

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 12, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We are writing to express our concern with a lack of responsiveness to requests to Ranking Members from our Committees on the topic of the origins of COVID-19. Disappointingly, many of us have received unsatisfactory responses, or no response at all. Requests for documents, briefings, or written responses for questions were refused, citing your request that the Intelligence Community review its holdings regarding the origins of COVID-19. Now that the one-and-a-half-page unclassified summary and a 17-page declassified document have been released, it is clear that many of our concerns have not been adequately addressed.

First, we are deeply concerned with the WHO's and Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) handling of the early stages of COVID-19. The CCP's lies on the origins and early stages of this outbreak, along with WHO's poor handling of this crisis, enabled a regional epidemic to become a global pandemic. This resulted in countries around the world, including ours, fighting the novel virus with incomplete information and valuable time wasted, resulting in almost 5 million dead. This malfeasance and lack of regard for human life is another example of the CCP's treatment of their own people and reminds us this is the same regime who puts millions of their own citizens in "concentration camps" and uses them for forced labor.

Additionally, there remain many outstanding questions regarding the origins of COVID-19, the nature of classified military research conducted at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and how funding from the United States supported that research. As such, we reiterate our request that you declassify all relevant intelligence on this matter, as far as possible while protecting sources and methods. Congress and the American people have a right to know.

Your administration's lack of responsiveness ignores judicial precedent. Decades ago, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals recognized that:

"All Members have a constitutionally recognized status entitling them to share in general congressional powers and responsibilities, many of them requiring access to executive information. It would be an inappropriate intrusion into the legislative sphere for the courts to decide without congressional direction

that, for example, only the chairman of a committee shall be regarded as the official voice of the Congress for purposes of receiving such information, as distinguished from its ranking minority member, other committee members, or other members of the Congress. Each of them participates in the law-making process; each has a voice and a vote in that process; and each is entitled to request such information from the executive agencies as will enable him to carry out the responsibilities of a legislator.”<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, previous administrations as a matter of policy and practice have voluntarily released information to Members of Congress who are not chairs of a committee. For example, the previous administration noted as a matter of policy: “We also agree that the Executive Branch should voluntarily release information to individual Members where possible, even though individual members cannot by themselves compel such release.”<sup>2</sup>

In addition, a 2019 Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel opinion acknowledged this longstanding Executive Branch practice:

“The Executive Branch has historically exercised discretion in determining whether and how to respond to requests for information from individual members of Congress. Individual members often have legitimate interests in seeking information from Executive Branch officials, and providing this information can aid individual members in carrying out their legislative responsibilities. When individual members are requesting information in their official capacity on their own behalf, and not acting on behalf of a body of Congress, an Executive Branch policy of providing good-faith responses to their requests exhibits a proper respect for members of a coordinate branch of the government. Departments and agencies, therefore, appropriately give due weight and sympathetic consideration to requests for information from individual members of Congress.”<sup>3</sup>

In light of these precedents, we request that your administration clarify whether it will adhere to judicial precedent and Executive Branch policy and practice on responding to Congressional requests from Ranking Members of Committee in good faith exhibiting proper respect. In addition, we urge you to direct your administration to adequately respond to our requests in a manner consistent with Congress’ oversight roles and our Constitutional principle of co-equal branches of government. We have attached several such outstanding letters, and we look forward to your response.

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<sup>1</sup> *Murphy v. Dep’t of Army*, 613 F.2d 1152, 1157 (1979).

<sup>2</sup> Letter for Charles E. Grassley, Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, from Marc Short, Director of Legislative Affairs, The White House at 2 (July 20, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Steven A. Engel, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel, Department of Justice, Requests by Individual Members of Congress for Executive Branch Information (February 13, 2019), *available at* <https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1356251/download>

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul  
Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



Frank Lucas  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Energy and Commerce

Enclosures:

Letter from Ranking Member McCaul to Secretary Blinken on Sanctioned WIV Employees

Letter from Ranking Members Lucas and Waltz to OSTP

Letters from Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers to NIH and USAID

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**One Hundred Seventeenth Congress**  
**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
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July 14, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

I am writing to request that the Department of State share any unclassified or classified document(s) that list or otherwise detail Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) employees involved in the CCP's cover-up and likely accidental release of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Access to such information will assist in my efforts to help uncover the origins of COVID-19 and better determine what malign actions the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took to conceal the existence of the virus. Further, I believe these individuals and entities involved in the cover up should immediately be considered for sanctions.

In June 2020, the HFAC minority staff released a comprehensive report on the origins of COVID-19, concluding that the CCP deliberately and repeatedly disregarded international law to conceal the spread of the virus throughout China. The CCP not only hid the deadliness of virus, but also lied to international bodies like the World Health Organization (WHO), foreign states, and Chinese citizens about confirmed cases and deaths caused by COVID-19. At the time of our report, HFAC minority staff called on the U.S. government to respond in strength to the CCP's malign actions.

Seven months later, on January 15, 2021, the Department of State released a fact sheet similarly concluding that the CCP "systemically prevented a transparent and thorough investigation of the COVID-19 pandemic's origin, choosing instead to devote enormous resources to deceit and disinformation." Furthermore, the report confirmed the possibility that the SARS-CoV-2 virus originated from the WIV, stating that the U.S. government has reason to believe several WIV employees became sick in autumn 2019 with symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Such information suggests that the CCP's cover-up of COVID-19 was not just a reactive effort to conceal spreading cases, but an active attempt to deny China's likely involvement in origins of the

deadly SARS-CoV-2 virus. I share the Department of State's conclusion—that it is possible the COVID-19 virus originated from the WIV, rather than occurring naturally, and demand that all actors possibly involved in the CCP's cover up be held accountable.

In order to continue congressional efforts to respond to the CCP's involvement in the COVID-19 pandemic, I am requesting the Department of State's or other government entities' documents in your possession that list WIV employees and related entities be provided as soon as possible. I look forward to working together to address the CCP's cover up and doing all we can to help ensure another pandemic does not occur emanating from China.

Sincerely,



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MICHAEL T. McCAUL  
Ranking Member

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

2321 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

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June 3, 2021

The Honorable Eric Lander  
Director  
Office of Science and Technology Policy  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Dr. Lander:

As the Ranking Republican Members of the Research and Technology Subcommittee and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, with jurisdiction over the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), we write to obtain more information on OSTP's role in investigating the origins of the COVID-19 virus and federally funded Gain-of-Function (GOF) research. On May 26, 2021, President Biden "asked the Intelligence Community to redouble their efforts to collect and analyze information [related to the origins of COVID-19] that could bring us closer to a definitive conclusion, and to report back to [him] in 90 days."<sup>1</sup> During this critical 90 day period, we believe OSTP, a cabinet level office, must play an active role ensuring a comprehensive investigation that includes sound scientific expertise, and the coordination and cooperation of all federal research agencies with the intelligence community.

Over multiple Administrations OSTP has provided policy guidance to federal research agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), on GOF research. In 2014, OSTP announced a United States Government (USG) process to assess the risks and benefits of GOF studies.<sup>2</sup> The announcement of the assessment included reference to biosafety and biosecurity "incidents." The "pause" and assessment of GOF research clearly indicates the severity and risk of GOF research when unsecured or in the hands of malign actors.

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<sup>1</sup> *Statement by President Joe Biden on the Investigation into the Origins of COVID-19*, THE WHITE HOUSE (May 26, 2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/05/26/statement-by-president-joe-biden-on-the-investigation-into-the-origins-of-covid-19/>.

<sup>2</sup> *U.S. Government Gain-of-Function Deliberative Process and Research Funding Pause on Selected Gain-of-Function Research Involving Influenza, MERS, and SARS Viruses*, U.S. DEP'T OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVS. (Oct. 17, 2014), available at <https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/gain-of-function.pdf>.

However, the pause of GOF research only applied to “research projects that may be reasonably anticipated to confer attributes to influenza, MERS, or SARS viruses such that the virus would have enhanced pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in mammals via the respiratory route” and did not apply to GOF testing of naturally occurring influenza, MERS, and SARS viruses.<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently, in January 2017, OSTP issued guidance<sup>4</sup> on the use of GOF research after a multi-year review by National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) in coordination with the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and HHS.<sup>5</sup> At that time, the moratorium on GOF research was not lifted.

On December 19, 2017, HHS issued the “Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens.”<sup>6</sup> As a result, NIH lifted its pause on GOF research dating back to 2014.<sup>7</sup>

The Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) is known globally for GOF research. WIV has received federal research funding, including funding from NIH through the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to study the risk of bat coronavirus emergence.<sup>8</sup> The WIV received approximately \$598,500 of the grant to EcoHealth from 2014-2019.<sup>9</sup> In 2019, the grant was reauthorized for \$3.7 million over five years.<sup>10</sup> Although the NIH funding to WIV was not approved for GOF, Dr. Francis Collins testified before the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations that “We are of course not aware of other sources of funds or other activities they might have undertaken outside of what our approved grant allowed.”<sup>11</sup> This statement amongst a litany of mounting evidence raises legitimate concerns regarding the safety and security of federally funded research to the WIV.

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<sup>3</sup> *Doing Diligence to Assess the Risks and Benefits of Life Sciences Gain-of-Function Research*, THE WHITE HOUSE (Oct. 17, 2014), <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/10/17/doing-diligence-assess-risks-and-benefits-life-sciences-gain-function-research>.

<sup>4</sup> *Recommended Policy Guidance for Departmental Development of Review Mechanisms for Potential Pandemic Pathogen Care and Oversight (P3CO)*, NAT’L INSTS. OF HEALTH (Jan. 9, 2017), available at [https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017\\_OSTP\\_P3CO\\_Policy\\_Guidance.pdf](https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017_OSTP_P3CO_Policy_Guidance.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity, *Recommendations for the Evaluation and Oversight of Proposed Gain-of-Function Research*, NAT’L INSTS. OF HEALTH (May 2016), available at [https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NSABB\\_Final\\_Report\\_Recommendations\\_Evaluation\\_Oversight\\_Proposed\\_Gain\\_of\\_Function\\_Research.pdf](https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NSABB_Final_Report_Recommendations_Evaluation_Oversight_Proposed_Gain_of_Function_Research.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> *Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens*, U.S. DEP’T OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVS. (Dec. 19, 2017), available at <https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> *NIH Lifts Funding Pause on Gain-of-Function Research*, NAT’L INSTS. OF HEALTH (Dec. 19, 2017), <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/who-we-are/nih-director/statements/nih-lifts-funding-pause-gain-function-research>.

<sup>8</sup> Award Profile Grant Summary, Project Grant FAIR01A110964, [https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST\\_NON\\_R01A110964\\_7529](https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_R01A110964_7529).

<sup>9</sup> Betsy McKay, *NIH Presses U.S. Nonprofit for Information on Wuhan Virology Lab*, WALL ST. J. (Aug. 19, 2020), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/nih-presses-u-s-nonprofit-for-information-on-wuhan-virology-lab-11597829400>.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *FY 2022 Budget Request for the National Institutes of Health: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Appropriations, Subcomm. on Labor, Health & Human Servs., Education, & Related Agencies*, 117th Cong. (May 25, 2021) (testimony of Dr. Francis S. Collins, Dir., Nat’l Insts. of Health), available at <https://appropriations.house.gov/events/hearings/fy-2022-budget-request-for-the-national-institutes-of-health>.

OSTP has historically played a central role in providing policy guidance and directives to agencies pertaining to GOF activities. As a result, and in consideration of President Biden's 90-day origins of COVID-19 review, we request a Member-level briefing by June 30, 2021 to provide information to the Committee on the following questions regarding OSTP's role in the review and assessment of existing USG policies related to GOF:

- President Biden has directly tasked the Intelligence Community with the 90-day review, what is OSTP's role in the review?
- Considering OSTP advises the President on scientific aspects of national security, how is OSTP coordinating with other agencies to review the merit, safety, and security of USG research at WIV?
- Does OSTP plan to review policies and procedures that lead to resumption of GOF research?
- Does OSTP plan to conduct a new risk analysis of GOF research?
- Does OSTP plan to review all GOF science or research grants or subgrants issued between 2014 and today?
- Is OSTP reviewing federal grants or subgrants to Wuhan Institute of Virology and other Chinese laboratories between 2015 and 2019?
- Will OSTP review the process by which NASBB and NAS conducted a risk assessment on GOF research, and the conclusions reached that lead to a resumption?

Sincerely,



Michael Waltz  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Research and Technology



Frank Lucas  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Cc: Rep. Haley Stevens, Chair, Subcommittee on Research and Technology  
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Chair, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology



FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY  
CHAIRMAN

CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, WASHINGTON  
RANKING MEMBER

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE**

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
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October 27, 2021

The Honorable Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D.  
Director National Institutes of Health  
9000 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dr. Collins,

We write again asking the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to be transparent about its relationship with EcoHealth Alliance (EcoHealth) and to provide information and documents related to National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) grant project number R01AI110964, “Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence.”<sup>1</sup> In 2014, NIH awarded this grant to EcoHealth, the non-profit organization that in turn funneled those funds to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV)<sup>2</sup> and to additional research organizations to support risky research in China.

Since March 2021, we have led a comprehensive examination of how the COVID-19 pandemic started. Understanding the root cause of this pandemic will help us prevent future pandemics. We are examining in connection with this effort whether NIH oversight of risky research conducted by an NIH sub-grantee in China was adequate to prevent or render it implausible that a lab accident could have been involved in the origins of the pandemic. Based on a review of documents and other information recently made available, we have significant

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<sup>1</sup>This is our fourth letter to NIH seeking information related to oversight of NIAID’s grant R01AI110964. Our prior letters dated March 18, 2021, July 21, 2021 and August 24, 2021 are available at <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/the-covid-19-origins-investigation/>. At this time, NIH has yet to respond in writing to any of the questions in these letters, and only produced EcoHealth grant documents to us after HHS had released them to *The Intercept* in response to a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit.

<sup>2</sup> This funding was in addition to USAID funding to EcoHealth that was also funneled to the WIV during this timeframe. USA Spending.gov, *EcoHealth Alliance*, Advanced Recipient Search (Aug. 2, 2021), available at <https://www.usaspending.gov/search/?hash=b2b11ac84d498190e8e69a33c04cdd99>. An April 6, 2016 correction to the Nov. 20, 2015 research article acknowledged the USAID-EPT-PREDICT funding source from EcoHealth Alliance to Zhengli Shi. Menachery, V. et al, *Correction: Corrigendum: A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence*, Nature Medicine (Apr. 6, 2016), available at <https://www.nature.com/articles/nm0416-446d>.

concerns about the adequacy of NIH oversight of EcoHealth and the related research activities at the WIV and other organizations in China.

In 2016, EcoHealth proposed a research project with the WIV using humanized mice to test several chimeric viruses to see if these experiments would show whether these viruses could infect human cells. EcoHealth portrayed the risks of these experiments as if they were not of concern, and the NIH accepted EcoHealth's assertions without a searching inquiry. However, the assessment of the risks by both EcoHealth and the NIH do not seem to square with the understanding of the research risks at that time. Although the engineered viruses at the WIV were far from SARS CoV-2 on the coronavirus family tree, this research reflected a high tolerance for risk.<sup>3</sup> As noted by Stanford University microbiologist David Relman, "[The WIV] were essentially playing Russian roulette with the virus that the world's expert had labelled poised for human emergence. It's the willingness to manipulate them without due concern."<sup>4</sup>

Further, the one condition imposed by the NIH was the requirement that EcoHealth stop the humanized mice experiment and notify the NIH if the result was a virus with enhanced growth by more than ten times (or one log) compared to the parental backbone or strains found in nature. The purpose of this policy was to safeguard against experiments creating viruses that could replicate quickly and had the potential to overwhelm the immune systems of humans. We believe the EcoHealth grant documents indicated such a reportable result from the experiment, but there is no evidence of EcoHealth taking the required actions, or the NIH raising any questions after getting the results of the experiment from EcoHealth. If EcoHealth and NIH could not handle compliance and oversight of such a basic policy, it raises more concerns about the overall adequacy of the oversight of this research, which leaves the public vulnerable to a serious lab accident.

In addition to how NIH examined the research proposal, the funding of EcoHealth by NIH after the suspension of their grant raises serious concerns about NIH's management and oversight of grants. Following an initial grant termination in April 2020, NIH reinstated the grant and then suspended the grant in July 2020 because of EcoHealth's inadequate oversight of the WIV.<sup>5</sup> When NIH asked EcoHealth to provide information related to its subaward to the WIV, EcoHealth refused to comply with most of the requests.<sup>6</sup> Despite EcoHealth's unwillingness to cooperate, NIH paid an additional \$369,819 to EcoHealth on July 13, 2020, a mere five days after its grant was suspended. NIH's payment seems inconsistent with NIH's grant policy and possibly violates other federal laws and regulations.<sup>7</sup>

NIH also failed to report EcoHealth's noncompliance and grant suspension into the www.SAM.gov database that alerts other U.S. Government agencies to risky grant recipients. Remarkably, the NIH, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and Department of Defense (DoD) have paid EcoHealth more than \$23.4 million in new and renewed assistance

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<sup>3</sup> Carolyn Korman, *The Mysterious Case of the COVID-19 Lab Leak Theory*, *The New Yorker* (October 12, 2021), available at <https://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/the-mysterious-case-of-the-covid-19-lab-leak-theory>.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Mark Moore, *NIH investigating Wuhan lab at center of coronavirus pandemic*, *NEW YORK POST* (Apr. 28, 2020), available at <https://nypost.com/2020/04/28/nih-investigating-wuhan-lab-at-center-of-coronavirus-pandemic/>.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* EcoHealth did report select subgrant funding data on July 13, 2020 into a public database. NIH had raised concerns that EcoHealth had not accounted for its funding of subgrantees.

<sup>7</sup> USA Spending.gov, *EcoHealth Alliance*, Advanced Recipient Search (Oct. 13, 2021), available at [https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST\\_NON\\_R01A1110964\\_7529](https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_R01A1110964_7529).

awards since April 2020, when NIH should have reported the administrative action it took against EcoHealth's grant. To date, NIH has refused to address any of these concerns.

We outline our concerns in more detail about NIH's oversight of the EcoHealth grant in the discussion that follows.

#### Grant Documents and Other Information Made Recently Available

On September 7, 2021, after the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) produced documents related to the EcoHealth grant because of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit, HHS shared essentially the same documents with us.<sup>8</sup> On September 29, 2021, Principal Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak briefed bipartisan Committee staff about the EcoHealth grant documents. Unfortunately, HHS and NIH did not accommodate the staff request to include subject matter experts and witnesses with first-hand knowledge from NIAID in this briefing. HHS arranged an in-person bipartisan Committee staff *in camera* review of the printed copies of the four highly relevant letters between NIH and EcoHealth about EcoHealth's humanized mice research proposal. These documents raise significant concerns about NIH's management and oversight of the EcoHealth grant.<sup>9</sup>

#### HHS Oversight Policy of Gain-of-Function Research Was Weakened in Recent Years

On August 30, 2021, the *Washington Post* published an article, *A Science in the Shadows*, detailing how the HHS oversight process over risky research, often referred to as Gain-of-Function (GOF) research, was weakened in recent years from the policy established in 2012.<sup>10</sup> For example, in December 2017, the review process known as the *HHS Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens Care and Oversight* (P3CO) was revised to remove any authority by the HHS P3CO review group to block GOF research proposals.<sup>11</sup> Instead, HHS redefined GOF research, which has given NIH leaders the sole discretion to approve GOF projects without referring them to the HHS PC3O review group.<sup>12</sup>

In a significant policy change, the 2017 policy also narrowed the criteria for review of GOF research to cover only altered pathogens "likely capable of wide and uncontrollable spread in human populations."<sup>13</sup> The review policy that started in October 2014, required experiments to

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<sup>8</sup> Sharon Lerner and Mara Hvistendahl, *New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab*, *The Intercept* (Sept. 6, 2021), available at <https://theintercept.com/2021/09/06/new-details-emerge-about-coronavirus-research-at-chinese-lab/>. The NIH document production appears identical to their production to *The Intercept*, except the documents NIH provided to us do not include FOIA exemption numbers in the redactions and instead include Bates numbered pages.

<sup>9</sup> A bipartisan *in camera* private in-person inspection of the physical copies of four letters dated May 18, 2016, June 8, 2016, July 7, 2016, and July 5, 2018 controlled by NIH was conducted at HHS headquarters on Oct. 5, 2021, monitored by HHS staff.

<sup>10</sup> David Willman and Madison Muller, *A Science in the Shadows*, *The Washington Post* (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/interactive/2021/a-science-in-the-shadows/>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens*, Dual Use Research of Concern (Dec. 19, 2017), available at <https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/P3CO.pdf>.

be reviewed if they expected to generate flu and coronaviruses that would be “transmissible among **mammals**” and might accidentally cause human infections.<sup>14</sup> (Emphasis added).

#### A GOF Experiment Warning by Dr. Ralph Baric and Others

In 2015, Dr. Ralph Baric of the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, Dr. Zheng-Li Shi of the WIV, and others published a study in *Nature*, titled *A SARS-Like Cluster Of Circulating Bat Coronaviruses Shows Potential For Human Emergence*.<sup>15</sup> Dr. Baric and Dr. Shi have each collaborated previously with EcoHealth. Importantly, EcoHealth, through its funding from USAID, helped support Dr. Shi of the WIV in this particular study.<sup>16</sup> Near the end of this publication, the authors issued a warning about a potential threat of certain viruses identified with the SHC014 reference number:

We consider viruses with the SHC014 spike a potential threat owing to their ability to replicate in primary human airway cultures, the best available model for human disease. In addition, the observed pathogenesis in mice indicates a capacity for SHC014-containing viruses to cause disease in mammalian models, without RBD adaptation.<sup>17</sup>

In the next paragraph, the authors explain the context of GOF research and how their expectation that the viruses they created would not increase pathogenicity turned out to be wrong after they conducted the experiments:

In addition to offering preparation against future emerging viruses, this approach must be considered in the context of the U.S. government–mandated pause on gain-of-function (GOF) studies. On the basis of previous models of emergence, the creation of chimeric viruses such as SHC014-MA15 was not expected to increase pathogenicity. Although SHC014-MA15 is attenuated relative to its parental mouse-adapted SARS-CoV, similar studies examining the pathogenicity of CoVs with the wild-type Urbani spike within the MA15 backbone showed no weight loss in mice and reduced viral replication. Thus, relative to the Urbani spike–MA15 CoV, SHC014-MA15 shows a gain in pathogenesis.<sup>18</sup>

The authors then explain that scientific review panels may determine that similar studies would be too risky, so any further research may be limited going forward:

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<sup>14</sup> The White House, *Doing Diligence to Assess the Risks and Benefits of Life Sciences Gain-of-Function Research*, Blog (Oct. 17, 2014), available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/10/17/doing-diligence-assess-risks-and-benefits-life-sciences-gain-function-research>.

<sup>15</sup> Menachery, V. et al, *A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence*, *Nature Medicine* (Nov.20, 2015), available at <https://www.nature.com/articles/nm.3985>.

<sup>16</sup> An April 6, 2016 correction to the Nov. 20, 2015 research article acknowledged the USAID-EPT-PREDICT funding source from EcoHealth Alliance to Zhengli Shi. Menachery, V. et al, *Correction: Corrigendum: A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence*, *Nature Medicine* (Apr. 6, 2016), available at <https://www.nature.com/articles/nm0416-446d>.

<sup>17</sup> Menachery, V. et al, *A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence*, *Nature Medicine* (Nov.20, 2015), available at <https://www.nature.com/articles/nm.3985.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

On the basis of these findings, scientific review panels may deem similar studies building chimeric viruses based on circulating strains too risky to pursue, as increased pathogenicity in mammalian models cannot be excluded. Coupled with restrictions on mouse-adapted strains and the development of monoclonal antibodies using escape mutants, research into CoV emergence and therapeutic efficacy may be severely limited moving forward.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the authors advise that the purpose of their study – to prepare potentially for and mitigate future outbreaks – must be carefully weighed against dangers posed by the experiments creating more dangerous pathogens. Notably, the authors considered whether similar studies should be pursued:

Together, these data and restrictions represent a crossroads of GOF research concerns; the potential to prepare for and mitigate future outbreaks must be weighed against the risk of creating more dangerous pathogens. In developing policies moving forward, it is important to consider the value of the data generated by these studies and whether these types of chimeric virus studies warrant further investigation versus the inherent risks involved.<sup>20</sup>

#### Letters Reveal NIH and EcoHealth Discussed GOF Research Concerns

HHS allowed bipartisan Committee staff to see three letters from NIH to EcoHealth (May 18, 2016, July 7, 2016, and July 5, 2018) and one letter from EcoHealth to NIH (June 8, 2016) in an *in camera* review.<sup>21</sup> To our knowledge, NIH has not publicly disclosed these letters, although some of the contents in these letters appear to have been used in NIH correspondence to U.S. Senators.<sup>22</sup>

During the 2014 GOF moratorium in the United States, EcoHealth submitted its Year Two progress report dated May 13, 2016, to NIAID for grant R01AI110964. EcoHealth disclosed it would conduct experiments in humanized mice using two chimeric bat coronaviruses.<sup>23</sup> In response to the experiment descriptions in EcoHealth's research progress report, NIH wrote to EcoHealth on May 28, 2016,<sup>24</sup> to advise that NIAID determined the R01AI110964 grant research project may include GOF experiments subject to the 2014 GOF research pause.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> A bipartisan *in camera* private in-person inspection of the physical copies of four letters dated May 18, 2016, June 8, 2016, July 7, 2016, and July 5, 2018, was conducted at HHS headquarters on Oct. 5, 2021, monitored by HHS staff. Information presented as letter excerpts are produced from detailed staff notes because NIH refused to release copies of the letters to the Committee.

<sup>22</sup> See July 28, 2021, letter from NIH Director Francis Collins to U.S. Senator Charles Grassley, *available at* [https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/national\\_institutes\\_of\\_health\\_to\\_grassley\\_-\\_covid\\_origins\\_grant\\_oversight.pdf](https://www.grassley.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/national_institutes_of_health_to_grassley_-_covid_origins_grant_oversight.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> Sharon Lerner and Mara Hvistendahl, *New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab*, The Intercept (Sept. 6, 2021), *available at* <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>24</sup> May 18, 2016, NIH letter to EcoHealth (per notes taken by Minority Committee staff Oct. 5, 2021 during bipartisan *in camera* review).

<sup>25</sup> On Oct. 17, 2014, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services instituted a pause on funding research of Gain-of-Function (GOF) experiments involving influenza, SARS, and MERS viruses following multiple biosafety accidents at U.S. laboratories. The White House, *Doing Diligence to Assess the Risks and Benefits of Life Sciences Gain-of-Function Research*, Blog (Oct. 17, 2014), *available at* <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/10/17/doing-diligence-assess-risks-and-benefits-life-sciences-gain-function-research>, and *available at* <http://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Documents/gain-of-function.pdf>.

Under the signature of Dr. Peter Daszak, its president, chief scientist, and grant principal investigator, EcoHealth replied to NIH on June 8, 2016, asserting their research was not GOF.<sup>26</sup>

These 2 chimeric bat-like CoVs were constructed on Sept. 24, 2015. They use the backbone of a group 2b SARS-like bat CoV WIV1 and the spike proteins of two newly discovered bat SL-CoVs (Rs7327 and RsSHC014). The construction of these chimeric viruses aims to understand the receptor usage and infectivity of bat SL-CoVs that may be progenitors of SARS-CoV. We have not yet tested the pathogenicity of these viruses in animals.<sup>27</sup>

There was no discussion of how the RsSHC014 differed from the SHC014 spike protein of concern in the 2015 Baric *et al* warning. If there was no difference between these viruses, then there was no assessment of a known risk. In addition to the potential threat of the RsSHC014 spike, the WIV1 backbone was already known to be potentially dangerous to humans.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, EcoHealth stated that its research would not be considered GOF because the virus it was using had never previously infected humans:

We believe that this work would not be considered GOF because the pause specifically targeted experiments that related to the pathogenicity or transmissibility of SARS-CoV, MERS CoV and any influenza virus. Our molecular clone is WIV1, which is a group 2b SARS-like bat coronavirus that has never been demonstrated to infect humans or cause human disease.<sup>29</sup>

EcoHealth also argued that because the virus was ten percent different from the original SARS-CoV, their research did not qualify being subject to the GOF moratorium. EcoHealth continued its justification by explaining that because EcoHealth and/or the WIV would progressively introduce spike proteins that were progressively more distant from the original SARS-CoV, that the research was not subject to the GOF pause. EcoHealth also explained that its theory was supported by the 2015 publication of Dr. Ralph Baric's study:

Moreover, we are introducing progressively more distant S glycoproteins into WIV1 (The RBD of Rs7327 differs from WIV1 in several amino acid residues while RsSHC014 is even more distantly related phylogenetically), so it seems progressively less likely that any of these viruses would be more pathogenic or transmissible than the SARS-CoV. This is further supported by the fact that

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<sup>26</sup> June 8, 2016, EcoHealth letter to NIH (per notes taken by Minority Committee staff Oct. 5, 2021 during bipartisan *in camera* review).

<sup>27</sup> *Id.*

<sup>28</sup> Carolyn Korman, The Mysterious Case of the COVID-19 Lab Leak Theory, The New Yorker (October 12, 2021), *available at* <https://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/the-mysterious-case-of-the-covid-19-lab-leak-theory>. (“Shi’s lab developed its own platform for creating chimeric viruses. She crossed another bat coronavirus from Yunnan—named WIV1—with clones of different novel spike proteins and tested the creation in humanized mice. The viruses quickly replicated. One made the mice emaciated, a sign of severe pathogenesis. **What made this work especially risky was that WIV1 was already known to be potentially dangerous to humans.** Baric himself had made this clear in a 2016 study titled ‘SARS-Like WIV1-CoV Poised for Human Emergence.’”) (Emphasis added).

<sup>29</sup> June 8, 2016, EcoHealth letter to NIH (per notes taken by Minority Committee staff Oct. 5, 2021, during bipartisan *in camera* review).

Professor Ralph Baric's group (Menachery et al 2015, Nature Medicine 21, 1508-1513...PNAS, 113 (11): 3048-3053) took WIV1 spike and inserted it onto a SARS-CoV backbone and showed reduced pathogenicity in mice with human ACE-2 relative to SARS-CoV (mortality rates were much lower, therefore this is loss of function). This strongly suggests that the chimeric bat spike/bat backbone viruses should not have enhanced pathogenicity in animals.<sup>30</sup>

#### NIH Agreed with EcoHealth's Self-Assessment and Added Grant Conditions

In a July 7, 2016, response letter to EcoHealth, NIH replied that NIAID agreed with EcoHealth's determination that its work was not subject to the GOF pause based on its review of the original grant application, and cited two of the justifications provided by EcoHealth as the basis for its agreement:

NIAID is in agreement that the work proposed under Aim 3 to generate MERS-like or SARS-like chimeric coronaviruses (CoVs) is not subject to the GOF research funding pause. This determination is based on the following: (1) the chimeras will contain only S glycoprotein genes from phylogenetically distant bat CoVs; and (2) recently published work demonstrating that similar chimeric viruses exhibited reduced pathogenicity. Therefore, it is not reasonably anticipated that these chimeric viruses will have enhanced pathogenicity and/or transmissibility in mammals via the respiratory route.<sup>31</sup>

As a result, the NIAID added the following award condition, per the grant documents:

NIAID acknowledges that if any of the MERS-like or SARS-like chimeras generated under this grant show **evidence of enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log over the parental backbone strain**, Dr. Daszak will immediately stop all experiments w/ these viruses and provide the NIAID Program Officer and Grants Management Specialist, and Wuhan Institute of Virology Institutional biosafety Committee, with the relevant data and information related to these unanticipated outcomes. (Emphasis added).<sup>32</sup>

In a revised grant award notice for Year Three, NIAID added the following in the special terms and conditions section:

Per the letter dated July 7, 2016 to Mr. Aleksei Chmura at EcoHealth Alliance, should any of the MERS-like or SARS-like chimeras generated under this grant show **evidence of enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log over the parental backbone strain** you must stop all experiments with these viruses and provide the NIAID Program Officer and Grants Management Specialist, and Wuhan Institute

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<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

of Virology Institutional Biosafety Committee with the relevant data and information related to these unanticipated outcomes.<sup>33</sup> (Emphasis added).

Neither EcoHealth nor NIAID discussed alternative approaches that could have been less risky but may have been able to achieve the same research goals.

### EcoHealth's Progress Report for Year Four Raises Question of Cover-up

EcoHealth submitted a Year Four progress report in September 2020, two years after when the report should have been submitted to receive Year Five funding.<sup>34</sup> The original EcoHealth's Year Four progress report that was presumably revised should have been submitted to NIH in spring 2018. However, this report was not included in the production to *The Intercept* or to us.

Sometime during Year Four of the grant (June 1, 2017-May 31, 2018), the humanized mice experiments with the chimeric viruses were carried out.<sup>35</sup> The Year Four progress report discussing these experiments are controversial because of the rarity of a progress report being submitted two years late. Given the strict NIH rules regarding the release of grant funds, it is believed that the Year Four progress report may have replaced an earlier version of the Year Four progress report.<sup>36</sup> It is highly unusual for a grantee to replace a progress report.

Contrary to Dr. Tabak's stated belief to bipartisan Committee staff during the June 28, 2021, briefing that all of EcoHealth's grant-supported research was published, and thus it was unlikely that EcoHealth would have much unpublished data, Minority Committee staff was unable to find any published studies for EcoHealth's humanized mice experiment discussed in the grant. The humanized mice experiment results EcoHealth reported to NIH, as described in the grant documents, showed that the SHC014S virus seriously infected the mice and caused them to lose 20 percent of their body weight in six days.<sup>37</sup> EcoHealth and the WIV infected humanized mice with the WIV1 parental virus and three chimeric viruses containing SHC014S, WIV16S and Rs4231S.<sup>38</sup> At two and four days post-infection, "viral loads in lung tissues of mice challenged with all three chimeras reached  $>10^6$  genome copies per/g, significantly higher than related WIV1 infection (Fig. 6b). This demonstrates that pathogenicity of SARS-related coronaviruses in humanized mice differs with divergent S proteins, **confirming** the value of this model in assessing novel SARS related coronavirus pathogenicity."<sup>39</sup> (Emphasis added).

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<sup>33</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at 189, available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>34</sup> Mara Hvistendahl and Sharon Lerner, *NIH Bat Coronavirus Grant Report Was Submitted More Than Two Years Late*, *The Intercept*, (Oct. 1, 2021), available at <https://theintercept.com/2021/10/01/nih-bat-coronavirus-grant-ecohealth-alliance/>.

<sup>35</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at 485-486 available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>36</sup> Mara Hvistendahl and Sharon Lerner, *NIH Bat Coronavirus Grant Report Was Submitted More Than Two Years Late*, *The Intercept*, (Oct. 1, 2021), available at <https://theintercept.com/2021/10/01/nih-bat-coronavirus-grant-ecohealth-alliance/>.

<sup>37</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at 486, available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

<sup>39</sup> *Id.* The use of the word "confirming" suggests a previous belief that the experiment would demonstrate increased pathogenicity seen in the experiment's results rather than simply showing reduced pathogenicity, which was the purported justification that the experiment was not GOF.



NIH's Re-Review of EcoHealth Grant Found Research Was Not Subject to the P3CO Risk Analysis Framework Policy

Despite the documents NIH produced to us in which EcoHealth's Year Four progress report, dated September 16, 2020, more than two years after when it should have been submitted, NIH approved EcoHealth's Year Five grant renewal with a Notice of Award dated June 18, 2018.

Even though the proposed humanized mice experiment would have been already conducted during 2016 to 2017, NIH wrote on July 5, 2018, to EcoHealth reaffirming its July 7, 2016, determination that EcoHealth's proposed research was not a GOF experiment under the HHS P3CO framework. In its July 2018 letter, NIH did not cite any new or additional evidence to show the research was not subject to the HHS P3CO framework<sup>40</sup>

The experiments to generate MERS-like or SARS-like chimeric coronaviruses, are not subject to the HHS P3CO framework. The terms and conditions of the award have been revised to indicate that should experiments proposed in this award result in a virus with enhanced growth by more than 1 log compared to wild type strains, you must notify your NIAID Program Officer, and Grants Management specialist immediate and that further research involving the resulting virus(es) may require review by the DHHS in accordance with the HHS PC30 Framework.<sup>41</sup>

In its November 5, 2018, progress report to NIH for the period of June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2019, EcoHealth reported that the strains of the viruses it was using in its experiments could represent a significant threat to public health because they could escape existing vaccine and therapeutic treatments.<sup>42</sup>

Preliminary Observations

Based on the totality of these studies and reports made available so far, we make the following preliminary observations:

- The revised 2017 HHS definition of GOF research appears to be too narrow because it does not capture SARS-like or MERS-like viruses that are very similar to SARS or MERS. On January 23, 2020, Dr. Christian Hassell, the Chair of the HHS P3CO review group, expressed concern about the narrow definition in the most recent meeting of NIH's National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB): "I'll just probably be more frank than may be appropriate - I think that's too narrow. My view on this thing is, don't

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<sup>40</sup> July 5, 2018, NIH letter to EcoHealth (per notes taken by Minority Committee staff Oct. 5, 2021 during bipartisan *in camera* review).

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at 486, available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

use too fine a filter.”<sup>43</sup> No additional meetings or communications have been taken in a year and nine months by NIH to address Dr. Hassell’s concerns.<sup>44</sup>

- Both EcoHealth’s and NIAID’s assessments that the experiment would be expected to show less pathogenesis seem at odds with the stated goals of the research project to look for dangerous viruses with pandemic potential. The assessments also turned out to be wrong. Specifically, the humanized mice experiment with the SARS-like coronaviruses showed more pathogenesis with three of the viruses, especially the one labeled SHC014, which produced a 20 percent weight loss in the humanized mice.<sup>45</sup> As previously mentioned, Baric *et al* warned about viruses containing SHC014 in their 2015 publication.
- After the results of the 2015 Baric *et al* paper, which showed an increase in pathogenesis with some viruses, EcoHealth and NIAID should have examined the research proposal more closely before reaching the conclusion that the expected results of the experiment would be less pathogenic.
- It seems unlikely that EcoHealth and NIAID were unaware of the findings in the 2015 paper. Thus, we are left with the impression that both chose to document the research as less dangerous so that EcoHealth could continue to receive its funding and NIAID could avoid outside oversight of that research proposal.
- Neither the EcoHealth nor the NIAID assessments reflected the careful weighing of risks and benefits of the proposed potential GOF research.<sup>46</sup> In particular, NIAID’s assessment in 2016 did not explain the benefits of the proposed research and how such benefits outweighed the risks, nor did NIAID consider any biosafety and risk mitigation measures. The NIAID determination in 2018 that the research was not subject to the HHS P3CO framework lacked any analysis or explanation supporting its determination and failed to address how it concluded that there was no pandemic potential.
- Based on the available documents, EcoHealth violated the terms of its grant. The chimeric virus used in the humanized mice experiment produced more than one log of virus growth compared to the WIV1 parental backbone.<sup>47</sup> In fact, it appears the experiment with the virus listed as SHC014 produced more than 3 logs of comparative growth. Per their grant terms, EcoHealth was to stop their experiment and notify NIAID.<sup>48</sup> It does not appear it

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<sup>43</sup> David Willman and Madison Muller, *A Science in the Shadows*, The Washington Post (Aug. 26, 2021), available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/interactive/2021/a-science-in-the-shadows/>.

<sup>44</sup> Confirmed with Dr. Hassell on August 13, 2021 in a bipartisan Committee staff briefing.

<sup>45</sup> Sharon Lerner and Mara Hvistendahl, *New Details Emerge About Coronavirus Research at Chinese Lab*, The Intercept (Sept. 6, 2021), available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>46</sup> June 8, 2016 EcoHealth letter to NIH (per notes taken by Minority Committee staff Oct. 5, 2021 during bipartisan *in camera* review); July 7, 2016 NIH letter to EcoHealth (per notes taken by Minority Committee staff Oct. 5, 2021 during bipartisan *in camera* review).

<sup>47</sup> See Andrew Kerr, *Fauci-Funded Wuhan Lab Viruses Exhibited Over 10,000 Times Higher Viral Load Than Natural Strain*, Daily Caller (September 9, 2021), available at <https://dailycaller.com/2021/09/09/ecohealth-alliance-gain-of-function-higher-viral-load-anthony-fauci/>.

<sup>48</sup> There is no evidence that EcoHealth stopped the experiment to notify NIAID as required. In discussing the results of this experiment, EcoHealth never explicitly stated in the text of the progress reports the amount of virus growth of the parental backbone, thereby masking the comparison that might have attracted attention from a NIAID reviewer. However, the bar graph in the grant documents shows that the parental backbone, WIV 1, produced about 4.7 log<sub>10</sub> genome copies per gram, two days after

did either. As a result, NIAID's oversight of the grant failed to detect the viral growth issue and, notably, did not hold EcoHealth accountable for violating the terms of its grant.

### NIH Funded the EcoHealth Grant After Suspending It

Since April 2020, NIH has suspended all activities for NIAID grant R01AI110964 due to EcoHealth's grant award non-compliance.<sup>49</sup> Among other infractions, NIH advised EcoHealth in a July 8, 2020, letter that EcoHealth had not satisfied its obligations to monitor the WIV's activities and had not reported its subawards as required. The grant activities remain suspended and, as a result of such suspension, NIH made clear in its letter that "no funds from grant R01AI110964 may be provided to or expended by EcoHealth Alliance" until EcoHealth provides information and materials to NIH's satisfaction.<sup>50</sup>

On July 13, 2020, NIH issued a revised award approval notice to EcoHealth for the sixth year of the suspended project, despite NIH's suspension of all grant activities.<sup>51</sup> Not only did NIH approve the award, but based on a letter from EcoHealth, NIH apparently increased the award amount by an additional \$369,819. Despite NIH's notification to EcoHealth on July 8, 2020, that no funds would be provided, NIH issued the payment of that increase to EcoHealth on July 13, 2020, even though EcoHealth was not allowed to conduct activities under this grant during the suspension. In its revised award notice to EcoHealth issued on the same date as the \$369,819 payment, NIH designated specific allocations of \$76,301 for the WIV, and \$75,600 for the Institute of Pathogen Biology in Beijing, China.<sup>52</sup>

This raises significant concerns regarding NIH's oversight of grantees. This also raises concerns that NIH funding of a suspended entity is contrary to the Public Health Service Act and is possibly an Anti-Deficiency Act violation.<sup>53</sup> At a minimum, this expenditure is inconsistent with competent stewardship of federal funds, and subverts compliance with the NIH suspension letter and the NIH Grant Policy, which states: "Organizations or individuals that are suspended... cannot receive NIH grants, be paid from NIH grant funds, whether under a primary or lower-tier transaction (including trainees on NIH-supported training grants), or otherwise participate during the period of suspension..."<sup>54</sup>

On June 10, 2021, we wrote to you about our concerns that NIH issued a new \$2 million award to EcoHealth in August 2020, while EcoHealth was a noncompliant grantee with a

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infection compared to about 8 log<sub>10</sub> genome copies per gram produced by the SHC014 strain - more than three logs of growth, much more than one log threshold specified in the grant terms.

<sup>49</sup> Committee staff have confirmed the grant status on multiple occasions with NIH leadership.

<sup>50</sup> NIH terminated the grant on April 24, 2020. On July 8, 2020, NIH simultaneously reinstated and suspended the grant activities, pending EcoHealth's cooperation and compliance. Katherine Eban, *The Lab Leak Theory: Inside the Fight to Uncover COVID 19's origins*, Vanity Fair (June 3, 2021), available at <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2021/06/the-lab-leak-theory-inside-the-fight-to-uncover-covid-19s-origins>.

<sup>51</sup> 2R01AI110964-06 is the renewal number assigned to the sixth year of the NIH R01AI110964 grant project.

<sup>52</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at 321, available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>53</sup> 31 U.S.C. 1341.

<sup>54</sup> National Institutes of Health, *Debarment and Suspension*, NIH Grants Policy Statement (Oct. 1, 2020), available at [https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/html5/section\\_4/4.1.6\\_debarment\\_and\\_suspension.htm](https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/html5/section_4/4.1.6_debarment_and_suspension.htm).

suspended NIH grant.<sup>55</sup> In the same letter, we also detailed our concerns that EcoHealth had never met its requirements to report publicly its subawards to the WIV or to the Wuhan University School of Public Health until NIH specifically instructed them to do so during communications between April and July 2020. The effect of EcoHealth withholding its financial reporting is that prior to and at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the financial relationship between EcoHealth, NIH, and the WIV was hidden from the public and not included in USASpending.gov.

After paying an illegible grant recipient in July 2020, the NIH in August 2020 announced its award of two multimillion-dollar grants to EcoHealth for NIAID's \$3.05 million project number U01AI151797, and NIAID's \$1.2 million project number U01AI153420.<sup>56</sup> Based on available information, NIH has not recovered the \$369,819 payment to EcoHealth. As recently as July 2021, NIH approved a \$574,984 payment to EcoHealth.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, over \$23.4 million has been paid to EcoHealth in its status as a potentially ineligible grant recipient, by NIH, USAID, and DoD since the time NIH should have reported its administrative suspension to [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov).<sup>58</sup>

In light of our concerns about NIH's grant management and oversight, please respond to the following by November 10, 2021:

1. Does NIH plan to stop funding EcoHealth until it is compliant with NIH's requests? If yes, please identify when you will notify EcoHealth. If not, why not?
2. Does NIH plan to recover the money paid to EcoHealth on its suspended grant? If yes, please identify when you will notify EcoHealth. If not, why not?
3. Please identify who authorized the \$369,819 funding issued to EcoHealth on July 13, 2020, and the specific authority for this funding.
4. Does NIH intend to enter the EcoHealth suspension into the [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) database that is intended for agency reporting of temporary or permanent suspensions? If yes, when? If no, why not?
5. Please provide all funded and denied grant applications, progress and final reports for all NIH grants awarded to EcoHealth Alliance as a prime or subgrant recipient in unredacted form.
6. Please provide the following documents related to grant award R01AI110964:

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<sup>55</sup> U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee Republicans, Letter to NIH, Spotlight on COVID-19 Origin Investigation, (June 10, 2021), *available at* <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/06.10.21-Letter-to-NIH-Director-Collins.pdf>.

<sup>56</sup> National Institutes of Health, *NIH establishes Center for Research in Emerging Infectious Diseases*, News Releases (Aug. 27, 2020), *available at* <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-establishes-centers-research-emerging-infectious-diseases>.

<sup>57</sup> USA Spending.gov, *EcoHealth Alliance*, Advanced Recipient Search (Oct. 13, 2021) *available at* [https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST\\_NON\\_U01AI153420\\_7529](https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_U01AI153420_7529).

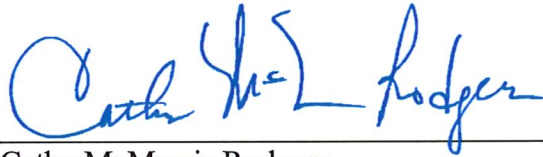
<sup>58</sup> U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee Republicans, Letter to NIH, Spotlight on COVID-19 Origin Investigation, (June 10, 2021), *available at* <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/06.10.21-Letter-to-NIH-Director-Collins.pdf>.

- a. all documents that were not provided to *The Intercept*, including the letter from EcoHealth on which NIH based its decision to increase the award,
  - b. EcoHealth's original application, and
  - c. all other original documents for which only the revised versions were produced.
7. Please provide all correspondence between EcoHealth and NIH, including any letter exchanges about NIH's identification of EcoHealth research that potentially included GOF experiments and EcoHealth's response, dated in May, June, and July of 2016 and July 2018. Please also provide all correspondence between EcoHealth and NIH, including any letter exchanges about humanized mice experiments conducted during Year Five of the grant. Please also include another missing letter from EcoHealth to NIH that was used as the basis to increase the award amount by \$369,819.
8. Please provide an accounting of all EcoHealth subawards, including contracts or any other agreements, to all organizations and scientists located in or sponsored by China from the year 2000 to the present.
9. Please facilitate access for Committee staff and the undersigned to EcoHealth's genomic sequence data and/or database of unpublished and published sequences.
10. Please provide all documentation regarding NIH's resource coordination with USAID, EcoHealth, DoD, and any other communications in which NIH took steps to ensure no overlap of U.S. Government agency funds for the same research was occurring.
11. Please provide EcoHealth's original Year Four progress report for the period of June 1, 2017 to May 31, 2018, that would have been submitted in 2018.
12. Please provide the list of all NIH personnel involved in the development of the HHS P3CO framework with an explanation of each individual's role.
13. What would be the purpose of conducting humanized mice experiments other than to test whether a virus could infect human cells?
14. Please make appropriate NIAID personnel available to Committee staff to address questions about the handling of the EcoHealth grant.
15. When did NIAID first learn that EcoHealth had conducted the humanized mice experiment proposed in 2016?
16. Why did NIAID conduct an HHS P3CO review of the EcoHealth research proposal if the experiment was already conducted?
17. Why were less risky alternative approaches to EcoHealth's proposed experiment not considered and discussed?

18. Please explain why NIAID concluded that the EcoHealth grant was not subject to the HHS P3CO framework.

If you have any questions, please contact Alan Slobodin or Diane Cutler of the Minority Committee staff.

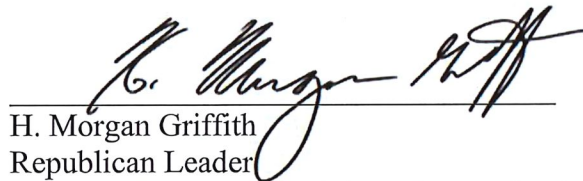
Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Republican Leader  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Brett Guthrie  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Health



H. Morgan Griffith  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

cc: The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chairman  
The Honorable Anna Eshoo, Chair, Subcommittee on Health  
The Honorable Diana DeGette, Chair, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations  
Ms. Christi Grimm, Principal Deputy Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY  
CHAIRMAN

CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, WASHINGTON  
RANKING MEMBER

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE**

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927

Minority (202) 225-3641

June 28, 2021

The Honorable Samantha Power  
Administrator  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Ronald Reagan Building  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20523

Dear Administrator Power,

As the Congressional committee with public health jurisdiction, we are investigating the origins of COVID-19, including examination of a possible laboratory accident in China. We write to request the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provide information we believe you have that will shed light on the possible origins of SARS-CoV-2. We also write with significant concerns that USAID may have funded risky research related to bat coronaviruses at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), in partnership with EcoHealth Alliance (EHA) and the University of California at Davis (UC Davis), while such research was not allowed in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

USAID's Relevant Work to the origins of COVID-19

In 2009, USAID launched PREDICT, a \$220 million, ten-year project, as part of its Emerging Pandemic Threat Program to detect viruses of pandemic potential. By collecting data, such as bat coronavirus samples, USAID aimed to identify viruses that may spark a naturally-occurring global pandemic.<sup>2</sup> Through PREDICT, the USAID-funded project “collected more than 15,000 bat samples, which led to the identification of around 500 new coronaviruses”<sup>3</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Vineet Menachery, *et al*, *A SARS-like cluster of circulating bt coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence*, Nature (Nov. 9, 2015) available at <https://www.nature.com/articles/nm.3985#Ack1>; National Institutes of Health, *Gain of Function Research*, Office of Science Policy (accessed June 14, 2021) available at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/biotechnology/gain-of-function-research/>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development, *PREDICT – Advancing Global Health Security at the Frontiers of Disease Emergence*, (Dec. 2020) available at [https://ohi.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/inline-files/PREDICT%20LEGACY%20-%20FINAL%20FOR%20WEB%20-compressed\\_0.pdf](https://ohi.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/inline-files/PREDICT%20LEGACY%20-%20FINAL%20FOR%20WEB%20-compressed_0.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Julie Zaugg, *The virus hunters who search bat caves to predict the next pandemic* CNN Health (Apr. 26, 2020) available at <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/26/health/virus-hunters-bat-cave-coronavirus-hnk-intl/index.html>.

detected about 1,200 viruses that could spread from wild animals to humans with more than 160 of them being novel coronaviruses, much like SARS-CoV-2.<sup>4</sup> The data was to be “analyzed to investigate the risks for *virus spillover and spread*” at markets and other high-risk animal-human interfaces, including human behaviors, types of animals present, value chains and networks (emphasis added).<sup>5</sup> Notably, one sample collected by PREDICT in 2013 from a bat cave in China was a possible ancestor of SARS-CoV-2.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, a key part of the PREDICT project was its direct partnerships with foreign laboratories to build laboratory capacity, train scientists, and collect research specimens in foreign countries, and one of PREDICT’s partner laboratories from 2009 to 2019 was the WIV.<sup>7</sup> The PREDICT program trained WIV scientists to help them detect deadly new viruses on their own and received USAID funding for equipment before SARS-CoV-2. PREDICT was originally scheduled to sunset in 2019, but to complete its work, USAID extended the project by six months.<sup>8</sup> In April 2020, USAID extended an existing PREDICT project an additional \$2.26 million in funding to provide technical assistance to its partner labs for the COVID-19 response, and assistance on COVID-19 origins.<sup>9</sup> Specifically, the project was to review “the animal source or sources of SARS CoV-2 using data and samples collected over the past 10 years in Asia and Southeast Asia.”<sup>10</sup>

The USAID PREDICT -COVID-19 expansion project has provided data to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) “hinting that SARS-CoV-2 had pandemic potential, connected COVID-19 cases with the ‘wildlife-human interface’ in China and provided early testing protocols for COVID-19.”<sup>11</sup> This suggests that USAID has already identified potential sources of the virus. Further, the extension project investigation was funded to “conduct SARS CoV-2-specific testing on samples collected” and analyze existing project data.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, before the SARS-CoV-2 sequence and specific assays were available, the PREDICT-trained laboratories detected “the new SARS CoV-2 virus in some of the first patients that traveled outside China.”<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Emily Baumgaertner, James Rainey, *Trump administration ended pandemic early-warning program to detect coronaviruses*, Los Angeles Times (Apr. 2, 2020) available at <https://www.latimes.com/science/story/2020-04-02/coronavirus-trump-pandemic-program-viruses-detection>.

<sup>5</sup> Kristin Burns, *PREDICT Receives Extension for COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency Response*, UC Davis (Mar. 31, 2020) available at <https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/news/predict-receives-extension-covid-19-pandemic-emergency-response>.

<sup>6</sup> Julie Zaugg, *The virus hunters who search bat caves to predict the next pandemic* CNN Health (Apr. 26, 2020) available at <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/26/health/virus-hunters-bat-cave-coronavirus-hnk-intl/index.html>.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development, *PREDICT – Advancing Global Health Security at the Frontiers of Disease Emergence*, (Dec. 2020) available at [https://ohi.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/inline-files/PREDICT%20LEGACY%20-%20FINAL%20FOR%20WEB%20-compressed\\_0.pdf](https://ohi.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/inline-files/PREDICT%20LEGACY%20-%20FINAL%20FOR%20WEB%20-compressed_0.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Emily Baumgaertner, James Rainey, *Trump administration ended pandemic early-warning program to detect coronaviruses*, Los Angeles Times (Apr. 2, 2020) available at <https://www.latimes.com/science/story/2020-04-02/coronavirus-trump-pandemic-program-viruses-detection>.

<sup>9</sup> Kristin Burns, *PREDICT Receives Extension for COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency Response*, UC Davis (Mar. 31, 2020) available at <https://www.ucdavis.edu/coronavirus/news/predict-receives-extension-covid-19-pandemic-emergency-response>.

<sup>10</sup> Kristin Burns, *PREDICT Receives Extension for COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency Response*, UC Davis News (Apr. 3, 2020) available at <https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/news/predict-receives-extension-covid-19-pandemic-emergency-response>.

<sup>11</sup> Joelle Tahta, *PREDICT project, providing support to countries in detecting COVID-19, receives six-month extension*, The California Aggie (May 4, 2021) available at <https://theaggie.org/2020/05/04/predict-project-providing-support-to-countries-in-detecting-covid-19-receives-six-month-extension/>.

<sup>12</sup> Kristin Burns, *PREDICT Receives Extension for COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency Response*, UC Davis News (Apr. 3, 2020) available at <https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/news/predict-receives-extension-covid-19-pandemic-emergency-response>.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*



To be clear, this suggests, and we believe, that USAID has information with analytical value to the COVID-19 origins investigation.

### USAID Risky Research During the United States Gain-of-Function Moratorium

The PREDICT consortium was in its formal ten-year partnership with the WIV from 2009 to 2019, during the U.S. gain-of-function research moratorium from 2014 to 2017.<sup>14</sup> Gain-of-function research manipulates microorganisms to enhance the pathogenicity or transmissibility of potential pandemic pathogens (PPPs).<sup>15</sup> This research can be misused to pose significant threats, thus having “dual use” risks and is a subset of Dual Use of Reach Concern (DURC) categories of studies that have safeguards in place.<sup>16</sup> A significant exception in oversight policy is noted in that research associated with developing and producing vaccines is not considered enhanced PPPs.<sup>17</sup> It is critical to understand that this exception creates oversight loopholes and if research is declared to create vaccines, the research can bypass important risk assessment analysis.<sup>18</sup> USAID may have been funding gain-of-function studies at the WIV and, importantly, while bat coronavirus research studies were ongoing.<sup>19</sup>

U.S. federal grant-making rules and laws require grant recipients to preserve research records and give record access to grant-making agencies.<sup>20</sup> Published reports about PREDICT research experiments describe the information in records that USAID keeps or can access in accordance with applicable laws and policies. Through its PREDICT grant recipients, such as EHA and UC Davis, USAID likely possesses detailed documentation and extensive knowledge about bat coronavirus research and experiments performed at the WIV and at other laboratories in China.<sup>21</sup> Considering its long-term WIV partnership and the extent of the research conducted there by USAID grantees, we expect USAID has records pertinent to our COVID-19 origins investigation.<sup>22</sup> As such, we request USAID produce all information and related documents to the following items:

#### Scientific Research Data

1. All research records from the PREDICT COVID-19 extension project.

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<sup>14</sup> National Institutes of Health, *Gain of Function Research*, Office of Science Policy (accessed June 14, 2021) available at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/biotechnology/gain-of-function-research/>.

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> National Institutes of Health, *Dual Use of Research Concern*, Office of Scientific Policy (accessed June 18, 2021) available at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/biotechnology/dual-use-research-of-concern/>.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Framework for Guiding Funding Decisions about Proposed Research Involving Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens*, Science Safety Security (Dec. 2017) available at <https://www.phe.gov/s3/dualuse/Pages/p3co.aspx>.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> National Institutes of Health, *Gain of Function Research*, Office of Science Policy (accessed June 14, 2021) available at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/biotechnology/gain-of-function-research/>.

<sup>20</sup> 2 CFR 200 (Dec. 26, 2014) available at [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl).

<sup>21</sup> USAID, *PREDICT-China*, (2014) available at

[https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local\\_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> 2 CFR 200 (Dec. 26, 2014) available at [https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200\\_main\\_02.tpl](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl).

2. Any bat coronavirus sequences from its supported research that are more genetically similar to SARS-CoV-2 virus than any other sequences already publicly known.
3. WIV bat coronavirus data, including unpublished partial and full bat coronavirus sequences collected in China from over 3,061 bats, 737 rodents and shrews, and 146 other animals sampled in animal markets, farms, and rural areas in China.
4. Human blood samples collected from more than 1,300 individuals in high-risk human populations and the 4,483 samples that tested positive for coronaviruses.<sup>23</sup>
5. Documentation about the full characterization of the whole genomes of two novel bat SARS-like coronaviruses discovered by the research team.<sup>24</sup>

#### WIV Safety Protocols

6. Reports of any WIV laboratory accidents or other safety concerns about the WIV facilities, including the WIV infectious disease diagnostics labs used by USAID or WIV researchers, described as having “state-of-the-art molecular virology and serology capacity.”<sup>25</sup>
7. Reports regarding capabilities of WIV scientists to detect, risk assess, and predict infectious disease outbreaks of bat coronaviruses.<sup>26</sup>
8. Reports of observations about inadequate staffing of properly trained technicians to support the WIV, and any requests for additional staff.
9. Documentation about the WIV sample storage procedures and safety protocols for storing the SARS-like coronavirus isolates from bats sampled in China.
10. WIV storage of the bat SARS-like coronavirus that the research team discovered that has 99.98 percent sequence homology to the SARS coronavirus, capable of binding to the human ACE-2 receptor.<sup>27</sup>
11. WIV laboratory biosafety protocols, including the use of personal protection equipment (PPE).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> USAID, *PREDICT-China*, (2014) available at [https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local\\_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf), USAID PREDICT, *USAID Briefing, March 17, 2020*, Pandemic Preparedness for Global Security (Mar. 17, 2020) available at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c7d60a711f7845f734d4a73/t/5e95fb725309184f8a1e76b2/1586887590640/PREDICT+M+arch+18+Data+Discussion.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> USAID PREDICT-1 CONSORTIUM, *Reducing Pandemic Risk, Promoting Global Health*, Final Report (Dec. 2014) available at <https://ohi.sf.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/files/page/predict-final-report-lo.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.*

<sup>28</sup> USAID, *PREDICT-China*, Wayback Machine (2014) available at [https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local\\_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf).

### Outbreak Predictive Models of Naturally Occurring Viruses in China

12. The PREDICT project's predictive models and risk assessments to chart infectious disease outbreaks from animal markets in China.<sup>29</sup>
13. The PREDICT project's predictive models and risk assessment that the PREDICT consortium created to chart the infectious disease outbreaks from the Chinese wet animal markets of the Hubei province animal market.<sup>30</sup>
14. The next-generation, fine-scale outbreak hotspot maps identifying those at risk for outbreak and where viruses from animals (zoonosis) would spillover and amplify in China.<sup>31</sup>
15. Surveillance and ecological data with Geographical Information System (GIS) information in China used to assess the risk of emerging diseases and evaluate mitigation strategies for decreasing risk of pathogen spillover from animals into people.<sup>32</sup>

### WIV Capacity Building Records

16. Financial accounting records of all equipment, technology, personnel and financial support provided to the WIV to include all names, titles and dates of research participants.
17. All records of USAID training of WIV field and laboratory scientific teams in how to:
  - investigate disease outbreaks, and collect, process, preserve, and analyze samples;<sup>33</sup>
  - use surveillance and ecological data, with GGIS, to assess emerging disease risks in China,<sup>34</sup> use consensus polymerase chain reaction (cPCR) and high-throughput sequencing (HTS) tools to detect and characterize DNA and RNA viruses present in wildlife samples;<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> USAID PREDICT-1 CONSORTIUM, *Reducing Pandemic Risk, Promoting Global Health*, Final Report (Dec. 2014) available at <https://ohi.sf.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/files/page/predict-final-report-lo.pdf>, USAID, *PREDICT-China*, (2014) available at [https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local\\_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> USAID PREDICT-1 CONSORTIUM, *Reducing Pandemic Risk, Promoting Global Health*, Final Report (Dec. 2014) available at <https://ohi.sf.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/files/page/predict-final-report-lo.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> *Id.*, USAID, *PREDICT-China*, (2014) available at [https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local\\_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20180927024933/https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/ohi/local_resources/pdfs/predict-china.pdf).

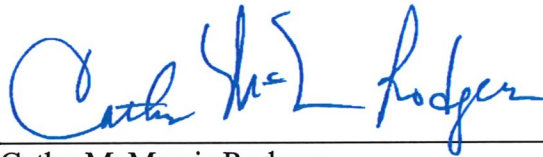
<sup>35</sup> Kirsten V.K. Gilardi, Jonna A.K. Mazet, *The United States Agency for International Development Emerging Pandemic Threat PREDICT Project – Global Detection of Emerging Wildlife Viral Zoonoses*, *Fowler's Zoo and Wild Animal Medicine Current Therapy*, Volume 9, Pages 110-116 (Sep. 28, 2018) available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7152072/>.

- clone and sequence Polymerase chain reaction-identified samples to detect new viruses and compare them with existing viruses;<sup>36</sup> improve sequencing and expand divergent strain detection;<sup>37</sup> and
- perform predictive analytics.<sup>38</sup>

We respectfully request that the USAID meet with Minority Committee staff by July 12, 2021, to discuss what documents and information can be provided. After the requested documents and information have been provided, we ask that the USAID provide a briefing to the Minority Committee staff to discuss the documents and information that the USAID, including its prime and sub-award recipients, have related to the origins of SARS-CoV-2.

If you have any questions, please contact Alan Slobodin or Diane Cutler of the Minority Committee staff.

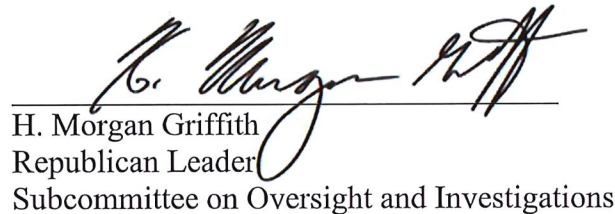
Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Republican Leader  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Brett Guthrie  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Health



H. Morgan Griffith  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

CC: The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chairman  
The Honorable Anna Eshoo, Chair, Subcommittee on Health  
The Honorable Diana DeGette, Chair, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

<sup>36</sup> USAID PREDICT-1 CONSORTIUM, *Reducing Pandemic Risk, Promoting Global Health*, Final Report (Dec. 2014) available at <https://ohi.sf.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk5251/files/files/page/predict-final-report-lo.pdf>.

<sup>37</sup> *Id.*

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*