March 9, 2022

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dr. Lawrence Tabak, D.D.S., Ph.D.  
Acting Director  
National Institutes of Health  
9000 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, MD 20892

Dear Secretary Becerra and Acting Director Tabak:

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) continue to show a troubling pattern of hiding documents related to the origins of COVID-19, NIH’s relationship with EcoHealth Alliance, Inc., and NIH’s role in potentially dangerous gain-of-function research.

This lack of transparency continued when the NIH produced—in response to litigation by The Intercept—314 pages of information, of which 292 were fully redacted.¹ The redacted pages appear to be different versions of both the “[National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases] NIAID Strategic Plan for COVID-19 Research” and the “NIAID COVID-19 Research implementation Plan.”² The unredacted portions suggest various research activities related to the COVID-19 response were added to each iteration of the documents.

NIH’s and NIAID’s use of taxpayer funds to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic is squarely within the Committee’s jurisdiction. Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §2954, we request you produce all 314 pages fully unredacted to the Committee as soon as possible but no later than March 23, 2022.

Sincerely,

James Comer  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and Reform

Jody Hice  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Government Operations

¹ Sharon Lerner, NIH Sent the Intercept 292 Fully Redacted Pages Related to Virus Research in Wuhan, THE INTERCEPT (Feb. 20, 2022).
² Id.
cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman
    Committee on Oversight and Reform

    The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman
    Subcommittee on Government Operations

    The Honorable Stephen F. Lynch, Chairman
    Subcommittee on National Security

    The Honorable Raja Krishnamoorthi, Chairman
    Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy

    The Honorable Ro Khanna, Chairman
    Subcommittee on Environment

    The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Chairman
    Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties