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# MailOnline

## Fashion billionaire Diane Von Furstenberg pledges HALF her fortune as part of greatest charity giveaway in history

By [Mail Foreign Service](#)

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**Diane Von Furstenberg with Barry Diller. The couple have pledged to donate half their fortune to charity**

Diane von Furstenberg is among 34 U.S. billionaires to pledge at least 50 per cent of their wealth to charity as part of a campaign by investor Warren Buffett and Microsoft founder Bill Gates.

The fashion designer, 63, who is most famous for the wrap dresses she designed in the Seventies, is married to TV mogul Barry Diller, 68. Together the couple have a fortune of more than £1billion.

They have been joined by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison, energy tycoon T. Boone Pickens, media mogul Ted Turner, banker David Rockefeller and investor Ronald Perelman in The Giving Pledge.

The initiative was started in June by Mr Gates, whose \$53billion (£33.3bn) fortune places him second on the Forbes magazine list of the world's richest people, and Mr Buffett, who ranks third on the list.

They wanted to persuade hundreds of U.S. billionaires to give away most of their fortune during their lifetime or after their death and to publicly state their intention with a letter of explanation.

'We've really just started but already we've had a terrific response,' Mr Buffett said in a statement.

'The Giving Pledge is about asking wealthy families to have important conversations about their wealth and how it will be used.

'We're delighted that so many people are doing just that - and that so many have decided to not only take this pledge but also to commit to sums far greater than the 50 per cent minimum level,' he added.

The full list of billionaires and their letters can be seen at [www.thegivingpledge.org](http://www.thegivingpledge.org).

The Giving Pledge does not accept any money but asks billionaires to make a moral commitment to give away their wealth to charity.

Mr Bloomberg wrote in his Giving Pledge letter: 'I am enthusiastically taking the Giving Pledge, and nearly all of my net worth will be given away in the years ahead or left to my foundation.

'Making a difference in people's lives - and seeing it with your own eyes - is perhaps the most satisfying thing you'll ever do.'

The billionaires announcing their pledge today join real estate and construction billionaire Eli Broad, venture capitalist John Doerr, media entrepreneur Gerry Lenfest and former Cisco Systems chairman John Morgridge who have already committed to giving away most of their wealth.





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**Initiative: Bill Gates (left) and Warren Buffett, right, are inviting fellow billionaires to join The Giving Pledge**

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Mr Buffett, who made his fortune with insurance and investment company Berkshire Hathaway Inc, Mr Gates and his wife, Melinda, held several dinners with a couple of dozen rich Americans in the past year to urge them to make the pledge.

Mr Buffett pledged in 2006 to give away 99 per cent of his wealth to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and family charities.

Bill and Melinda Gates have so far donated more than \$28billion (£17.6bn) of their fortune to their foundation.

Since the foundation began in 1994, it has given away more than \$22billion (£13.8bn) for health improvements in poor countries and to improve access for Americans to opportunities they need to succeed in school and life.

'I've long stated that I enjoy making money, and I enjoy giving it away,' Mr Pickens said in his Giving Pledge letter. 'I'm not a big fan of inherited wealth. It generally does more harm than good.'

Forbes said the U.S. is home to 403 billionaires, the most in the world.

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A fortune has been made exploiting third world countries - these people do not even have basic needs, including basic education. I am in talks with a lawyer in India to implement a vital need - we shall be happy to report back our progress.

- Pauline Maria, Manchester UK, 06/8/2010 21:17

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That's great, at last, someone putting their money where their mouth is. I love her and have got a wardrobe full of her dresses.

- Eureka, GB, 06/8/2010 16:53

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Just a drop in the ocean for them but oh so needed by many. Why cant more superrich give to help the NHS, homeless, ill etc. There are too many billionaires in the world and too many on the poverty line worldwide.

- sally coven, Corfu, Greece, 06/8/2010 13:36

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