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Brad R. Wenstrup, Ohio
Chris Stewart, Utah
Rick Crawford, Arkansas
Elise M. Stefanik, New York
Markwayne Mullin, Oklahoma
Trent Kelly, Mississippi
Darin LaHood, Illinois
Brian Fitzpatrick, Pennsylvania

Kevin McCarthy, California
Republican Leader

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE MINORITY

HVC-304, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-4121

George Pappas
Minority Staff Director

September 24, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

COVID-19 has now claimed the lives of nearly 700,000 Americans since its emergence in Wuhan, China in 2019,¹ while the Chinese government remains uncooperative and deceptive about the virus's origins. Republican Members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence have been investigating the origins of the pandemic as part of our ongoing oversight investigation into Chinese threats to American economic and national security. In May, I wrote to you requesting that you initiate a whole-of-government effort to identify the origins of the virus.² However, you opted for a much narrower review solely by the Intelligence Community (IC). The Committee has reviewed the resulting IC report and received a briefing from Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) personnel. Based on the IC's appalling lack of transparency and the ODNI staff's hostile response to simple questions, we have little confidence in the DNI's report.

The IC relied on analyses from outside scientists in reaching its assessments as to whether COVID emerged naturally or was the result of a lab leak, and whether it was genetically engineered. Several scientists who have publicly opined on these issues were later been revealed to have significant conflicts of interest such as financial and professional ties to the Wuhan Institute of Virology or other gain-of-function or chimeric efforts. Thus, we asked ODNI a simple question: "Who were the scientists you consulted?" This is fundamental oversight of the IC's work. We need this information to determine whether there was any selection bias in choosing the outside scientists to consult. We also need it to determine whether any of the scientists had conflicts of interest that should affect the weight given their analyses.

Shockingly, ODNI has repeatedly refused to tell the Committee which scientists the IC consulted. When pressed on the basis for this refusal during our hearing, ODNI staff

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *COVID Data Tracker*, https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#cases_casesper100klast7days.

² Letter from Devin Nunes, Ranking Member, H. Perm. Select Comm. on Intelligence, to Joseph R. Biden, President of the United States (May 16, 2021).

acknowledged there is no law or regulation prohibiting them from revealing these names to us. Instead, they simply refused again in a hostile manner, claiming it is their “policy” to do so. Charged with overseeing the nation’s most sensitive programs, our Committee is a trusted steward of the IC. Surely you can see the absurdity of ODNI withholding this information from us, as well as the impropriety of ODNI staff treating this Committee with disrespect.

Outside doctors and scientists who were consulted for their technical analyses of COVID’s potential origins are not clandestine sources or spies. They are consultants and there is no basis for stonewalling the Committee about their identities. Without this information, we cannot find the IC’s report remotely credible.

In your May 26th statement announcing this investigation, you said you had instructed the IC “to keep Congress **fully apprised** of its work.”³ This is, of course, not merely an accommodation but a legal obligation.⁴ I respectfully ask that you rectify this situation by instructing the ODNI to cease stonewalling Congressional oversight and to immediately disclose to the Committee the full list of all outside doctors and scientists consulted in the investigation of COVID’s origins.

Sincerely,



Devin Nunes
Member of Congress



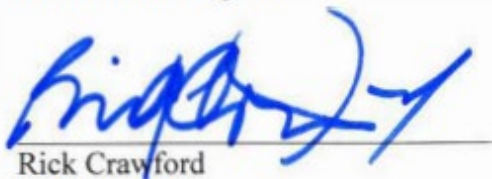
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Elise Stefanik
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³ Press Release, *Statement by President Joe Biden on the Investigation into the Origins of COVID-19*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/05/26/statement-by-president-joe-biden-on-the-investigation-into-the-origins-of-covid-19/> (emphasis added).

⁴ 50 U.S.C. § 3092.



Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood
Member of Congress



Trent Kelly
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress