



June 14, 2022

The Honorable Katherine C. Tai
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Tai,

The Pharmaceutical Industry Labor-Management Association, which advances the dual goals of fostering innovation of life-saving cures and securing high-quality union construction jobs, continues to be concerned about developments with regard to WTO consideration of waivers that would weaken intellectual property protections critical to supporting the jobs of PILMA-affiliated skilled union workers and their families.

We have been consistent in our determination that strong intellectual property protections (IP) also protect US jobs. Strong IP protections has been crucial in incentivizing companies to invest billions in research and development here in the US, including the construction of high-quality research and manufacturing facilities that can be built only by the most highly skilled workers.

However, some countries are arguing to weaken these protections and - even worse – expand waivers to include diagnostics and therapeutics, notwithstanding the fact that there currently exists a global surplus of COVID-19 vaccines – and it is widely acknowledged that suspending intellectual property rights will not increase the number of people vaccinated.

It is PILMA's position that a TRIPS waiver will undermine the Biden Administration's strong labor policies and track record by giving critical intellectual property – and therefore significant manufacturing capacity – to economic competitors like India and China. In fact, China continues to make clear that it must be an eligible WTO member state under any negotiated TRIPS waiver outcome.

Due to the efforts of US scientists and hard-working Americans, the US biopharmaceutical industry has answered the call to develop vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics to meet the challenge of COVID-19, and future debilitating and deadly illnesses. Without strong protections for intellectual property jobs and future cures could be at risk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy Dickson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Timothy Dickson
Executive Director
Pharmaceutical Industry Labor-Management Association

cc:

Hon. Gina Raimondo, U.S. Secretary of Commerce
Hon. Ron Klain, White House Chief of Staff