

CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS, WASHINGTON
CHAIR

FRANK PALLONE, JR., NEW JERSEY
RANKING MEMBER

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-3641

Minority (202) 225-2927

May 3, 2023

Lawrence A. Tabak, D.D.S, Ph.D.
Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dr. Tabak:

Pursuant to Rules X and XI of the U.S. House of Representatives, we write to request information and documents from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that could help support the Committee's potential legislative efforts to improve pandemic preparedness, strengthen NIH grant oversight, and enhance the biosafety of laboratory and field research.

Specifically, the Committee is investigating the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic and needs any early SARS-CoV-2 sequences, data from early COVID-19 cases, or other pertinent documents related to the early phase of the pandemic the NIH may have. In light of these oversight interests, and consistent with the provisions of Public Law 118-2 (S. 619), which passed both the House and Senate unanimously, please provide unredacted copies of the following by May 17, 2023:

1. All correspondence between Lili Ren and the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) or Genbank in the timeframe from January 1, 2019, to March 15, 2020, as well as any associated data files.
2. All documents, including the research proposal and progress reports, related to NIH grant R01AI098775.
3. All documents, including the research proposal and progress reports, related to NIH grant R01AI139092.
4. The unredacted version of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) disclosure found at https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/22011873/buzzfeed-v-hhs-20-cv-2704-71921-partial-production_redacted.pdf

5. The unredacted version of the FOIA disclosure found at https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/22011880/buzzfeed-v-hhs-20-cv-2704-51721-partial-production_redacted.pdf

These unredacted copies must not be modified, with the exception of Bates stamp numbers on the bottom of the page without obstructing the view of the document.

Finally, this letter serves as a formal request to preserve all existing and future records and materials in NIH's possession relating to the topics addressed in this letter. You should construe this preservation notice as an instruction to take all reasonable steps to prevent the destruction or alteration, whether intentionally or negligently, of all documents, communications, and other information, including electronic information and metadata, that are or may be responsive to this congressional inquiry. This instruction includes all electronic messages sent using official and personal accounts or devices, including records created using text messages, phone-based message applications, or encryption software.

An attachment to this letter provides additional instructions for responding to the Committee's request.

Your assistance is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Alan Slobodin and John Strom of the Majority Committee staff at (202) 225-3641.

Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chair
Energy and Commerce Committee



Brett Guthrie
Chair
Subcommittee on Health



H. Morgan Griffith
Chair
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

CC: Frank Pallone Jr., Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Committee
Anna Eshoo, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health
Kathy Castor, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations