

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-220, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

Thank you for your leadership to confront the threats posed by the coronavirus pandemic. We are writing to urge you to ensure that no stimulus funding is sent—directly or indirectly—to China’s controversial bio-agent laboratory the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).

We were troubled by recent media reports that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has been funding secretive and dangerous laboratory research at the WIV for many years.^{1,2} According to the NIH’s website, the WIV is currently authorized by the NIH to receive taxpayer funding for animal research (Assurance ID# F16-00279).³

You may be aware that the WIV is the only facility in China designated as a biosafety Level 4 (BSL-4) laboratory, meaning that it handles extremely deadly pathogens and biological agents. According to peer-reviewed research publications, the NIH has funded research at the WIV in recent years that involves capturing and handling coronavirus-infected bats from the same caves COVID-19 is believed to have originated from.⁴ In some cases, infected bats were killed and

¹ Taxpayer-funded Animal Experiments Tied To Chinese 'Wet Markets' and Wuhan Laboratory, Carlin Becker - <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/taxpayer-funded-animal-experiments-tied-to-chinese-wet-markets-and-wuhan-laboratory>

² U.S. Government Gave \$3.7 Million Grant To Wuhan Lab That Experimented on Coronavirus Source Bats, Frances Mulraney - <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-8211291/U-S-government-gave-3-7million-grant-Wuhan-lab-experimented-coronavirus-source-bats.html>

³ NIH website, Institutions with a PHS Approved Animal Welfare Assurance - <https://olaw.nih.gov/assured/app/index.html#FOREIGN>

⁴ Hu, B., Zeng, L., Yang, X., Ge, X., Zhang, W., Li, B. et al. Discovery of a rich gene pool of bat SARS-related coronaviruses provides new insights into the origin of SARS coronavirus. Plos Pathog. 2017; 13: e1006698 - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5708621/>

transported to the WIV for lab experiments.⁵ The research studies state that they were funded by an active NIH grant that has received \$3.7 million in taxpayers' money to date.⁶

To make matters worse, a highly disturbing new report indicates that U.S. State Department cables from 2018 warned of “a SARS-like pandemic” risk related to the WIV’s treacherous and sloppy coronavirus research on bats.⁷

We’re sure you agree that taxpayers’ money should not be sent to a dangerous Chinese state-run bio-agent laboratory that lacks any meaningful oversight from U.S. authorities and is run by adversaries with a history of lab leaks, including SARS, and deception about the causes and extent of deadly disease outbreaks, including COVID-19.⁸ Although President Trump has stated that his administration “will end that grant quickly,” we hope to ensure that WIV will not receive federal funds in any future spending packages.⁹

Thank you for your efforts and assistance in this matter. We look forward to working with you to ensure stimulus funds intended to help American taxpayers and businesses recover from the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic are not misspent. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Ed Kim in Senator McSally’s office at 202-224-2235, or Devin Murphy in Rep. Gaetz’s office at 202-225-4136.

Sincerely,



Martha McSally
U.S. Senator



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress

⁵ Luo Y, Li B, Jiang R-D, Hu B-J, Luo D-S et al. Longitudinal surveillance of Betacoronaviruses in fruit bats in Yunnan Province, China during 2009-2016. *Virology* 2018;33:87–95 - <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12250-018-0017-2>

⁶ NIH grant # [R01AI110964](#)

⁷ State Department Cables Warned Of Safety Issues At Wuhan Lab Studying Bat Coronaviruses, Josh Rogin <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/04/14/state-department-cables-warned-safety-issues-wuhan-lab-studying-bat-coronaviruses/>

⁸ We Are in This Crisis Because Of the Decisions Of the Chinese Government, Jim Geraghty - <https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/coronavirus-crisis-caused-by-decisions-chinese-government/>

⁹ Remarks by President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Members of the Coronavirus Task Force in Press Briefing (April 17, 2020) <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-vice-president-pence-members-coronavirus-task-force-press-briefing-april-17-2020/>

The following members of the U.S. Senate have also signed this letter:

Charles E. Grassley
Kelly Loeffler

Joni K. Ernst
James Lankford

The following members of the U.S. House of Representatives have also signed this letter:

Ralph Abraham, M.D.

Jodey Arrington

Brian Babin

Troy Balderson

Jim Banks

Andy Biggs

Vern Buchanan

Ken Buck

Ted Budd

James Comer

Rick Crawford

Dan Crenshaw

Jeff Duncan

Bob Gibbs

Louis Gohmert

Lance Gooden

Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.

Mark Green

Jim Hagedorn

Vicky Hartzler

Kevin Hern

Jody Hice

Dusty Johnson

Mike Kelly

Steve King

David B. McKinley P.E.

Alex X. Mooney

Gary Palmer

Scott Perry

Bill Posey

Tom Rice

Denver Riggleman

Francis Rooney

Chip Roy

David Schweikert

Pete Stauber

Elise Stefanik

W. Gregory Steube

Chris Stewart

Scott Tipton

Jeff Van Drew

Ann Wagner

Mark Walker

Michael Waltz

Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M.

Joe Wilson

Ron Wright

Ted S. Yoho, DVM