

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2024

Peter Daszak, Ph.D.
C/O Mr. Michael Grudberg, Esq.
Partner
Tarter Krinsky & Drogin LLP
1350 Broadway
New York, NY 10018

Dear Dr. Daszak:

Since the beginning of the 118th Congress, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic and the Committee on Energy and Commerce (together “the Committees”) have been investigating the origins of COVID-19 and related issues.¹

I. Public Hearing

We look forward to your testimony at a public hearing on May 1, 2024. In accordance with all applicable rules, a formal invitation will follow.

II. Discrepancies in Testimony

On November 14, 2023, you testified at a transcribed interview before the Committees.² At the interview, committee counsel advised that you were required pursuant to Title 18 Section 1001 of the United States Code to answer questions truthfully, including questions posed by Congressional staff in the interview, and that if you knowingly made false statements, you could be subject to criminal prosecution. You stated on the record that you understood the requirement and the consequences of not complying with that requirement.

During this interview, you were asked about the DEFUSE research proposal EcoHealth Alliance (“EcoHealth”), with the University of North Carolina (UNC) and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), submitted to the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). When asked about the location of planned experiments involving the reverse engineering and characterization of coronavirus spike proteins, you responded:

¹ Letter from the Hon. James Comer, the Hon. Brad Wenstrup, et. al., H. Comm on Oversight and Accountability, to Dr. Peter Daszak, Ph. D., President, EcoHealth Alliance (Feb. 13, 2023); Letter from the Hon. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, the Hon. Brett Guthrie, and the Hon. Morgan Griffith, H. Comm. on Energy and Commerce, to Dr. Peter Daszak, Ph. D., President, EcoHealth Alliance (Feb. 23, 2023).

² Transcribed Interview of Dr. Peter Daszak, Ph. D., President, EcoHealth Alliance, Select Subcomm. on Coronavirus Pandemic of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Accountability and Subcomm on Oversight and Investigations of the H. Committee on Energy and Commerce (Nov. 14, 2023).

Q. Was the work supposed to happen at UNC (University of North Carolina) or at the WIV (Wuhan Institute of Virology)?

A. My understanding for that work, it was going to be done at UNC. I think the proposal says it was going to be done in pseudo type, which is not even live virus.³

A recent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) document production calls into question whether your testimony omitted a material fact and was misleading. A draft of the DEFUSE proposal, contained a line explaining:

Isolation will be attempted on a subset of samples with novel SARSr-CoVs. Prof. Ralph Baric, UNC, will reverse engineer spike proteins in his lab to conduct binding assays to human ACE2 (the SARS-CoV receptor). Proteins that bind will then be inserted into the SARS-CoV backbones, and inoculated into humanized mice to assess their capability to cause SARS-like disease...⁴

For the first time, the FOIA production provided notes regarding the editing process for the grant application. In a draft of the proposal, you wrote a comment in this section addressed to your collaborators Dr. Baric and Dr. Shi Zhengli of the WIV:

If we win this contract, I do not propose that all of this work will necessarily be conducted by Ralph, but I do want to stress the US side of this proposal so that DARPA are comfortable with our team. Once we get the funds, we can then allocate who does what exact work, and I believe that a lot of these assays can be done in Wuhan as well...⁵

This comment appears to be materially inconsistent with your testimony assuring the Committees that the proposed work was planned to be done exclusively at UNC.

Additionally, while testifying before the Committees about the biosafety levels used by the WIV when conducting research funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID), you stated that:

Q: The "Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories" (BMBL) reference book that NIH and CDC put out, [is that] incorporated by reference into the terms of conditions of the grant?

³ *Id.*

⁴ Emily Kopp, *US Scientist Proposed to Make Viruses with Unique Features of SARS-CoV-2 in Wuhan*, U.S. RIGHT TO KNOW, January 18, 2024, <https://usrtk.org/covid-19-origins/scientists-proposed-making-viruses-with-unique-features-of-sars-cov-2-in-wuhan/>.

⁵ *Supra*, note 2.

A: Yeah.

Q: So as part of just this general auditing oversight, did [EcoHealth Alliance] ensure that the WIV follows the BMBL?

A: Yeah.

Q: And how did you monitor that compliance?

A: By requesting information about what biosafety levels they used for which at parts of the work. And we found that they use the same biosafety levels that were used in the U.S. and were directed by the CDC and the BMBL.⁶

However, in this draft of the DEFUSE proposal, Dr. Shi Zhengli wrote that she planned to perform this work in BSL-2. In response to Dr. Shi's proposal, Dr. Baric wrote the following alarmed comment:

IN [sic] the US, these recombinant SARS CoV are studied under BSL3, not BSL2, especially important for those that are able to bind and replicate in primary human cells. In [C]hina, might be grown [sic] these viruses under bsl2 [sic]. US researchers will likely freak out.⁷

It appears Dr. Baric then edited the document to reflect that the experiments should be carried out in BSL-3. Pursuant to the BMBL, the chimeric virus experiments in the DEFUSE proposal should have been conducted in BSL-3 or enhanced BSL-3.⁸

The Committees are alarmed at the divergence between your statements and your comments in the DEFUSE draft. These revelations undermine your credibility as well as every factual assertion you made during your transcribed interview. The Committees have a right and an obligation to protect the integrity of their investigations, including the accuracy of testimony during a transcribed interview. We invite you to correct the record.

III. Requests for Further Information

In the Committees' September 29, 2023 letter, we requested documents and information relating to multiple different topics. This letter serves as a record of what requests the Committees believe to be sufficiently responded to and what requests are outstanding.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Supra*, note 4.

⁸ NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH AND CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, U.S. DEP'T. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, BIOSAFETY IN MICROBIOLOGICAL AND BIOMEDICAL LABORATORIES, at 4 (6th ed. June 2020) (Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) is appropriate for agents with a known potential for aerosol transmission, for agents that may cause serious and potentially lethal infections, and that are indigenous or exotic in origin.)

September 29, 2023 Letter

1. All calendars from November 1, 2019, through present [September 29, 2023] for Dr. Peter Daszak.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

2. All phone records from November 1, 2019, through present [September 29, 2023] for Dr. Peter Daszak.

Please produce or notify the Committees you are unable to access the following records by **April 11, 2024**:⁹

- a. Pursuant to conversations with counsel, all phone records from November 1, 2019 through January 13, 2021. Consistent with the September 29 Letter, the Committees request you prioritize documents sufficient to show any meetings, phone calls, or other interactions between Dr. Daszak and the federal government or any entity in China.
3. A list of EcoHealth employees, contractors, or otherwise affiliated individuals that visited the Wuhan Institute of Virology since January 1, 2018.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

4. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc., including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), including but not limited to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, between January 1, 2014, and present.

Please produce the following records by **April 11, 2024**:

- a. Documents and communications regarding the reinstatement of the grant entitled “Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence;”
- b. Documents and communications regarding the suspension or debarment of the Wuhan Institute of Virology; and
- c. Documents and communications regarding the competitive renewal of the grant entitled “Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence.”

⁹ If counsel is unable to access these records, the notification to the Committees should also include the applicable cellular provider so the Committees may evaluate the use of the compulsory process.

5. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, and the Department of State between January 1, 2014, and present.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

6. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation between January 1, 2014, and present.

Please produce the following records by **April 11, 2024**:

- a. Pursuant to conversations with counsel, all documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation between January 1, 2014, and present.
7. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, and the Department of Energy between January 1, 2014, and present.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

8. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, and the Intelligence Community, including but not limited to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Central Intelligence Agency, between January 1, 2014, and present.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

9. All documents and communications between or among yourself and employees or contractors of the White House, including but not limited to the Executive Office of the President and the Office of Science and Technology Policy, between January 1, 2014, and present.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

10. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals, and the Wuhan Institute of

Virology, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, between January 1, 2014, and present.

Please produce the following records by April 18, 2024:

- a. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals, and the Wuhan Institute of Virology, including any of its subsidiaries, affiliated institutions, or affiliated individuals, between December 15, 2019 and present, including but not limited to:
 - i. Documents and communications regarding the origins of COVID-19, or SARS-CoV-2, or any iteration thereof;
 - ii. Documents and communications regarding the suspension or debarment of the Wuhan Institute of Virology;
 - iii. Documents and communications regarding EcoHealth's efforts to obtain WIV laboratory notebooks pursuant to NIH oversight and compliance efforts;
 - iv. Documents and communications regarding all humanized or transgenic mice experiments conducted at the WIV;
 - v. Documents and communications, including drafts with the underlying metadata, regarding EcoHealth's Year 4 and Year 5 progress reports produced to the NIH pursuant to the grant entitled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence";
 - vi. Documents and communications regarding the biosafety standards employed by the WIV, including if the WIV follows the applicable Biosafety and Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories standards; and
 - vii. Documents and communications regarding the reinstatement of the grant entitled "Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence," including but not limited to any efforts to access or retain sequences or samples.
11. All coronavirus-based research proposals, including those submitted for private funding, that include any work to be conducted or supported by individuals or institutions in China or Southeast Asia between January 1, 2014, and January 1, 2020, including proposals that were declined, denied, or otherwise ultimately not funded.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

12. All proposals that implicate gain-of-function-based, Potential Pandemic Pathogens (PPP), Enhanced Potential Pandemic Pathogens(ePPP), or Dual Use Research of Concern (DURC) research issues, including those submitted for private funding, between January 1, 2018, and January 1, 2020, including proposals that were declined, denied, or otherwise ultimately not funded.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

13. Copies of all grants, contracts, memorandums, and/or other documents executed between January 1, 2014, and present that involve the following, any iterations thereof, or affiliated individuals as parties:

- a. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill;
- b. New York Blood Center;
- c. Georgia State University;
- d. Wuhan Institute of Virology;
- e. Wuhan Center for Disease Control;
- f. Wuhan University;
- g. Chinese Academy of Sciences;
- h. People's Liberation Army; or
- i. Academy of Military Medical Sciences.

Please produce the following records by **April 18, 2024**:

- a. All data sharing contracts, memorandums, or agreements between EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology; and
 - b. All subgrant documents between EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology.
14. Copies of purchase orders, invoices, material transfer agreements, shipping orders or manifests, and/or any other documents sufficient to show, what if any, genetic material was obtained or shipped between January 1, 2014, and present pursuant to any research, publicly or privately funded, involving the following, any iterations thereof, or affiliated individuals:

- a. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill;
- b. New York Blood Center;
- c. Georgia State University;
- d. Wuhan Institute of Virology;
- e. Wuhan Center for Disease Control;
- f. Wuhan University;
- g. Chinese Academy of Sciences;
- h. People's Liberation Army; or
- i. Academy of Military Medical Sciences.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

15. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals and any of the individuals listed in Appendix I plus the individuals listed below regarding or referencing the Correspondence in *The Lancet* titled, “Statement in support of the scientists, public health professionals, and medical professionals of China combatting COVID-19” and the Correspondence in *Nature Medicine* titled, “The proximal origin of SARS-CoV-2.”

- a. Dr. Charles Calisher;
- b. Dr. Dennis Carroll;
- c. Dr. Rita Colwell;
- d. Dr. Ronald Corley;
- e. Dr. Luis Enjuanes;
- f. Dr. Hume Field;
- g. Dr. Josie Golding;
- h. Dr. Alexander Gorbalenya;
- i. Dr. Bart Haagmans;
- j. Dr. James Hughes;
- k. Dr. William Karesh;
- l. Dr. Gerald Keusch;
- m. Dr. Sai Kit Lam;
- n. Dr. Juan Lubroth;
- o. Dr. John Mackenzie;
- p. Dr. Larry Madoff;
- q. Dr. Joanna Mazet;
- r. Dr. Peter Palese;
- s. Dr. Stanley Perlman;
- t. Dr. Leo Poon;
- u. Dr. Bernard Roizman;
- v. Dr. Linda Saif;
- w. Dr. Kanta Subbarao; and
- x. Dr. Mike Turner.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

16. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals and any of the individuals listed in Appendix I regarding or referencing the origins of COVID-19.

Please produce the following records by **April 18, 2024**:

- a. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals and any of the individuals listed in Appendix I regarding or referencing the origins of COVID-19.
17. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals and any employee or contractor of the Defense Advanced Research Project agency regarding the DEFUSE proposal for the project entitled PREEMPT.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

18. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals and any employee or contractor of the Department of Health and Human Services, including but not limited to the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, regarding the DEFUSE proposal for the project entitled PREEMPT.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

19. All documents and communications between or among EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals and the following entities, including affiliated individuals, regarding the DEFUSE proposal for the project entitled PREEMPT.
- a. Duke-National University Singapore Medical School;
 - b. National Wildlife Center, United States Geological Survey;
 - c. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; and
 - d. Wuhan Institute of Virology.

Pursuant to the applicable productions and attestations made by counsel, the Committees consider this request closed.

In addition to fulfilling requests (2), (4), (6), (10), (13), and (16), testimony, documents, and our continued investigation necessitates the Committees request further information. Please produce the following documents and communications as soon as possible but no later than **April 25, 2024**:

1. All documents and communications sufficient to corroborate claims of cyber-attacks against EcoHealth Alliance, Inc that occurred from December 2019 through present.

2. A copy of the spreadsheet attached to the April 24, 2020 email sent by Metabiota Senior Management Developer to an EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. Research Scientist.¹⁰
3. All documents and communications regarding sampling expeditions conducted with the Wuhan Institute of Virology that were provided to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General.
4. A list of all science communicators, public relations experts, social media influencers, and crisis management consultants retained or otherwise used by EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. since January 2020.
5. All drafts of the 2017 paper “Discovery of a Rich Gene Pool of Bat SARS-related Coronaviruses Provides New Insights into the Origins of SARS Coronaviruses;”
6. All drafts of the EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. grant application submitted in 2019 in response to the National Science Foundation Notice of Funding Opportunity 2011162;
7. All communications between EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. and United States Agency for International Development regarding the Global Virome Project or the WIV from January 2018 to the present.

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. The Committee on Energy and Commerce is the authorizing committee with jurisdiction and oversight responsibilities for public health service agencies, including the National Institutes of Health and the entities it funds, as well as federal biomedical research and development.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Select Subcommittee Staff at 202-225-5074. Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,



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



James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and
Accountability

¹⁰ Email from Tammie O’Roake, Metabiota, to Hongying Li, EcoHealth (Apr. 24, 2024), <https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/China-GenBank-sequences.pdf>.

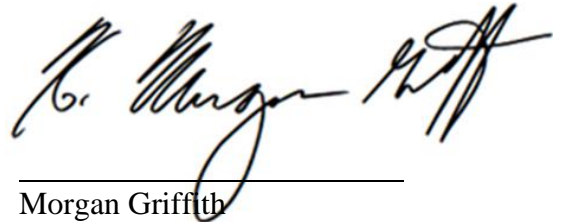
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Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chair
Committee on Energy and
Commerce



Morgan Griffith
Chair
Subcommittee on Oversight and
Investigations



Brett Guthrie
Chair
Subcommittee on Health

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

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr. Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Kathy Castor, Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

The Honorable Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Health

Appendix I

1. Individuals:

- a. Dr. Francis Collins;
- b. Dr. Anthony Fauci;
- c. Dr. Lawrence Tabak;
- d. Dr. Hugh Auchincloss;
- e. Mr. Greg Folkers;
- f. Dr. Cliff Lane;
- g. Dr. Ping Chen;
- h. Dr. Gray Handley;
- i. Dr. Erik Stemmy;
- j. Dr. Michael Lauer;
- k. Dr. Emily Erbeling;
- l. Dr. David Morens.
- m. Dr. Jeremy Farrar;
- n. Dr. Kristian Andersen;
- o. Dr. Robert Garry;
- p. Dr. W. Ian Lipkin;
- q. Dr. Edward Holmes;
- r. Dr. Michael Farzan;
- s. Dr. Christian Drosten;
- t. Dr. Ron Fouchier;
- u. Dr. Marion Koopmans;
- v. Dr. Ralph Baric;
- w. Dr. Peter Daszak;
- x. Dr. James LeDuc;
- y. Dr. Victor Dzau;
- z. Dr. Shi Zhengli;
- aa. Dr. Ben Hu;
- bb. Dr. Yu Ping;
- cc. Dr. Lanying Du;
- dd. Dr. Yan Zhu; and
- ee. Dr. Zhou Yusen.