

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 25, 2022

Dr. Rochelle Walensky
Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
395 E Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Dr. Walensky:

House Oversight and Reform Committee Republicans and Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis Republicans are conducting oversight of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) decision to withhold vital data and information about COVID-19. According to the *New York Times*, the CDC failed to publish essential information about COVID-19 hospitalizations, at least in part, to control the narrative around vaccine effectiveness.¹ States and localities could have used the withheld data to better inform their efforts to mitigate the virus' spread in their area. The decision to hide data from the public prevented a more targeted response, likely costing lives and causing unnecessary economic harm. This failure to be transparent further erodes the public's trust in the CDC.

CDC spokeswoman Kristen Nordlund stated that the agency has been slow to release the data they routinely collected because "basically, at the end of the day, it's not yet ready for prime time" and they feared the information might be misinterpreted.² She confirmed one of the main concerns with releasing breakthrough infection information is it may be misinterpreted as the vaccines being ineffective.³

Reports indicate that the CDC has, in fact, collected data on vaccine and booster shot effectiveness, breakthrough infections, and wastewater analysis but has delayed its release, released only small portions of the data or none at all. The CDC also blamed outdated systems for their inability to release data.⁴ The CDC received more than \$1 billion to modernize their systems yet the agency continues to fail to produce timely, robust, or accurate data. Further, the CDC has received over \$23 billion in supplemental funding to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.⁵ There is no reason for the CDC to withhold or release critical data in a piecemeal fashion.

¹ Apoorva Mandavilli, *The C.D.C. Isn't Publishing Large Portions of the Covid Data It Collects*, THE N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 20, 2022).

² *Id.*

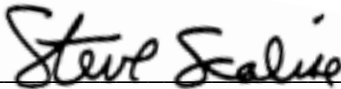
³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Budget*, CTRS. FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION (last visited Feb. 22, 2022).

This withheld information is critical to ushering in our post-pandemic normal. Detailed data enables better decision-making. For instance, wastewater surveillance nationwide would spot outbreaks and emerging variants; booster shot effectiveness data would inform who should receive booster shots; and tracking breakthrough infections would allow Americans to make their own informed risk analysis. The American people deserve transparency and accountability. The *New York Times* new report adds to the existing skepticism and public distrust of much of the CDC's current COVID-19 guidance. As part of your ongoing efforts to return credibility to the CDC, Republicans request that you produce to the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis and the Oversight and Reform Committee all information collected over the course of the last 12 months of the pandemic by March 11, 2022.

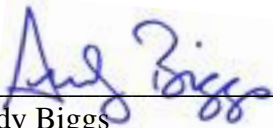
Sincerely,



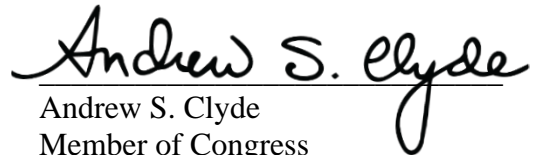
Steve J. Scalise
Ranking Member
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis



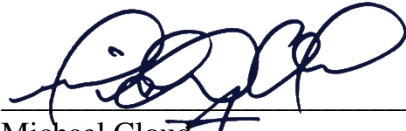
James R. Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



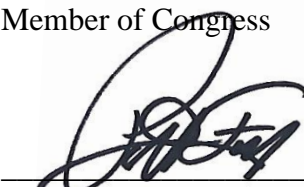
Andrew S. Clyde
Member of Congress



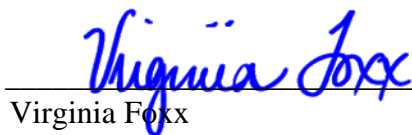
Michael Cloud
Member of Congress



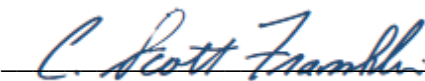
Byron Donalds
Member of Congress



Pat Fallon
Member of Congress




Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress




Scott Franklin
Member of Congress



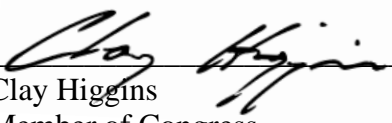
Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress

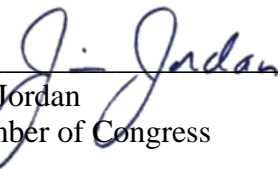

Mark E. Green, M.D.
Member of Congress


Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress


Yvette Herrell
Member of Congress


Jody Hice
Member of Congress



Clay Higgins
Member of Congress

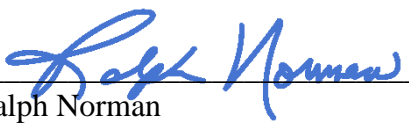

Jim Jordan
Member of Congress


Fred Keller
Member of Congress


Nancy Mace
Member of Congress


Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress


Mariannette Miller-Meeks, M.D.
Member of Congress


Ralph Norman
Member of Congress


Pete Sessions
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable James E. Clyburn, Chairman
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney
Committee on Oversight and Reform