

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 10, 2023

Stéphane Bancel
Chief Executive Officer
Moderna
200 Technology Square
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Bancel:

Yesterday, the Wall Street Journal reported that Moderna is considering more than quadrupling the price of its COVID vaccine after the supply that the U.S. government purchased, and distributed to Americans at no cost, is depleted. Instead of charging \$26.36 per dose, the price that the government paid, Moderna has indicated that the commercial price will go up to as much as \$130 per dose.

I have very deep concerns about that decision and the impact that it will have on the federal budget, the cost of private insurance and the unnecessary deaths that may occur because millions of Americans may not be able to afford the vaccine at the new cost.

I am writing to ask you to reconsider your decision and refrain from any price increases.

The huge increase in price that you have proposed will have a significantly negative impact on the budgets of Medicaid, Medicare and other government programs that will continue covering the vaccine without cost-sharing for patients. Your decision will cost taxpayers billions of dollars. Your outrageous price boost will also increase private health insurance premiums. Perhaps most significantly, the quadrupling of prices will make the vaccine unavailable for many millions of uninsured and underinsured Americans who will not be able to afford it. How many of these Americans will die from COVID-19 as a result of limited access to these lifesaving vaccines? While nobody can predict the exact figure, the number could well be in the thousands. In the midst of a deadly pandemic, restricting access to this much needed vaccine is unconscionable.

I find your decision particularly offensive given the fact that the vaccine was jointly developed in partnership with scientists from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a U.S. government agency that is funded by U.S. taxpayers. The federal government directly provided \$1.7 billion to your company for research and development, and guaranteed your company billions more in sales. In other words, you propose to make the vaccine unaffordable for the residents of this country who made the production of the vaccine possible. That is not acceptable.

Mr. Bancel: In the last two years, Moderna made over \$19 billion in profits and used those profits to provide incredibly extravagant compensation packages to you and other top officials at

your company. It is reported that you, yourself, became a multi-billionaire as a direct result of Moderna's COVID vaccine with Forbes currently estimating your wealth at \$6.1 billion.

Moreover, Noubar Afeyan, Moderna's chairman and co-founder is currently worth \$2.1 billion. Robert Langer, another co-founder of Moderna, is now worth \$2.2 billion. Timothy Springer, a founding investor in Moderna is now worth \$2.6 billion. Further, my understanding is that Moderna approved a \$926 million golden parachute for you once you leave the company along with \$160 million for Stephen Hoge (Moderna's president) and \$53 million for Juan Andres (Moderna's chief technical officer).

I should point out that all of this corporate welfare and profiteering has taken place in the midst of the worst public health crisis in America in 100 years. In the last three years, nearly 1.1 million Americans died from COVID-19 and over 100 million more have become ill. It has also been estimated that the cost of producing the vaccine is now as low as \$2.85 per dose – 2.2% of what Moderna has suggested charging to the public.

Let's be clear: The purpose of the recent taxpayer investment in Moderna was to protect the health and lives of the American people, not to turn a handful of corporate executives and investors into multi-billionaires.

As you know, the federal government, over the years, has supported Moderna every step of the way going back to 2013 when your company reportedly only had three employees. Now, in the midst of a continuing public health crisis and a growing federal deficit, is not the time for Moderna to be quadrupling the price of this vaccine. Now is not the time for unacceptable corporate greed.

As the incoming Chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions in the United States Senate, I look forward to hearing your response in the very near future.

Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator