

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 12, 2023

The Honorable William J. Burns
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
1000 Colonial Farm Rd.
Langley, VA 22101

Dear Director Burns:

The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic (Select Subcommittee) and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) (together “the Committees”) have received new and concerning whistleblower testimony regarding the Agency’s investigation into the origins of COVID-19.

A multi-decade, senior-level, current Agency officer has come forward to provide information to the Committees regarding the Agency’s analysis into the origins of COVID-19. According to the whistleblower, the Agency assigned seven officers to a COVID Discovery Team (Team). The Team consisted of multi-disciplinary and experienced officers with significant scientific expertise. According to the whistleblower, at the end of its review, six of the seven members of the Team believed the intelligence and science were sufficient to make a low confidence assessment that COVID-19 originated from a laboratory in Wuhan, China. The seventh member of the Team, who also happened to be the most senior, was the lone officer to believe COVID-19 originated through zoonosis. The whistleblower further contends that to come to the eventual public determination of uncertainty, the other six members were given a significant monetary incentive to change their position.

These allegations, from a seemingly credible source, requires the Committees to conduct further oversight of how the CIA handled its internal investigation into the origins of COVID-19. To assist the Committees with their investigations, we request the following documents and information as soon as possible, but no later than September 26, 2023.

1. All documents and communications regarding the establishment of all iterations of the COVID Discovery Team(s);
2. All documents and communications between or among the members of all iterations of the COVID Discovery Team(s) regarding the origins of COVID-19;
3. All documents and communications between or among members of all iterations of the COVID Discovery Team(s) and other employees or contractors of the Agency regarding the origins of COVID-19;

4. All documents and communications between or among members of all iterations of the COVID Discovery Team(s) and employees or contractors of other federal government agencies, including but not limited to the U.S. Department of State, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (to include the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases), and the U.S. Department of Energy regarding the origins of COVID-19; and
5. All documents and communications regarding the pay history, to include the awarding of any type of financial or performance-based incentive/financial bonus to members of all iterations of the COVID Discovery Team(s).

The Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic is authorized to investigate “the origins of the Coronavirus pandemic, including but not limited to the Federal Government’s funding of gain-of function research” and “executive branch policies, deliberations, decisions, activities, and internal and external communications related to the coronavirus pandemic” under H. Res. 5. Under House Rule X, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence has jurisdiction over all intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the departments and agencies of the U.S. government.

Further, House Rule XI clause 2(m)(1)(B) grants Committees of the House of Representatives with the authority “to require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, and documents as it considers necessary.” Should the required information not be produced in an expeditious and satisfactory manner, you should expect the Committee, or Committees, to use its additional tools and authorities to satisfy our legislative and oversight requirements.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Chairman
Select Subcommittee on the
Coronavirus Pandemic



Mike Turner
Chairman
Permanent Select Committee on
Intelligence

cc: The Honorable Raul Ruiz, M.D., Ranking Member
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

The Honorable Jim Himes, Ranking Member
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence