, and the public sector have all mobilized to develop a vaccine. The U.S. government has identified and funded three promising vaccine candidates through BARDA and NIH. We have every reason to believe that some of these candidates will ultimately be successful, but the nature of vaccine development means some won't work.

We should prepare ourselves for the potential consequences if a U.S. vaccine candidate is not the winner of the international vaccine race. The market for the SARS-CoV-2 vaccine will truly be a global one. It will require international supply chains for material ranging from preservatives to glass vials, which the U.S. may not have the capacity to produce solely on its own. Securing the cooperation of countries that control these supplies will be critical going forward.

It is for this reason that we urge U.S. participation in efforts to ensure development, production, and distribution of a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine is coordinated among international purchasers. Coordinated action would help manage and accelerate component sourcing, production and coproduction, and determine mechanisms for pricing and distribution. Most importantly, it would also develop a prioritization scheme to ensure the world's health care and other essential workers are immunized *first*, regardless of whose nation's vaccine wins.

We understand that there are active conversations to develop this international mechanism and framework for a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine. The United States needs to participate in and be a leader of these conversations. In our absence, we risk the rules and guidelines could be dictated by other countries who may not share our values. Should a U.S. candidate not cross the finish line first and an international

framework is established without U.S. participation, other countries may receive a vaccine before our health care and other essential workers. We cannot let that happen.

In particular, the U.S. should consider participating in the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). CEPI is funding the development of nine SARS-CoV-2 candidates. The organization is currently leading efforts to build an international vaccine cooperation mechanism. Participation in CEPI would accelerate the development of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines as well as providing a stake and a voice in CEPI's vaccine cooperation efforts

American ingenuity and leadership have helped contain diseases ranging from Ebola to polio, and eradicated smallpox. We can do so again. We stand ready to assist American leadership to enhance those efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ami Bera". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ami" and last name "Bera" clearly distinguishable.

Ami Bera, M.D.  
Chairman,  
Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and Nonproliferation  
House Foreign Affairs Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ted Yoho". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Ted" and last name "Yoho" clearly distinguishable.

Ted Yoho, D.V.M.  
Ranking Member,  
Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and Nonproliferation  
House Foreign Affairs Committee