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TEHAN MUST LEAD ON COVID-19 TRIPS WAIVER

Labor is calling on the Australian Government to follow through on their stated support of a waiver of World Trade Organisation intellectual property rules for COVID-19 vaccines, ahead of this week's formal meetings of the WTO's Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property.

The Morrison-Joyce Government had to be dragged to their current position of muted support for a COVID vaccine TRIPS waiver, which was only admitted in September following pressure from advocacy groups, including AFTINET, Oxfam, The Salvation Army, Amnesty International and the ACTU.

Last week, *Medecins Sans Frontieres* added its voice to calls for wealthy nations to support the TRIPS waiver.

Now, Labor is joining with advocates across Australia and the world in calling on Dan Tehan to co-sponsor the COVID-19 vaccine waiver in the WTO.

Our global economy will only move through the COVID-19 global pandemic if vaccines are available to all. Vaccine accessibility in both developed and developing nations is imperative for global supply chains to recover.

The TRIPS waiver for COVID-19 vaccines was first proposed a year ago, in October 2020.

If Scott Morrison and Dan Tehan want to make a real difference in the final few months of their term of government, they should should act diplomatically to build a coalition of support for the TRIPS waiver in the WTO.

The Morrison-Joyce Government's focus on announcement instead of doing the whole job is again risking the wider distribution of COVID-19 vaccine technology, particularly in developing nations, to fight the deadly coronavirus.

The WTO's Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property will conduct its next formal meetings on Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 October 2021.

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