



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on May 8, 2021

GOP Lawmakers Press Biden Administration on Wuhan “Lab Leak” Theory and U.S. Funding of the Lab

More than one year after the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, the virus’s origin remains a mystery, imperiling chances of preventing the next pandemic. Now, several Republican congressmen are responding to Chinese government obfuscation, World Health Organization (WHO) incompetence, and Biden administration neglect to launch a meaningful investigation into the issue. GOP lawmakers [insist](#) on exploring the theory that the outbreak might be connected to an accident at a Wuhan lab. The case may be especially sensitive since U.S. taxpayer money [funded](#) coronavirus research that included work at China’s Wuhan Institute of Virology through the National Institute of Health (NIH).

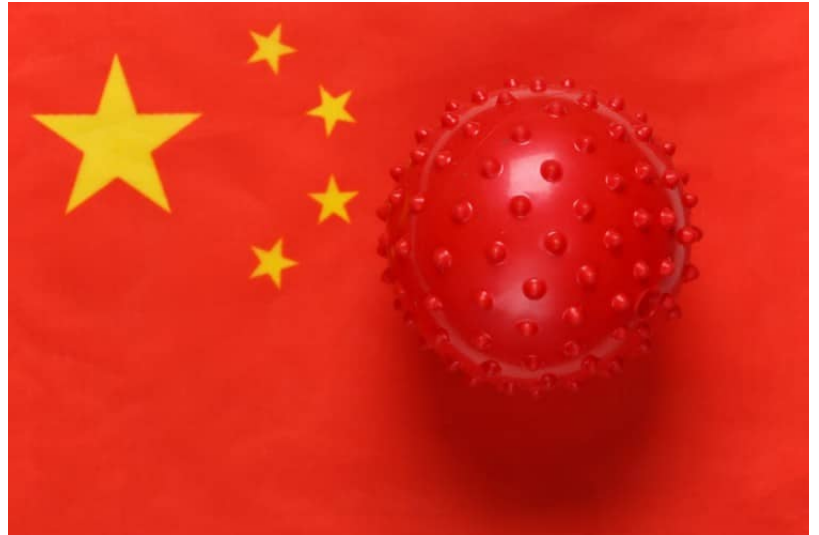


Photo: Vladimir Sukhachev/iStock/Getty Images Plus

For [a variety of reasons](#), no credible investigation into the origins of the coronavirus has taken place. Beijing has spent more than a year [covering up](#) the origin of the virus and [punishing any country](#) that dares call for an independent investigation. Chinese authorities [undermined](#) the WHO investigation so thoroughly that even WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus [admitted](#) that its team did not properly investigate the possibility of a lab accident origin. Just recently, China [lashed out](#) at the chief of the World Health Organization for suggesting that more study is needed into the possibility that the coronavirus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic initially escaped from a Wuhan lab.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken [said](#) last month that “we need to get to the bottom of this,” and Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines [has testified](#) that the U.S. government is investigating both the natural spillover and lab accident theories.

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But the Biden administration [reportedly](#) isn’t pursuing any genuine investigation into the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), which [was conducting risky experiments](#) through what is known as “[gain-of-function](#)” research (a biological research aimed at increasing the virulence and lethality of pathogens and viruses) on bat coronaviruses that infect humans.

This week, several Republican lawmakers have started investigations of their own. Their focus is on demanding that U.S. government agencies tell the American people what they know.

Representative Mike Gallagher (R-Wis.) wrote [a letter](#) to Dr. Anthony Fauci this week asking for answers on NIH’s relationship with the Wuhan lab:

Through National Institutes of Health grants to the New York-based organization EcoHealth



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Alliance, the U.S. government helped fund research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. While this funding was no doubt well-intentioned, taxpayers deserve a detailed understanding of whether federal resources supported dangerous “gain-of-function” research, and whether this might have played a role in the outbreak of the pandemic. As the world seeks to recover from this pandemic, Americans deserve to understand not only how this catastrophe came about, but that their government is learning and internalizing lessons to ensure it does not happen again.

[According](#) to the Tracking Accountability in Government Grant System (TAGGS) data, EcoHealth Alliance received at least \$3.4 million from 2014, and [Peter Daszak](#), a key member of the WHO-China joint study team who is also the leader of the EcoHealth Alliance, steered at least \$600,000 in HIN funding to the Wuhan lab for bat coronavirus research. Daszak also [criticized](#) the Biden administration for appearing skeptical of the WHO’s findings and defended China to outlets linked to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Representative Cathy McMorris Rogers (R-Wash.), a ranking member on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, together with Brett Guthrie (R-Ky.) and H. Morgan Griffith (R-Va.), [wrote](#) to Secretary of State Antony Blinken this week requesting documents to “assist” in their investigation into the origins of COVID-19:

We [leaders of the Congressional Committee] request that the U.S. Department of State release unclassified documents and declassify other documents for public release, as appropriate, related to the assertion in the Department’s January 15, 2021 Fact Sheet that the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) in Wuhan, China collaborated with the Chinese military in conducting classified research, including laboratory animal experiments.

In March, the same group of representatives wrote a letter to NIH Director [Francis Collins](#), as well as in April to EcoHealth Alliance’s [Daszak](#), demanding extensive records about their research and collaborations. Collins, Fauci and Daszak have not responded to congressional inquiries. And back in February, more than two dozen GOP House members [called](#) for a “prompt and thorough investigation into the NIH’s response to biosafety concerns” at the Wuhan lab, asking the HHS inspector general to investigate U.S. funding for the lab, and the response is yet to come.

Meanwhile, Republican Senators. Josh Hawley (Mo.) and Mike Braun (Ind.) introduced the “[COVID-19 Origin Act of 2021](#)” bill, which would force the Biden administration to declassify intelligence related to COVID-19 origins. “For over a year, anyone asking questions about the Wuhan Institute of Virology has been branded as a conspiracy theorist,” Hawley said in a statement last month. “The world needs to know if this pandemic was the product of negligence at the Wuhan lab but the CCP has done everything it can to block a credible investigation.”

According to the [latest evidence](#) that has come to light, Chinese scientists were exploring coronavirus as biological and genetic weapons for a future global conflict six years ago. That evidence, a dossier by People’s Liberation Army scientists and health officials, examined the manipulation of diseases to make weapons “in a way never seen before.” [According](#) to the *Daily Mail*, the bombshell dossier, accessed by the U.S. State Department, insists the viruses would be “the core weapon for victory” in such a conflict. Similar [reports](#) have appeared before.



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Undoubtedly, Americans deserve to know the details and extent of the U.S. involvement in viral experiments in China that was a precursor to so many economic, social and medical implications at home and abroad.



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