



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on August 2, 2021

House GOP Report Doubles Down on Wuhan “Lab Leak” Theory

The House Foreign Affairs Committee, led by Representative Michael McCaul (R-Texas), has [released an addendum](#) to the September 2020 [“Origins of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic”](#) report that has presumably uncovered “ample evidence” to prove the disputed Wuhan lab-leak theory.

China has repeatedly denied developing SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, and has accused the United States of creating the virus and unleashing it on the world. But the hypothesis that the virus emerged from a scientific laboratory in a city known for its work with coronaviruses — and not from a “wet market” — has been getting more and more traction on Capitol Hill.



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The theory’s proponents in the United States have pointed to the Wuhan lab’s reportedly faulty safety procedures and alleged Chinese government and military involvement in engineering the virus and releasing it. The uncovered scientific [articles](#) written by Chinese scientists funded by the U.S. National Institute of Health (NIH) and that likely worked on the so-called gain-of-function research, i.e., deliberately enhancing coronaviruses previously harmless to humans to increase their virulence and lethality, have become a topic of the heated congressional debate.

The recently released addendum, part of the broader report that will be formally presented, [reportedly](#), later this month, showed “a preponderance of the evidence [that] proves that all roads lead” to the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV). The end of August is also a deadline for the U.S. intelligence community to release a review of the pandemic’s origins, [ordered](#) by President Biden in May.

Meanwhile, McCaul’s Monday report states that it’s time to completely dismiss the wet market as the source of the outbreak, and the virus did leak from the WIV “sometime before September 12, 2020.” [According](#) to Fox News, it was the day when urgent inspections were called for that the lab and its viral sequence database disappeared from the Internet.

The evidence the virus came from the WIV outlined in the report includes:

- The sudden removal of the WIV’s virus and sample database in the middle of the night on September 12, 2019 and without explanation;
- Safety concerns expressed by top PRC [People’s Republic of China] scientists in 2019 and unusually scheduled maintenance at the WIV;
- Athletes at the Military World Games held in Wuhan in October 2019 who became sick with symptoms similar to COVID-19 both while in Wuhan and also shortly after returning to their home countries;



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- Satellite imagery of Wuhan in September and October 2019 that showed a significant uptick in the number of people at local hospitals surrounding the WIV's headquarters, coupled with an unusually high number of patients with symptoms similar to COVID-19;
- The installation of a People's Liberation Army's bioweapons expert as the head of the WIV's Biosafety Level 4 lab (BSL-4), possibly as early as late 2019; and
- Actions by the Chinese Communist Party and scientists working at or affiliated with the WIV to hide or coverup the type of research being conducted there.

McCaul also states that the gathered evidence outlines not just that WIV was the source of the outbreak, but also traces some of the many steps researchers at the WIV — along with Peter Daszak of EcoHealth Alliance, which funneled \$3.4 million of the NIH funds to WIV — took to cover up the dangerous research they were conducting. In addition to that, the report breaks down how scientific papers written by researchers at the WIV not only prove the WIV was doing dangerous genetic modification research on coronaviruses at unsafe biosafety levels, but also that WIV researchers had the ability to genetically modify coronaviruses as early as 2016 without leaving any trace of that modification. This point seems especially important since “the scientific community told the American people for more than a year it was impossible to modify a virus without leaving a trace when this technology existed more than 14 years before the pandemic began,” per McCaul’s statement.

McCaul suggests Daszak should be subpoenaed to appear before the House Foreign Affairs Committee to “answer the many questions his inconsistent — and in some instances outright and knowingly inaccurate — statements have raised.” In addition to transferring money on risky research in Wuhan, Daszak is under scrutiny for his alleged connection with the Wuhan lab and involvement in publishing an [open letter](#) in influential medical journal *Lancet* in February 2020 that rejected the lab theory as a xenophobic distraction from the pandemic response.

The report also called for Congress to “sanction scientists at the WIV and CCP officials who participated in this coverup.”

“This was the greatest coverup of all time and has caused the deaths of more than four million people around the world, and people must be held responsible,” McCaul said.

A State Department [fact sheet](#) released in January contended Wuhan lab researchers “conducted experiments involving RaTG13, the bat coronavirus identified by the WIV in January 2020 as its closest sample to SARS-CoV-2 (96.2% similar)” and the lab “has a published record of conducting ‘gain-of-function’ research to engineer chimeric viruses.” The fact sheet also asserted the lab “engaged in classified research, including laboratory animal experiments, on behalf of the Chinese military” and that lab workers became sick with coronavirus-like symptoms in autumn 2019.

Last month, the World Health Organization (WHO) [called](#) for a second stage of investigations, which would include “audits of relevant laboratories and research institutions” in Wuhan. But China’s vice health minister, Zeng Yixin, countered that a mere assumption the virus came from a lab “defies common sense and science,” while adding the WHO inspectors visited the WIV, and concluded that the laboratory-leak possibility is “extremely unlikely.”



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