

PhRMA Messaging and Polling Memo / TRIPS Waiver

To: Interested parties

From: PhRMA message and research team

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PhRMA recently completed a quick pulse poll on voter attitudes around the Administration's decision to support the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver. This poll fielded with Morning Consult from May 7th to May 10th and the sample consisted of N=1,990 registered voters.

Three takeaways from this survey of Americans nationwide:

1. Americans want a better way on the TRIPS waiver when they learn about it. They want to expand global access without risking to patient safety or vaccine manufacturing.
2. Majorities of Americans – including majorities of Democrats and Republicans – believe vaccine IP is important to ending COVID-19 and that the U.S. should protect it.
3. Majorities of Democrats and Republicans are concerned that the TRIPS waiver could risk patient safety, sow public confusion, increase competition for scarce resources and introduce new competition from China and Russia.

Detailed findings:

Americans support expanding vaccine access globally. Seven-in-ten (70%) registered voters believe it is a “top priority” to ensure COVID-19 vaccines become widely available for all countries, including 82% of Democrats and 56% of Republicans.

Americans across party lines support IP protections for COVID-19 vaccines. Three-quarters (75%) believe that the U.S. needs strong IP protections to encourage innovation (77% for Democrats, 72% for Republicans).

- 66% of Democrats think the “the U.S. needs strong intellectual property protection to beat coronavirus (COVID-19).”
- 67% of Democrats believe that “innovators and entrepreneurs in the coronavirus crisis deserve intellectual property protection.”

Americans would prefer to build on successful U.S. manufacturing than waive patents: When asked to choose one of two statements, a strong majority prefers the following, first statement:

- 56% select: *The U.S. should build upon successful U.S. manufacturing of COVID-19 vaccines to increase global supply, donate excess doses and increase licensing agreements with foreign manufacturers to increase supply.* (56% for Democrats, 58% for Republicans)
- Just 23% select: *The U.S. should incentivize other countries to make their own versions of U.S. vaccines by waiving intellectual property right and patents of U.S. manufacturers to increase supply.* (29% for Democrats, 17% for Republicans)

Americans worry that waiving IP introduces unnecessary and dangerous risks to safety and vaccine manufacturing. Strong majorities are concerned by the following potential outcomes of the TRIPS waiver:

- 68% are concerned “other countries don't have the same standards and oversight as the U.S., which opens up potential for error and risks people's safety worldwide” (65% among Democrats, 71% among Republicans).
- 65% are concerned “flooding the market with vaccine producers and vaccines will create confusion and heighten concerns about the possibility of counterfeit vaccines” (62% among Democrats, 69% among Republicans).
- 66% are concerned “waiving rights unfairly gives new technology to companies that have not proven they have the expertise or resources to make COVID-19 vaccines safely and effectively” (64% among Democrats, 71% among Republicans).
- 61% are concerned about “unproven vaccine manufacturers will now compete with U.S. manufacturers for already scarce resources to make COVID vaccines” (59% among Democrats, 65% among Republicans)
- 60% are concerned about an “increase (in) competition from China by giving away U.S. trade secrets for mRNA (technology)” (54% among Democrats, 72% among Republicans)

Americans want strong IP and more collaboration to expand global access. Among other solutions examined, 4-in-5 voters (80%) say that vaccine makers working together to aid vaccines getting to poorer countries is important (45% say “very” important). This type of collaboration was the top ranked alternative for both parties: 84% among Democrats and 74% among Republicans. Voters also strongly support the following:

- Increase production targets from manufacturers: 73% say “very” or “somewhat” important
- U.S. vaccine makers partnering directly with manufacturers in poorer countries: 71%
- Financial support and in-kind donations to local organizations in poorer countries: 69%
- More American vaccine exports: 69%
- New commitments to COVAX: 68%