

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 29, 2021

Dr. Anthony Fauci
Director
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
5601 Fishers Lane, MSC 9806
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Director Fauci:

On June 9, 2021, we wrote to you to provide you an opportunity to clarify an apparent discrepancy in your sworn congressional testimony regarding National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) funding of gain-of-function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).¹ You failed to respond.

On July 20, 2021, you testified, again, that NIAID never funded dangerous gain-of-function research at the WIV.² New emails make this recurring testimony even more concerning and show a closer relationship between NIAID and the WIV than previously known.

1. **NIAID funded work at the WIV.** On February 1, 2020, you emailed the Deputy Director of NIAID, Dr. Hugh Auchincloss, a research paper entitled, “A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronavirus shows potential for human emergence” [hereinafter WIV Paper].³ This paper was primarily authored by Dr. Ralph Baric and Dr. Li-Zhengli Shi—a bat coronavirus expert from the WIV.⁴ In fact, the WIV is listed as a “Key Laboratory of Special Pathogens and Biosafety” in the paper.⁵ This work was funded by NIAID grant U19AI107810.⁶ Drs. Baric and Shi acknowledge this.⁷
2. **This work was gain-of-function research.** There is no need to conduct a scientific analysis of this paper to determine whether or not it constituted gain-of-function; you state it in your email to Dr. Auchincloss and it states it in the paper itself. The attachment line of your February 1, 2020 email to Dr. Auchincloss stated, “Baric, Shi et al – Nature medicine – SARS *Gain of Function*.pdf.”⁸ Additionally, the paper itself stated,

¹ Letter from Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, & Hon. Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, Nat’l Inst. Of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (June 9, 2021).

² *The Path Forward: A Federal Perspective on the COVID-19 Response: Hearing Before S. Comm. on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions, 117th Cong.* (July 20, 2021) (statement by Dr. Anthony Fauci).

³ Email from Anthony Fauci to Hugh Auchincloss (Feb. 1, 2020, 12:29 a.m.) (on file with Comm. staff).

⁴ Ralph Baric & Li-Zhengli Shi, *A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence*, NATURE MEDICINE (Nov. 9, 2015), <https://www.nature.com/articles/nm.3985#citeas>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Email, *supra note 3* (emphasis added).

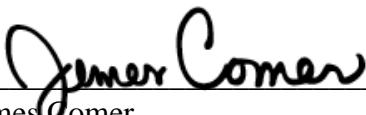
“[e]xperiments with the full-length and chimeric SHC014 recombinant viruses were initiated and performed before the [*gain-of-function*] research funding pause and have since been reviewed and approved for continued study by the [National Institute of Health] (NIH).”⁹

3. **This work did not go through proper oversight.** Drs. Baric and Shi claim their gain-of-function research conducted with American taxpayer dollars in the WIV was “reviewed and approved for continued study by the NIH.”¹⁰ Your Deputy, Dr. Auchincloss, disagrees. On February 1, 2020, Dr. Auchincloss emailed you and said, “[t]he [WIV Paper] says the experiments were performed before the gain of function pause but have since been reviewed and approved by NIH. Not sure what that means since [we are] sure that no Coronavirus work has gone through the P3 framework.”¹¹ This statement directly refutes the authors’ claims and raises serious questions as to who approved dangerous gain-of-function research to take place in the WIV.

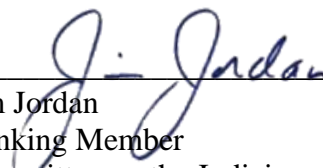
In short, NIAID funded gain-of-function research at the WIV and this research did not go through the proper oversight. It is unclear why you would continue to testify otherwise. We therefore ask you again to please clarify what you meant when you said twice—under oath—“[t]he NIH has not ever and does not now fund gain-of-function research in the [WIV].”¹²

To schedule a time to discuss this important topic or ask any follow-up or related questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform staff at (202) 225-5074. Under House Rule X, the Committee on Oversight and Reform as the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives with broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time.” Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,



James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman, Committee on Oversight and Reform
The Honorable Jerrold Nadler, Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary

⁹ WIV Paper, *supra* note 4.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Email from Hugh Auchincloss to Anthony Fauci (Feb. 1, 2020, 11:47 a.m.) (on file with Comm. staff).

¹² Zachary Basu, *Fauci and Rand Paul clash over NIH funding for Wuhan Institute of Virology*, Axios (Mar. 11, 2021), <https://www.axios.com/fauci-rand-paul-wuhan-lab-coronavirus-eff1bb08-f6c7-4d63-b170-c49e87c2e3dd.html>.