

# R21-3 SUBSTITUTE Resolution Urging Big Pharma Vaccine Access for the Most At-Risk Governments

*Resolved*, that Council use effective communications and policy resources to prevail upon U.S. pharmaceutical companies to escalate Covid-19 vaccine access for the most at-risk governments during a global state of emergency that justifies (1) waiving standard intellectual property rights and (2) implementing transparency policies in contractual negotiations for vaccine sales and distribution; and be it further

*Resolved*, that Diocese of Atlanta congregations be encouraged to support the work of the Office of Government Relations and Episcopal Public Policy Network in promoting global vaccine access; and be it further

*Resolved*, that a Task Force be created by the Bishop to determine the best way to achieve these goals, and the Task Force shall present action item(s) to the Executive Board of the Diocese for their further action no later than March 31, 2022.

## **EXPLANATION**

The Episcopal Church is a signatory among dozens of advocacy groups, both faith-based and secular, to a letter dated September 19, 2021 that urged President Biden to promote a \$25 billion investment that would produce 8 billion Covid-19 vaccine doses within a year (appended on the Annual Council website). Also: Episcopal Relief and Development was signatory to an earlier, similar appeal to the President dated April 13, 2021, that urged the launching of a global vaccine manufacturing program (appended on the Annual Council website).

Meanwhile, the two pharmaceutical companies that have most benefitted financially from the pandemic continue to place profits over people (appended report on the Annual Council website: Public Citizen, October 19, 2021). Related reports represent Pfizer and Moderna as a vaccine 'duopoly' and indicate that they could immediately implement breakthrough outcomes in world vaccination results by changes in policy.

However, it is evident that public opinion will be necessary to impact Covid-19 policies that operate in a business-as-usual ethos and on a profit-driven basis. Such policies

involve prepandemic intellectual property rights and secret negotiation practices that hold national governments hostage to corporate self-interest during an unprecedented world crisis. In addition to advocacy appeals like the appended letters to the President, public protests are required to get the attention and sway the status quo interests of pharmaceutical CEOs and their shareholders.

Appended: 1. April 13, 2021 Letter to President Biden that includes The Episcopal Church as a signatory (See other sources via internet keyword research) 2. September 19, 2021 Letter to President Biden that includes Episcopal Relief and Development as a signatory (See other sources via internet keyword research) 3. October 19, 2021 Public Citizen Report by Zain Rizvi, "Pfizer's Power" (See other sources via internet keyword research)

Submitted by the Annual Council Committee for Community Ministries