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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

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April 25, 2024

Albert Bourla
President
International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Pfizer
235 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

David Reddy
Director General
International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations
Chemin des Mines 9, 1202
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Bourla and Mr. Reddy:

I am writing to urge you to reconsider [your opposition](#) to proposed measures in the World Health Organization's Pandemic Accord that would help make tests, treatments, and vaccines available to everyone who needs them.

As leaders of the pharmaceutical industry, you play a critical role in making sure new tests, treatments and vaccines are created. The success of your scientists is humanity's success. But your responsibility does not end with inventing breakthroughs. The products you develop must be made available around the world quickly and affordably. At the very least, you should not challenge governments negotiating new rules to make medicines more accessible.

We must learn the lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. Consider Pfizer, the drug company you lead, Mr. Bourla. While Pfizer doubled its profits in 2021 and made a record \$100 billion in revenue in 2022, millions of people in low-and-middle income countries died as a result of not having access to vaccines. Pfizer [repeatedly](#) put profit above public health.

By the end of 2021, even the former head of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations was [forced to acknowledge](#) that everyone was "ashamed and embarrassed" by the inequality in access to COVID vaccines. "We also have to admit we dismally failed in terms of equitable rollout, equitable distribution, and that is something we really need to do better in 2022," he said.

Mr. Bourla and Mr. Reddy: you now have an opportunity to do better. It is not a radical idea to suggest that pharmaceutical companies should set reasonable prices when they benefit from

taxpayer investment. There is no rational reason why vaccine manufacturers should be allowed to keep lifesaving manufacturing information secret in the face of an international public health emergency.

That is not just the right thing to do. It is the smart thing to do to protect the American people from viruses that respect no borders.

On March 11, 2024, you [announced](#) that your member companies could support voluntary adoption of equitable access commitments that could be “legally binding and enforceable through contracts.” Exactly one month after your announcement, one of your member companies, [Moderna](#), backtracked on its plan to build a manufacturing facility in Kenya. The African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said “Moderna is [abandoning a commitment](#) to build highly needed and relevant vaccine manufacturing capabilities in Africa, in truth, demonstrating that Moderna’s commitment is in fact not to vaccine equity and access to vaccines.”

As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, I am committed to doing everything I can to help ensure that everyone can access the tests, treatments and vaccines they need. For this reason, I believe the industry you represent must not stand in the way of a Pandemic Accord with strong binding equitable access obligations.

I ask that you provide a written response to the following questions, no later than May 9, 2024:

1. What was the total amount of public funding received by International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) member companies for research and development of COVID-19 tests, treatments and vaccines?
2. Will IFPMA commit to respecting the inclusion of strong reasonable pricing and technology sharing requirements in the WHO Pandemic Accord?
3. Will IFPMA commit to not exerting pressure against developing countries that use flexibilities available under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) to make tests, treatments, and vaccines more accessible?
4. To assess the feasibility of the March 11th announcement, please provide a list of your member companies and their current legally binding equitable access commitments.

Thank you, in advance, for your prompt reply. If necessary, I will give you the opportunity to explain to the HELP Committee your decision to prioritize the profits of the pharmaceutical industry over public health imperatives.

Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders

Chair

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

cc:

Ted W. Love, Chair, Board of Directors, Biotechnology Innovation Organization

John F. Crowley, President and CEO, Biotechnology Innovation Organization

Stephen J. Ubl, President and Chief Executive Officer, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America

Daniel O'Day, Chair, Board of Directors, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America; Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Gilead Sciences, Inc.