

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 19, 2022

Dr. Kristian Andersen
Professor, Department of Immunology and Microbiology
Scripps Research
10550 North Torrey Pines Rd.
La Jolla, CA 92037

Dear Dr. Andersen:

On February 3, 2022, we wrote you regarding apparent attempts to conceal or cover-up pertinent information regarding the origins of COVID-19, specifically the hypothesis that it leaked from a laboratory in Wuhan, China.¹ On February 17, 2022, you responded to our letter and stated that you were “not aware of, and [were] not involved in, any effort to suppress any particular theory about the origins of SARS-CoV-2.”² Recent reporting by *Vanity Fair* brings into question the truthfulness of that response. Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §1001, “in any matter within the jurisdiction of the...legislative...branch of the Government of the United States, knowingly and willfully mak[ing] any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation” is a crime.³ We therefore invite you to correct the Committee record, in person, in a transcribed interview at your earliest convenience.

A recent exposé by *Vanity Fair* brings into question the accuracy of your assertion that you did not suppress any theory about the origins of COVID-19 and therefore all previous statements made to the Committee.⁴ According to *Vanity Fair*, on June 20, 2021 you, Dr. Robert Garry, Dr. Francis Collins, Dr. Anthony Fauci, and others attended a virtual conference call to discuss a new research paper regarding the origins of COVID-19.⁵ This paper, written by Dr. Jesse Bloom, revealed that early viral sequences of COVID-19 were deleted from National Institutes of Health (NIH) databases at the behest of Chinese researchers and analyzed those sequences importance to discovering the origins of COVID-19.⁶ The paper begins, “[t]he origin and early spread of SARS-CoV-2 remains shrouded in mystery.”⁷ Dr. Bloom wrote, “...the approach taken here hints it may be possible to advance the understanding of SARS-CoV-2’s origins or early spread [of the virus] even without further on-the-ground studies, such as by more

¹ Letter from Hon. James Comer, et. al., Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform, to Dr. Kristian Andersen, Professor, Dep’t of Immunology and Microbiology, Scripps Research (Feb. 3, 2022).

² Letter from Mr. Aaron Cutler, Counsel for Scripps Research, to Hon. James Comer, et. al., Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform (Feb. 17, 2022).

³ 18 U.S.C. §1001(a)(2).

⁴ Katherine Eban, “*This Shouldn’t Happen*”: *Inside the Virus-Hunting Nonprofit at the Center of the Lab-Leak Controversy*, VANITY FAIR (Mar. 31, 2022).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Jesse Bloom, RECOVERY OF DELETED DEEP SEQUENCING DATA SHEDS MORE LIGHT ON THE EARLY WUHAN SARS-CoV-2 EPIDEMIC, OXFORD ACADEMIC (last updated Aug. 16, 2021).

⁷ *Id.*

deeply probing data archived by the NIH and other entities.”⁸ Dr. Bloom’s paper was problematic for Drs. Fauci and Collins—who one year earlier had awarded you an \$8.9 million dollar research grant—since it explicitly advocated for a more thorough investigation of NIH, COVID-19’s origin, and did not adhere to the “real card-carrying...virologists[’]” preferred narrative.⁹

According to Dr. Bloom’s memorandum memorializing the June 20 call, he presented his paper to the group and the meeting “became extremely contentious.”¹⁰ Dr. Bloom said that you took issue with his research suggesting it was “unethical” to analyze why the Chinese researchers requested the sequences be deleted and that the paper would “lead to more criticism of scientists such as [yourself].”¹¹ According to *Vanity Fair*, you then told Dr. Bloom that you could simply delete or revise the paper in a way that “would leave no record that this had been done.”¹² Even Drs. Collins and Fauci were suspicious of your attempts to silence Dr. Bloom and reportedly stated their objections for the record.¹³ But, according to Dr. Bloom, you persisted and suggested that you could use your authority and power as a research screener to edit or delete the paper.¹⁴ This incident, if true, contradicts your February 17, 2022 letter and shows that you offered to “suppress” research about the origins of COVID-19 that did not fit your pre-determined narrative.

Dr. Bloom’s memo directly contradicts your previous statement to the Committee that you were “not aware of, and [were] not involved in, any effort to suppress any particular theory about the origins of SARS-CoV-2.”¹⁵ In fact, it appears you were involved in and actually attempted to orchestrate an effort to suppress Dr. Bloom’s paper and thereby scientific research regarding theories about the origins of COVID-19—particularly the likelihood of a lab leak.

We invite you to correct the Committee record, in person, in a transcribed interview. Please confirm, as soon as possible, your attendance for an interview the week of May 2, 2022. The Select Subcommittee is empowered to investigate “any...issues related to the coronavirus crisis.”¹⁶ The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. The Committee on the Judiciary has jurisdiction over federal criminal laws, including Title 18 of the U.S. Code.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Press Release, *International research alliance launched to boost pandemic preparedness*, SCRIPPS RESEARCH (Aug. 27, 2020); Ian Schwartz, *Fauci: “Real Card-Carrying Molecular Virologists” Feel COVID Is a Natural Occurrence*, REAL CLEAR POLITICS (Jan. 25, 2022).

¹⁰ Notes and e-mails from Jesse Bloom related to my meeting with NIH on June-20-2021 after I sent them an advance copy of my pre-print about SARS-CoV-2 sequences that had been deleted from the NCBI Sequence Read Archive (last accessed Apr. 5, 2022).

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ Letter from Mr. Aaron Cutler, *supra* note 2.

¹⁶ H. Res. 935(3)(a)(10).

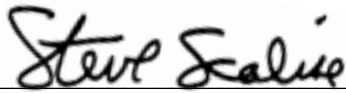
Dr. Kristian Andersen

April 19, 2022

Page 3

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

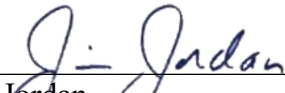
Sincerely,



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



James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary



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



Nicole R. Malliotakis
Member of Congress

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

The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary