

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE EDUCATION SQUAD

December 6, 2021

DEAR EDITORS,

The International Trade Education Squad (ITES) has been working with other trade justice and human rights groups throughout the pandemic to push for changes in international trade arrangements to enable the making of vaccines across the world. From November 30–December 3 the World Trade Organization is meeting where a vote will take place to suspend intellectual property monopolies for COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatments. Already more than 100 nations support a temporary, COVID-specific waiver of WTO Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) rules.

The White House said it would support the TRIPS waiver, but governments of the European Union are currently blocking it. Our government needs to push the European Union to support vaccinating and treating the world so further SARS variants will not render the existing shots and treatment modalities we have ineffective.

Join us in calling on our government to:

1. Cooperate with South Africa, India and other waiver proponents to speedily produce a draft WTO TRIPS waiver text and use all means available to press the European Union to end their opposition and secure swift passage of a comprehensive waiver agreement.
2. Leverage the U.S. government's past public investments, existing legal authorities and considerable equities to make vaccine firms transfer technology to capable and qualified producers around the world.
3. Launch and fund a global manufacturing plan to increase and democratize vaccine production in hubs worldwide.

Thank you,
Helen Beichel

