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ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
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Minority (202) 225-3641

November 30, 2021

Elena Fuentes-Afflick, M.D., M.P.H.  
Home Secretary  
National Academy of Medicine  
2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Dr. Fuentes-Afflick,

We write to urge the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) immediately to suspend Dr. Peter Daszak's status and affiliation with NAM<sup>1</sup> and to proceed with an investigation into his conduct in connection with a grant awarded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to Dr. Daszak as the Principal Investigator (PI) for EcoHealth Alliance (EcoHealth) and a subgrant recipient, the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), to determine whether his actions constitute violations of NAM's Code of Conduct that warrant expulsion. In addition to his NAM membership, Dr. Daszak continues to influence healthcare policies and inform public opinion through his position as the chair of the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine's (NASEM) Forum on Microbial Threats,<sup>2</sup> and as a member of the NASEM Standing Committee on emerging Infectious Diseases and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Health Threats.<sup>3</sup>

Membership in the NAM is a privilege predicated on members' adherence to ethical standards and professional behavior. By accepting membership in the Academy, NAM members agree to abide by the NAM's Code of Conduct. Under Rule Two of the Code of Conduct, "NAM members are expected to conduct themselves lawfully . . . to comply with public and institutional rules regulating their professional practice; and to be committed to the responsible conduct, review,

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<sup>1</sup> Scientists, *Dr. Peter Daszak, President*, ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE, (last accessed Nov. 5, 2021) available at <https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2018/10/peter-daszak-elected-as-a-member-of-the-national-academy-of-medicine>.  
<sup>2</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Medicine and Engineering, *Forum on Microbial Threats, Membership* (last accessed Nov. 8, 2021) available at (<https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/forum-on-microbial-threats/about#members>)  
<sup>3</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Medicine and Engineering, *Standing Committee on Emerging Infectious Diseases and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Health Threats*, Committee (last accessed Nov. 8, 2021) available at <https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/standing-committee-on-emerging-infectious-diseases-and-21st-century-health-threats#sectionCommittee>.

presentation, and publication of research.”<sup>4</sup> Incidental to our investigation into how the COVID-19 pandemic started, we have learned that Dr. Daszak, who has been a member of the NAM since 2018, has repeatedly and willfully refused to honor data-sharing commitments, and acted in ways that are antithetical to responsible conduct of scientific research, in apparent violation of several rules of the NAM’s Code of Conduct. By agreeing to be a member, Dr. Daszak agreed to comply with the Code of Conduct that he now disregards.

### Dr. Daszak’s Refusal to Cooperate with Congressional Request

On April 16, 2021, we sent a letter to Dr. Daszak and EcoHealth as award recipients of numerous U.S. Government grants with requirements to maintain and provide records, requesting data and documents in their possession related to how the COVID-19 pandemic started.<sup>5</sup> This inquiry is of top importance to the U.S. and the global community to help prevent and/or mitigate future pandemic threats. This is a moment for all of us to pull together with common purpose.

Unfortunately, EcoHealth, under Dr. Daszak’s leadership, and Dr. Daszak directly, have refused to engage with us or cooperate in any way to assist in this public health emergency examination.<sup>6</sup> Dr. Daszak as the President of EcoHealth and as PI of an NIH grant of interest must be held responsible for his organization’s refusal to respond to legitimate Congressional oversight requests. While there is no legal obligation to respond to Minority committee requests, there has been a longstanding practice that recipients of such requests at a minimum make efforts to respond. Given we are exploring the origins of a global pandemic, Dr. Daszak’s behavior is particularly troubling. What makes his behavior even more egregious is that we are seeking information connected to the use of U.S. taxpayer funds. As noted by the *Washington Post* editorial board, “Mr. Daszak must answer these questions before Congress. His grants were federal funds, and it is entirely appropriate for Congress to insist on accountability and transparency. He might also help the world understand what really happened in Wuhan.”<sup>7</sup>

We would expect that NAM members would cooperate with requests from members of Congress. Further, the purpose of our inquiry is to help prevent another pandemic and improve pandemic preparedness. By refusing to cooperate, Dr. Daszak has caused EcoHealth to be noncompliant in its pledged commitments made to NIH in its grant awards as well as other data-sharing commitments. Dr. Daszak’s disrespect of the Congress and the U.S. taxpayers, as far as we are aware, is unprecedented for a PI on an NIH grant, and for a member of the NAM.

### Dr. Daszak’s Pattern of Uncooperative Conduct

Unfortunately, Dr. Daszak’s uncooperative conduct with our request is part of a larger pattern of behavior unbecoming of a NAM member. Requests from the NIH in its July 8, 2020,

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<sup>4</sup> National Academy of Medicine, *Code of Conduct* (Adopted Dec. 11, 2018) available at <https://nam.edu/national-academy-of-medicine-code-of-conduct/>.

<sup>5</sup> Energy and Commerce GOP Expands the COVID-19 Origins Investigation to EcoHealth Alliance (Apr. 16, 2021) available at <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/the-covid-19-origins-investigation/>.

<sup>6</sup> EcoHealth and Dr. Daszak were requested by email to acknowledge receipt of our April 16, 2021 letter, but did not do so. Staff called Dr. Daszak about the letter, but he refused to discuss the matter or respond in a later phone call.

<sup>7</sup> Editorial Board, *One person who might really know what happened in Wuhan*, *Washington Post* (Oct. 25, 2021) available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/10/25/one-person-who-might-know-what-really-happened-wuhan/>.

letter of suspension to EcoHealth, and from scientists who have sought information from EcoHealth have also been stymied.<sup>8</sup> Under Dr. Daszak's direction, his organization refused to cooperate in sharing vital scientific information for more than a year, even though EcoHealth co-signed a pledge to share all data related to COVID-19.<sup>9</sup>

We are not alone in our concerns about Dr. Daszak's conduct. Recently, Dr. Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University dissolved the *Lancet* COVID-19 origins commission and recused Dr. Daszak from participation. Dr. Sachs explained one reason for the termination was because of Dr. Daszak's conflicts of interest and refusal to cooperate.<sup>10</sup> Once Dr. Sachs began learning about Dr. Daszak's undeclared conflicts of interest with the WIV, Dr. Sachs asked Dr. Daszak for a copy of EcoHealth's NIH grant documents, but Dr. Daszak refused to provide them, claiming they were "confidential."<sup>11</sup> After the grant documents were published, Dr. Sachs learned about additional conflicts of interest related to Dr. Daszak's NIH grants and decided to end the *Lancet* COVID-19 origins task force that was investigating the advent of the most devastating public health emergency of our time.

By shielding his conflicts of interest, Dr. Daszak's unscrupulous behavior caused a team of experts to be dismantled from proceeding on their important mission. Dr. Daszak intentionally undermined the task force due to his undisclosed conflict of interest and lack of cooperation, and his behavior is not in keeping with the NASEM Policy on Conflicts of Interest that "[t]he quality and integrity of the work of these committees is essential to the reputation of the National Academies and to continuation of the institution's role as an advisor to the government and the nation on matters involving science, engineering and medicine."<sup>12</sup>

### Dr. Daszak's Contrary Conduct to Scientific Process and Open-Mindedness

The NASEM Conflicts of Interest policy asserts that "the members of the committee must be able to work together to reach scientific consensus through cooperative, respectful discourse and the free exchange of ideas."<sup>13</sup> However, Dr. Daszak effectively shut down all scientific discussion about the pandemic origins very early into the outbreak and used knowledge from his position with the NAM to do so. Shortly after the February 3, 2020, United States declaration of a public health emergency, Dr. Daszak leveraged his personal knowledge about the plans of the presidents of the NASEM when he first started soliciting six prominent scientists to join him as

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<sup>8</sup> The complaints from scientists were made in confidence to Minority Committee Staff.

<sup>9</sup> It was only after the NIH recently initiated compliance enforcement action against EcoHealth and demanded unpublished data that EcoHealth responded with some information, albeit incomplete. This response was yielded only under enforcement pressure after Dr. Daszak has willfully and stubbornly refused to share EcoHealth information in his control.

<sup>10</sup> Jon Cohen, *Fights over confidentiality pledge and conflicts of interest tore apart COVID-19 origin probe*, SCIENCE (Oct. 18, 2021) available at <https://www.science.org/content/article/fights-over-confidentiality-pledge-and-conflicts-interest-tore-apart-covid-19-origin-probe>.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, *Policy on Composition and Balance, Conflicts of Interest, and Independence for Committees Used in the Development of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*, Institutional Policies and Procedures (Sept. 7, 2021) available at [https://www.nationalacademies.org/documents/link/web?IdcService=GET\\_FILE&dLinkID=LD68CA4FD5B40205FD9F6B3950CE645F6581B29C8294&item=fFileGUID:DBB40FA1AED970B36E839E91C147601584BE92960BAC&scsOriginalFileName=Policy%20on%20Composition%20and%20Balance%20for%20Consensus%20Activities.pdf](https://www.nationalacademies.org/documents/link/web?IdcService=GET_FILE&dLinkID=LD68CA4FD5B40205FD9F6B3950CE645F6581B29C8294&item=fFileGUID:DBB40FA1AED970B36E839E91C147601584BE92960BAC&scsOriginalFileName=Policy%20on%20Composition%20and%20Balance%20for%20Consensus%20Activities.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

signatories in what would become known as “The Lancet letter” in his February 6, 2020, email.<sup>14</sup> He explained his plan to present the letter personally during his upcoming plenary session at the International Society for Infectious Diseases 2020 conference and would “circulate this widely to coincide with a letter from the Presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, which will likely be released tomorrow or Friday.”<sup>15</sup> In the draft letter attached to his email, Dr. Daszak included the convincing declaration that his position “is further supported by a letter from the Presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, and by the scientific communities they represent (INSERT REF).”<sup>16</sup>

The NASEM Policy on Conflicts of Interest also states that “[c]onsideration should be given to whether the committee membership can be objective and open-minded in addressing the issues before it.”<sup>17</sup> Dr. Daszak has failed to demonstrate any objectivity or open-mindedness about the origins of the pandemic. As early as February 6, 2020, he claimed in his draft letter that “[s]cientific evidence overwhelmingly suggests that this virus originated in wildlife, as have so many other emerging diseases.”<sup>18</sup> While negotiating the text of the draft letter in a subsequent email amongst nine scientists, Dr. Daszak revealed to them his personally known, and possibly non-public, NASEM leadership plans when he wrote:

The Presidents of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine have drafted a letter that I expect will be released Friday or Monday. I’ve not seen the final version yet, but the draft version that we (and expert group that met last week) edited has the following sentence: “The initial views of the experts is that the available genomic data are consistent with natural evolution and that there is currently no evidence that the virus was engineered to spread more quickly among humans.” I think this is a bit too specific, because there are other conspiracy theories out there.<sup>19</sup>

At the time he started his petition for scientists to join him on the Lancet letter, Dr. Daszak described his plan of personally presenting the letter in an open forum. Within a couple of days of commencing his solicitation campaign, Dr. Daszak instead proceeded to conceal his role as the facilitator so the letter would appear as “simply a letter from leading scientists” to “avoid the appearance of a political statement.”<sup>20</sup> After others agreed to sign the letter, he wrote that he intended the letter to “not be identifiable as coming from any one organization or person.”<sup>21</sup> His

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<sup>14</sup> Page 251 of the *Biohazard FOIA Maryland Emails* contributed by U.S. Right to Know, (Nov. 18, 2020) available at [https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard\\_FOIA\\_Maryland\\_Emails\\_11.6.20.pdf](https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard_FOIA_Maryland_Emails_11.6.20.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> *Id.* at 252.

<sup>17</sup> The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, *Policy on Composition and Balance, Conflicts of Interest, and Independence for Committees Used in the Development of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations*, Institutional Policies and Procedures (Sept. 7, 2021) available at [https://www.nationalacademies.org/documents/link/web?IdcService=GET\\_FILE&dLinkID=LD68CA4FD5B40205FD9F6B3950CE645F6581B29C8294&item=fFileGUID:DBB40FA1AED970B36E839E91C147601584BE92960BAC&scsOriginalFileName=Policy%20on%20Composition%20and%20Balance%20for%20Consensus%20Activities.pdf](https://www.nationalacademies.org/documents/link/web?IdcService=GET_FILE&dLinkID=LD68CA4FD5B40205FD9F6B3950CE645F6581B29C8294&item=fFileGUID:DBB40FA1AED970B36E839E91C147601584BE92960BAC&scsOriginalFileName=Policy%20on%20Composition%20and%20Balance%20for%20Consensus%20Activities.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Page 266 of the *Biohazard FOIA Maryland Emails* contributed by U.S. Right to Know, (Nov. 18, 2020) available at [https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard\\_FOIA\\_Maryland\\_Emails\\_11.6.20.pdf](https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard_FOIA_Maryland_Emails_11.6.20.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> *Id.* at 301.

<sup>21</sup> Page 306 of the *Biohazard FOIA Maryland Emails* contributed by U.S. Right to Know, (Nov. 18, 2020) available at [https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard\\_FOIA\\_Maryland\\_Emails\\_11.6.20.pdf](https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard_FOIA_Maryland_Emails_11.6.20.pdf).

tactics were similar to a bait-and-switch scam in which he lured fellow scientist to participate under false pretenses, and then changed the plan in a way that would not have been agreeable had it been previously disclosed. Further, Dr. Daszak concealed from the scientists that his motivation to write the letter was actually at the request of his collaborators in China, as revealed in a February 8, 2020, email to Rita Colwell in which he wrote that “[t]hey have asked for any show of support we can give them.”<sup>22</sup> Eventually, on June 21, 2021, *The Lancet* published an addendum of competing interests in which Dr. Daszak provided a lengthy explanation of the conflicts he did not declare for a year and four months.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout the pandemic outbreak, Dr. Daszak has made political arguments rather than measured scientific analysis. Dr. Daszak has been critical of the lab leak hypothesis as being a conspiracy theory and that any such suggestion was “ironic and preposterous,”<sup>24</sup> “pure baloney,”<sup>25</sup> and “are crackpot theories.”<sup>26</sup> On June 9, 2020, *The Guardian* published Dr. Daszak’s opinion article entitled, *Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn’t created in a lab.*<sup>27</sup> Dr. Daszak wrote:

Suggestions that Covid-19 is a manmade virus are the latest chapter in a tale of blame, misinformation and finger-pointing. Cue the conspiracy theorists, marching out their narrative about the high-security BSL-4 lab in Wuhan, where mysterious experiments to design “frankenviruses” led to the tragic global pandemic. Cue the genetic analyses pointing to “unexpected” insertions in the code of A, G, T, and C that explain how this virus could not have evolved naturally. Cue political posturing against China, with calls for an inquiry, trade sanctions and even reparations.<sup>28</sup>

Dr. Daszak has also promoted scientific claims that are questionable:<sup>29</sup>

- Regarding zoonotic jumps, Dr. Daszak said that they “occur every day.” However, his claim is disputed, such as in a May 25, 2020 *Science Focus* article, that explains how it is “...rare for a virus to be able to jump to another species. When this does happen, it’s by chance, and it usually requires a large amount of contact with the virus.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Page 301 of the *Biohazard FOIA Maryland Emails* contributed by U.S. Right to Know, (Nov. 18, 2020) available at [https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard\\_FOIA\\_Maryland\\_Emails\\_11.6.20.pdf](https://usrtk.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Biohazard_FOIA_Maryland_Emails_11.6.20.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> *The Lancet*, Addendum: competing interests and the origins of SARS-CoV-2 (June 21, 2021) available at [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(21\)01377-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(21)01377-5/fulltext).

<sup>24</sup> Eliza Barclay, *Why these scientists still doubt the coronavirus leaked from a Chinese lab*, VOX (Apr. 29, 2020) available at <https://www.vox.com/2020/4/23/21226484/wuhan-lab-coronavirus-china>.

<sup>25</sup> Amy Goodman, “Pure Baloney”: Zoologist Debunks Trump’s COVID-19 Origin Theory, Explains Animal-Human Transmission, Democracy Now (Apr. 16, 2020) available at [https://www.democracynow.org/2020/4/16/peter\\_daszak\\_coronavirus](https://www.democracynow.org/2020/4/16/peter_daszak_coronavirus).

<sup>26</sup> Sarah Bosely, *Experts fear false rumours could harm Chinese cooperation on coronavirus*, The Guardian (Feb. 20, 2020) available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/20/coronavirus-chinese-scientists-false-rumours-experts>.

<sup>27</sup> Peter Daszak, *Ignore the conspiracy theories: scientists know Covid-19 wasn’t created in a lab*, The Guardian (June 9, 2020) available at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/09/conspiracies-covid-19-lab-false-pandemic>.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> Johnathan Matthews, *Why are the lab escape denialists telling such brazen lies?*, GM WATCH (June 17, 2020) available at <https://www.gmwatch.org/en/news/latest-news/19437>.

<sup>30</sup> Katherine Arden, *How do viruses jump from animals to humans?*, Science Focus (May 25, 2020) available at <https://www.sciencefocus.com/the-human-body/how-do-viruses-jump-from-animals-to-humans/>.

- Noting that evidence shows bats infect large numbers of people with SARS-related coronaviruses, Dr. Daszak said that “[i]t’s utterly illogical to think that this did not lead to the current outbreak.”<sup>31</sup> This seems to be a vast overstatement, and if human spillovers were good evidence of predictive pandemic potential, we would be seeing pandemics frequently.<sup>32</sup>
- In response to revelations that the WIV has done work on viruses similar to those that cause COVID-19, Dr. Daszak said “[a]nyway, there are no relevant live viruses at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, only data on computers, so nothing could escape.”<sup>33</sup> However, in the released EcoHealth grant documents, Dr. Daszak described results of his NIH research conducted at the WIV as, “[o]ur previous R01 work identified diverse SARS-CoVs with high propensity for human infection,”<sup>34</sup> and explained to NIH that “[v]iral isolates will remain at the Wuhan Institute of Virology initially. Isolates, reagents and any other products, should they be developed, will be made available to other NIH-funded researchers via applicable Wuhan Institute of Virology and EcoHealth Alliance Material Transfer Agreements and/or licensing agreements.”<sup>35</sup>
- Related to investigating the WIV, Dr. Daszak declared “I have no conflicts of interest.”<sup>36</sup> Yet in his NIH grant documents, he described his collaborations with Dr. Shi and with the WIV as, “Dr. Daszak has had inter-institutional contractual agreements with the Wuhan Institute of Virology for over 13 years. Drs. Shi and Daszak have collaborated together since 2002 and have been involved in running joint conferences, collaborating on papers, and shipping samples into and out of China.”<sup>37</sup>

On April 18, 2020, Dr. Daszak emailed Dr. Anthony Fauci, the Director of NIH’s National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to thank him for downplaying the lab leak theory. Dr. Daszak wrote, “I just wanted to say a personal thank you on behalf of our staff and collaborators, for publicly standing up and stating that the scientific evidence supports a natural

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<sup>31</sup> Peter Daszak (@PeterDaszak), Twitter (April 16, 2020 10:30AM), available at <https://twitter.com/peterdaszak/status/1250793665913655299?lang=en>.

<sup>32</sup> See Edward C Holmes, Andrew Rambaut, Kristian G Andersen, Pandemics: spend on surveillance, not prediction, 558 *Nature* 180 (June 2018).

<sup>33</sup> *Function Communications Between EcoHealth Alliance and NIAID*, White Coat Waste Project (Nov. 4, 2021) available at <https://www.scribd.com/document/537027808/Gain-Of-Function-Communications-Between-EcoHealth-Alliance-And-NIAID>.

<sup>34</sup> NIH grant to EcoHealth page 489, *Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence*, contributed by The Intercept, (Sept. 9, 2021) available at <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21055989-understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice>.

<sup>35</sup> NIH grant to EcoHealth page 526, *Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence*, contributed by The Intercept, (Sept. 9, 2021) available at <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21055989-understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice>.

<sup>36</sup> Josh Rogin, *Opinion: The coronavirus crisis shows the risks of scientific collaboration with China*, *The Washington Post* (Apr. 23, 2020) available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-coronavirus-crisis-shows-the-risks-of-scientific-collaboration-with-china/2020/04/23/4ccd5850-85a8-11ea-878a-86477a724bdb\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-coronavirus-crisis-shows-the-risks-of-scientific-collaboration-with-china/2020/04/23/4ccd5850-85a8-11ea-878a-86477a724bdb_story.html).

<sup>37</sup> NIH grant to EcoHealth page 521, *Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence*, contributed by The Intercept, (Sept. 9, 2021) available at <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21055989-understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice>. The “over 13 years” reference may be based on language from a submission being made in 2014.

origin for COVID-19 from a bat-to-human spillover, not a lab release from the Wuhan Institute of Virology.”<sup>38</sup> In an April 24, 2020, panel presentation hosted by the Smithsonian Conservation Commons, when asked to explain how and where COVID-19 originated, Dr. Daszak unequivocally stated that “[i]t is an animal origin virus” and “we know that because when we look at the genetic sequence of the virus behind COVID-19, it’s very closely related to a group of viruses from bats in Southeast Asia.” He further explained that people were probably infected from their everyday exposure to bats through the wildlife trade and that, “there is definitely some evidence that the wildlife trade at least is involved in amplifying the initial outbreak. But yeah, this is another animal origin virus, and we estimate there are millions perhaps out there waiting to emerge.”<sup>39</sup>

As the only American approved by the Chinese Communist Party for membership on the World Health Organization pandemic origins investigative team, Dr. Daszak’s two decades of collaborations with individuals supported by the Chinese Communist Party<sup>40</sup> raise questions about his objectivity and influence on the WHO investigative team and its report, which concluded that it is “extremely unlikely” COVID-19 came from a lab under the control of the Chinese Communist Party.<sup>41</sup> In the *Consortium/Contractual Arrangements* section in the NIH’s grant documents, in Peter Daszak’s biosketch as the Principal Investigator, he wrote “Drs. [Zhengli] Shi, [ShiYu] Zhang, and Daszak have collaborated together since 2002 and have been involved in running joint conferences, and shipping samples into and out of China.”<sup>42</sup> In April 2020, Dr. Daszak told the *Washington Post* he had “no conflicts of interest” in his role on the WHO team, despite having worked with Dr. Shi and the Wuhan Institute of Virology since at least 2002 and his direct funding of research at the WIV.<sup>43</sup>

### Dr. Daszak’s Responsibility for EcoHealth’s Questionable Financial Reporting

In our April 16, 2021, letter to Dr. Daszak, we requested information about his knowledge of biosafety concerns at the WIV.<sup>44</sup> We also inquired about EcoHealth’s apparent omissions in their required public financial reporting of grant financial support paid to the WIV.<sup>45</sup> Specifically, we asked about a 2016 independent American review that found China’s biosafety controls had a

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<sup>38</sup>Natalie Bettendorf and Jason Leopold, *Anthony Fauci’s emails Reveal The Pressure That Fell On One Man*, BuzzFeed News (June 2, 2021) available at <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/nataliebettendorf/fauci-emails-covid-response>.

<sup>39</sup> Peter Daszak at mark 9:40. Smithsonian Conservation Commons, Global Health Virus Hunters, Earth Optimism (Apr. 24, 2020) available at <https://earthoptimism.si.edu/calendar/2020-dc-summit/events/virus-hunters/>.

<sup>40</sup> In some media discussions referenced later in this letter, Dr. Daszak claimed that EcoHealth Alliance has worked with the Chinese scientists for 15 years, however in the NIH grant documents, he claimed that he worked with Dr. Shi since 2002. EcoHealth grant documents at page 142 available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>41</sup> Michelle Roberts, *COVID: WHO says ‘extremely unlikely’ virus leaked from lab in China*, BBC (Feb. 9, 2021) available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55996728>.

<sup>42</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at page 142 available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>43</sup> Josh Rogin, *Opinion: The coronavirus crisis shows the risks of scientific collaboration with China*, The Washington Post (Apr. 23, 2020) available at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-coronavirus-crisis-shows-the-risks-of-scientific-collaboration-with-china/2020/04/23/4ccd5850-85a8-11ea-878a-86477a724bdb\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-coronavirus-crisis-shows-the-risks-of-scientific-collaboration-with-china/2020/04/23/4ccd5850-85a8-11ea-878a-86477a724bdb_story.html).

See also, NIH grant to EcoHealth page 142, *Understanding the Risk of Bat Coronavirus Emergence*, contributed by The Intercept, (Sept. 9, 2021) available at <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/21055989-understanding-risk-bat-coronavirus-emergence-grant-notice>.

<sup>44</sup> Energy and Commerce GOP Expands the COVID-19 Origins Investigation to EcoHealth Alliance (Apr. 16, 2021) available at <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/the-covid-19-origins-investigation/>.

<sup>45</sup> *Id.*

shortage of officials, experts, and scientists who specialize in laboratory biosafety. We also inquired about a Chinese national security review team finding in 2019 that the WIV did not meet national standards in five categories and questioned if those standards were met before 2020. As a research partner of WIV and the PI of the grant funding the WIV, we expect Dr. Daszak to have first-hand knowledge about the WIV operations.<sup>46</sup> We also requested information about EcoHealth's tax returns because we found it odd that no money was reported as being dispensed to the WIV, even though \$319,570 and \$126,792 cash grant awards dispersed by wire to China for the purpose of "[u]nderstanding the risk of bat coronavirus emergence" and a \$291,507 cash award disbursed by wire transfer to an unnamed recipient in China for "Grants and Assistance to Individuals Outside the U.S." were reported on its calendar year 2016 IRS Form 990 with a description of "Coronavirus & Emerging Diseases."<sup>47</sup>

In our June 10, 2021, letter to NIH, we note that EcoHealth under Dr. Daszak's direction was delinquent for many years and inaccurate on its financial reporting requirements involving the NIH grant it used to pass subawards to the WIV.<sup>48</sup> EcoHealth entered several years of reports on July 13, 2020, for subawards to the WIV from EcoHealth. These reports were submitted only after NIH instructed it to do so in an April 2020 email followed by a July 8, 2020, letter of suspension.<sup>49</sup> Because EcoHealth did not report its WIV subawards until July 13, 2020, any search of the USASpending.gov database for awards or subawards to the WIV would not have returned any results until July 13, 2020, effectively hiding EcoHealth's funding to WIV from the public for at least a year.<sup>50</sup>

#### Dr. Daszak's Inaccurate Statements about the WIV

Dr. Daszak has also inaccurately claimed that no live bats were held at the WIV<sup>51</sup> and indicated that he would know if the WIV held live bats because he has collaborated with WIV for 15 years. In December 2020, Dr. Daszak declared that "[t]his is a widely circulated conspiracy theory. This piece describes work I'm the lead on and labs I've collaborated with for 15 years. They DO NOT have live or dead bats in them. There is no evidence anywhere that this happened. It's an error I hope will be corrected,"<sup>52</sup> and that "No BATS were sent to Wuhan lab for genetic analysis of viruses collected in the field. That's not how this science works. We collect bat samples, send them to the lab. We RELEASE bats where we catch them!"<sup>53</sup> However, in his NIH

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<sup>46</sup> *Id.*

<sup>47</sup> Energy and Commerce GOP Expands the COVID-19 Origins Investigation to EcoHealth Alliance (Apr. 16, 2021) *available at* <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/the-covid-19-origins-investigation/>.

<sup>48</sup> Energy and Commerce Republicans, Letter to NIH, COVID-19 Origins Investigation (June 10, 2021) *available at* <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/06.10.21-Letter-to-NIH-Director-Collins.pdf>.

<sup>49</sup> *Id.*

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*

<sup>51</sup> Dylan Housman, *New video shows live bats held in cages at Wuhan Institute of Virology* Daily Caller (June 14, 2021) *available at* [https://www.carolinacoastonline.com/national/article\\_4f44f77c-cd4c-11eb-b1a0-f30ece73e63c.html](https://www.carolinacoastonline.com/national/article_4f44f77c-cd4c-11eb-b1a0-f30ece73e63c.html).

<sup>52</sup> *Id.*

<sup>53</sup> *Function Communications Between EcoHealth Alliance and NIAID*, White Coat Waste Project (Nov. 4, 2021) *available at* <https://www.scribd.com/document/537027808/Gain-Of-Function-Communications-Between-EcoHealth-Alliance-And-NIAID>.

<sup>53</sup> DRASTIC RESEARCH. *The DEFUSE PROJECT Documents*, The DRASTIC Team (Sept. 21, 2021) *available at* <https://drasticresearch.org/2021/09/21/the-defuse-project-documents/>.

<sup>53</sup> Michelle Vu and Vineet Menachery, *Binding and entering: COVID finds a new home*, PLOS PATHOGENS (Aug. 30, 2021) *available at* <https://journals.plos.org/plospathogens/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.ppat.1009857&type=printable>.



grant documents, Dr. Daszak reports that “UNC and WIV will implement an audit trail that tracks animals used in experimental investigations from parents, through birth, **shipment** experimentation, results, QC, and analyses, providing outside researchers the ability to track experiments from conception through publication,” (emphasis added).<sup>54</sup>

Dr. Daszak’s assertion that the WIV did not have dead or live bats is concerning because, based on his 15-year history of collaboration with the WIV and his lead role on projects and his grant documents, there is reason to believe he knew the facts and made inaccurate statements to mislead the public. For example, in June 2021, an official Chinese Academy of Sciences May 2017 video from inside the WIV facility, released during the launch of the new biosafety level four (BSL-4) laboratory, includes video of bats held inside a cage at the WIV.<sup>55</sup> Observations of bat cages were absent from the WHO Joint Mission report and the only report of animals being housed there was in the report annex, which stated that “[t]he animal room in the P4 facility can handle a variety of species, including primate work with SARS-CoV-2.”<sup>56</sup> As a member of the WHO team, Dr. Daszak stated that it was a conspiracy to suggest bats were held at the Wuhan Institute of Virology.<sup>57</sup> In June 2021, Dr. Daszak appeared to retract his earlier denials and admitted that bats could have been housed at the WIV, but he had not asked them.<sup>58</sup>

Another material misrepresentation Dr. Daszak promoted about the WIV was that the BSL-4 had just opened in 2013, the year Dr. Daszak initially applied for the NIH grant that he later used as a vehicle to pay for and transfer intellectual property, such as humanized mice, to the WIV.<sup>59</sup> In his initial grant application documents and throughout his progress reports, Dr. Daszak touted the laboratories’ capabilities at the WIV with his claim that the BSL-4 opened in 2013, when in fact, the BSL-4 was under construction from 2005 to 2015. The BSL-4 was not officially allowed to begin operation for experiments until 2017, four years after Dr. Daszak’s initial declaration that the WIV opened its BSL-4 laboratory in 2013. For example, Dr. Daszak claimed in his 2013 NIH grant application that “[i]n 2013, the first BSL-4 lab in China was opened at this Institute in a purpose-built facility which has been designed with the assistance of the US Centers for Disease Control and the Pasteur Institute.”<sup>60</sup>

### Dr. Daszak’s Provocative Leadership Led to Bipartisan Vote for EcoHealth Federal Funding Ban

On September 23, 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives on a bipartisan basis voted to prohibit making available to EcoHealth funds authorized by the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense

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<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>53</sup> Peter Daszak (@PeterDaszak), Twitter (June 13, 2021, 11:16 AM) *available at* <https://twitter.com/Zulu18360299/status/1404095219507810308>.

<sup>54</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at page 527 *available at* <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>55</sup> Dylan Housman, *New video shows live bats held in cages at Wuhan Institute of Virology* Daily Caller (June 14, 2021) *available at* [https://www.carolinacoastonline.com/national/article\\_4f44f77c-cd4c-11eb-b1a0-f30ece73e63c.html](https://www.carolinacoastonline.com/national/article_4f44f77c-cd4c-11eb-b1a0-f30ece73e63c.html).

<sup>56</sup> *Id.*

<sup>57</sup> *Id.*

<sup>58</sup> *Id.*

<sup>59</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at pages 17 through 18 *available at* <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>60</sup> *Id.*

Authorization Act.<sup>61</sup> This proposal was based on a bill in which the sponsor noted that one of its justifications was Dr. Daszak's misconduct.<sup>62</sup> The bipartisan vote should be seen as reflecting concerns about Dr. Daszak's conduct.

### A Scientific Community Request for Removal of Dr. Daszak as EcoHealth President

On September 30, 2021, an international group of scientists and other experts wrote to the EcoHealth Board of Directors calling for Dr. Daszak's removal as President of EcoHealth.<sup>63</sup> This group noted:

Unfortunately, the driving force behind this unwelcome media and scientific attention stems from the actions and behaviour of EHA President Dr. Peter Daszak, whether in his official capacity as President of EcoHealth Alliance, as a scientific authority, or as a key member of the WHO-China mission investigating the origins of COVID-19. Dr. Daszak has now been proven to have concealed several extreme situations of conflict of interest, withheld critical information and misled public opinion by expressing falsehoods.<sup>64</sup>

### Dr. Daszak's Responsibility for Persistent NIH Suspension of Grant to EcoHealth

Dr. Daszak serves as the PI of NIH grants and is the President of EcoHealth. In these capacities, it would appear Dr. Daszak has violated NAM's Code of Conduct Rule Two multiple times.<sup>65</sup> For more than a year, EcoHealth has not fully complied with NIH's July 8, 2020, request for information that resulted in a suspension of EcoHealth's NIH grant for more than a year. As far as we are aware, it is unprecedented for a PI and a PI's institution to refuse to cooperate with the NIH for more than a year.

### Numerous Official Representations to NIH by Dr. Daszak Are Contradicted by Documentation

Further, on October 20, 2021, the NIH informed us by letter that, under Dr. Daszak's leadership, EcoHealth had violated the terms of its grant by not stopping a risky experiment and

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<sup>61</sup> Congressman Guy Reschenthaler, *House Passes Reschenthaler Amendment Defunding EcoHealth Alliance*, Press Releases (Sept. 23, 2021) available at <https://reschenthaler.house.gov/media/press-releases/house-passes-reschenthaler-amendment-defunding-ecohealth-alliance>. ("In February 2020, the head of EcoHealth Alliance, Peter Daszak, led an unsubstantiated letter denying the possibility of COVID-19 originating in a lab. He [Dr. Daszak] went so far as to condemn any alternative explanation to his natural origins narrative, such as a lab accident at nearby WIV, as "conspiracy theory.")

<sup>62</sup> Congressman Guy Reschenthaler, *Reschenthaler Introduces Bill to Defund EcoHealth Alliance*, Press Releases (Feb. 1, 2021) available at <https://reschenthaler.house.gov/media/press-releases/reschenthaler-introduces-bill-defund-ecohealth-alliance>.

<sup>63</sup> Fabien Colombo, et al, *Call for the Board of EcoHealth Alliance to remove Dr. Peter Daszak as President of their organization*, ResearchGate (Sept. 20, 2021) available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355020382\\_Call\\_for\\_the\\_Board\\_of\\_EcoHealth\\_Alliance\\_to\\_remove\\_Dr\\_Peter\\_Daszak\\_as\\_President\\_of\\_their\\_organization](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355020382_Call_for_the_Board_of_EcoHealth_Alliance_to_remove_Dr_Peter_Daszak_as_President_of_their_organization).

<sup>64</sup> *Id.*

<sup>65</sup> Under Rule Two of the Code of Conduct, "NAM members are expected to conduct themselves lawfully...to comply with public and institutional rules regulating their professional practice; and to be committed to the responsible conduct, review, presentation, and publication of research." National Academies of Sciences, Medicine and Engineering, *Standing Committee on Emerging Infectious Diseases and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Health Threats*, Committee (last accessed Nov. 8, 2021) available at <https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/standing-committee-on-emerging-infectious-diseases-and-21st-century-health-threats#sectionCommittee>.

notifying the NIH.<sup>66</sup> In his October 26, 2021, response letter to NIH, Dr. Daszak wrote that EcoHealth complied with NIH's grant policy requirement to notify the NIH promptly about experiments where a test virus generated greater than one log of virus growth compared to the growth from the control virus.<sup>67</sup> Dr. Daszak explained that the experiment in question was conducted in Year Four, and that EcoHealth met the notification requirement by reporting partial experiment results in his Year Four progress report submitted in April 2018.

However, Dr. Daszak's June 8, 2016, letter to NIH stated that the one log growth policy proposed would involve stopping the experiment and notifying NIH, and then deciding appropriate paths forward. He wrote:

Finally, should any of these recombinants show evidence of enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log in cells expressing the human, bat, mouse or other DPP4 receptor over wildtype parental backbone MERS-CoV strain or grow more efficiently in human airway epithelial cells, **we will immediately: i) stop all experiments with the mutant, ii) inform our NIAID Program Officer and the UNC IBC of these results and iii) participate in decision making trees to decide appropriate paths forward.** (Emphasis added).<sup>68</sup>

The letter continued:

Finally, as proposed above for MERS-like viruses, should any of these recombinants show evidence of enhanced virus growth greater than 1 log in cells expressing the human, bat, mouse, or civet receptor over wildtype parental backbone SARS-CoV strain or grow more efficiently in airway epithelial cells, **we will immediately: i) stop all experiments with the mutant, ii) inform our NIAID Program Officer and the UNC IBC of these results and iii) participate in decision making trees to decide appropriate paths forward.** (Emphasis added).<sup>69</sup>

This is at odds with what EcoHealth actually did in April 2018, completing the experiment and then notifying NIAID in a progress report.

Further, a recently released email produced by NIH in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) court order raises serious doubts about Dr. Daszak's October 26, 2021, explanation to the NIH on his reason for not officially submitting the EcoHealth Year Five progress

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<sup>66</sup> Energy and Commerce GOP Leaders Statement on Documents Released by NIH (Oct. 20, 2021) *available at* <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/energy-commerce-gop-leaders-statement-on-documents-released-by-the-nih/>.

<sup>67</sup> Betsy McKay and Amy Dockser Marcus, *Coronavirus Study of Bats in China Met NIH Grant Requirements, EcoHealth Says*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (Oct. 28, 2021) *available at* [https://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/EcoHealth%20letter%20\(1\).pdf](https://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/EcoHealth%20letter%20(1).pdf).

<sup>68</sup> Andrew Kerr, *Gain of Function Communications Between EcoHealth Alliance and NIAID*, White Coat Waste Project (Nov. 4, 2021) *available at* <https://www.scribd.com/document/537027808/Gain-Of-Function-Communications-Between-EcoHealth-Alliance-And-NIAID>. Please note also that Dr. Daszak erroneously implied by his mention of the "UNC [University of North Carolina] IBC [Institutional Biosafety Committee], that the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill would conduct the experiment when in fact the experiment was conducted by the WIV."

<sup>69</sup> *Id.*

until August 3, 2021, two years late after its required submission date. The Year Five progress report, as delineated on the report itself, was supposed to describe the work conducted for the project from June 2018 to May 2019, which is a critical timeframe for understanding the origins of the pandemic. According to NIH, the progress report was due by September 30, 2019. However, the copy of the EcoHealth Year Five progress report NIH provided to *The Intercept* was dated August 3, 2021, delinquent by two years.

In his October 26, 2021, letter to NIH, Dr. Daszak claimed that EcoHealth tried to upload the progress report on time in July 2019 but was locked out of the NIH reporting system on July 24, 2019, the date when NIH renewed the EcoHealth grant. However, emails recently posted by the White Coat Waste Project contradict this claim. An email dated July 24, 2019, from Aleksei Chmura of EcoHealth to NIH grants official Tseday Gima said that the renewal had been approved as of July 24, 2019:

I see that now we may commence our Year Five report in eRA Commons' RPPR. Peter [Daszak] just initiated our Year Five report. We were already prepared to submit this and expect to have everything uploaded and submitted by the end of July. Will this be OK and is there a due date?<sup>70</sup>

However, the email made no mention of being locked out of the system.

#### Dr. Daszak Withheld Research Plans to Insert Furin Cleavage Site into Bat Coronavirus

Dr. Daszak's credibility has been undermined by the recent whistleblower disclosure of his bat coronavirus research project rejected proposal he submitted in March 2018 to Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), entitled *Project DEFUSE: Defusing the Threat of Bat-borne Coronaviruses*.<sup>71</sup> DARPA rejected the proposal in 2018, which included detailed plans to fund research that, among other risky experiment techniques, would insert a furin cleavage site into a bat coronavirus genetic sequence. The SARS-CoV-2 virus is a betacoronavirus that, features a furin cleavage site in the spike protein, a characteristic that has never previously been detected in this family of coronaviruses.<sup>72</sup> The function of the furin cleavage site in SARS-CoV-2 is significant because it is the essential mechanism for the virus entry into human lungs.<sup>73</sup> From the start of the pandemic until the disclosure of his rejected DARPA grant project proposal, Dr. Daszak publicly ridiculed suggestions that any scientist would pursue adding a furin cleavage site into a bat coronavirus.<sup>74</sup> For example, only a few months into the start of the pandemic, Dr. Daszak

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<sup>70</sup> Emails posted by White Coat Waste Project at 302, Andrew Kerr, *Gain of Function Communications Between EcoHealth Alliance and NIAID*, White Coat Waste Project (Nov. 4, 2021) available at <https://www.scribd.com/document/537027808/Gain-Of-Function-Communications-Between-EcoHealth-Alliance-And-NIAID>.

<sup>71</sup> DRASTIC RESEARCH. *The DEFUSE PROJECT Documents*, The DRASTIC Team (Sept. 21, 2021) available at <https://drasticresearch.org/2021/09/21/the-defuse-project-documents/>.

<sup>72</sup> Michelle Vu and Vineet Menachery, *Binding and entering: COVID finds a new home*, PLOS PATHOGENS (Aug. 30, 2021) available at <https://journals.plos.org/plospathogens/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.ppat.1009857&type=printable>.

<sup>73</sup> *Id.*

<sup>74</sup> Peter Daszak (@PeterDaszak), Twitter (May 11, 2020, 8:06 PM) available at <https://twitter.com/peterdaszak/status/1259998416148594691?lang=en>.

See also Daniel Engber and Adam Federman, *The Lab-Leak Debate Just Got Even Messier*, The Atlantic (Sept. 24, 2001) available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2021/09/lab-leak-pandemic-origins-even-messier/620209/>.

tweeted that “[t]he presence of a furin cleavage site in SARS-CoV-2 glycoprotein is widely touted by conspiracy theorists as evidence of lab culture or bioengineering.”

### Dr. Daszak Violated EcoHealth Data-Sharing Commitments

Recent EcoHealth grant documents were forced out into the open by multiple court orders from FOIA lawsuits against the NIH. These documents reveal that EcoHealth made several commitments to share research data. EcoHealth’s R01 renewal document stated that EcoHealth “will deposit all genetic sequences in the NIH data bank, NCBI GenBank, as soon as possible after data are generated (including ensuring quality control), **and no later than 6 months**, so that they are readily available to the scientific community,” (emphasis added). EcoHealth also stated that all datasets and associated meta-data will be additionally submitted to Virus Pathogen Resource (ViPR), and that all computational models of biological processes will be made available on the BioModels Database.<sup>75</sup>

In addition to NIH grant terms, EcoHealth, under Dr. Daszak, made other commitments on data-sharing that do not appear to have been honored. In January 2020, EcoHealth made a commitment to share “interim and final research data relating to the outbreak, together with protocols and standards used to collect the data, as rapidly and widely as possible – including with public health and research communities and the WHO” relevant to the COVID-19 outbreak.<sup>76</sup> In 2016, EcoHealth signed a statement on data sharing in public health emergencies.<sup>77</sup> The NAM was also a signatory to this statement. The statement declared that “[i]n the context of a public health emergency of international concern, there is an imperative on all parties to make any information available that might have value in combatting the crisis.” In a February 5, 2020, article Dr. Daszak co-authored with two EcoHealth employees, with a copywrite by the Chinese Medical Association Publishing House, he boasted about the data in his possession related to the genetic sequence of SARS-CoV-2:

At the time of writing, we have detailed information on its relationship to other bat coronaviruses, many of which were discovered in a collaboration among EcoHealth Alliance, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, and Duke NUS. We also have data from experimental cell line infections, on the clinical findings, the epidemiology of viral transmission, and on its spread to other countries.<sup>78</sup>

In addition to genomic sequence data and clinical data, Dr. Daszak has access to other research data relevant to our COVID-19 origins investigation. Even as recently as June 2021, when his team was a 2021 Finalist in The Trinity Challenge financial award competition,<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>EcoHealth grant documents at page 526 available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>76</sup> Wellcome Trust, *Sharing research data and findings relevant to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak*, Press Release (Jan. 30, 3030) available at <https://wellcome.org/press-release/sharing-research-data-and-findings-relevant-novel-coronavirus-ncov-outbreak>.

<sup>77</sup> Wellcome Trust, *Statement on data sharing in public health emergencies*, Press Release (Jan. 31, 2016) available at <https://wellcome.org/press-release/statement-data-sharing-public-health-emergencies>.

<sup>78</sup> Daszak, et. al, *A strategy to prevent future epidemics similar to the 2019-nCoV outbreak*, Biosafety and Health (Feb. 5, 2020) available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7144510/pdf/main.pdf>.

<sup>79</sup> The Trinity Challenge, *Fine-Scale Risk Mapping to Identify and Disrupt Viral Spillover*, TTC Finalist 2021 (June 18, 2021) available at <https://thetrinitychallenge.org/awards/finalists/>.

Dr. Daszak publicly discussed his unique access to data in China, through his partnerships in which he can access human surveillance data through Hong Kong University and the China CDC, Southeast Asia mobility data through Facebook and mobility data throughout China through TenCent.<sup>80</sup> Of note, The Trinity Challenge is a financial award competition created in 2020, of which the Global Virome Project is a founding member and Dr. Daszak holds leadership roles in the Global Virome Project.<sup>81</sup> EcoHealth, under Dr. Daszak's direction, has withheld information and data pertinent to investigations into the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic, a public health emergency.

Dr. Daszak's research plans at the WIV are revealed in EcoHealth NIH grant documents to sequence approximately 1,000 bat samples per year. However, there does not seem to be anything close to 1,000 sequences that have been released from this work.<sup>82</sup> This suggests that Dr. Daszak is preventing disclosure of a substantial amount of unpublished data pertinent to an investigation into the origins of the pandemic, even after the recent EcoHealth submission of some unpublished information to NIH.

In his October 26, 2021, response letter to NIH's request for Dr. Daszak's unpublished experiment data collected through his NIH-funded research, Dr. Daszak explains that he is unable to provide some of the data to NIH because "[we] are now going through the approval process by the Chinese authorities so that they can be uploaded to Genbank at the earliest possible opportunity."<sup>83</sup> It is perverse that Dr. Daszak has ceded control to the Chinese Communist government over U.S. taxpayer funded data needed to investigate a pandemic. It raises profound questions about the true nature of the purported "partnership" between EcoHealth Alliance and the WIV that Dr. Daszak promoted to U.S. government officials.

#### Dr. Daszak Failed to Ensure WIV Lab Safety Compliance

Further, NIH found that EcoHealth, under the direction of Dr. Daszak as the PI of NIAID's grant, failed to manage biosafety issues of its subgrantee, the WIV, as noted by the NIH in its July 8, 2020, suspension letter to EcoHealth:

As the grantee, EcoHealth Alliance was required to "monitor the activities of the subrecipient as necessary to ensure that the subaward is used for authorized purposes, in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subaward . . ." 45 C.F.R. § 75.352(d). We have concerns that WIV has not satisfied safety requirements under the award, and that EcoHealth Alliance has not satisfied its obligations to monitor the activities of its subrecipient to ensure compliance.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *Id.*

<sup>81</sup> The Global Virome Project, *GVP is a Founding Member of THE TRINITY CHALLENGE* (Oct. 2020) available at <https://www.globalviromeproject.org/partnerships>.

<sup>82</sup> EcoHealth grant documents at page 458, available at <https://theintercept.com/document/2021/09/08/understanding-the-risk-of-bat-coronavirus-emergence/>.

<sup>83</sup> Betsy McKay and Amy Dockser Marcus, *Coronavirus Study of Bats in China Met NIH Grant Requirements, EcoHealth Says*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (Oct. 28, 2021) available at [https://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/EcoHealth%20letter%20\(1\).pdf](https://s.wsj.net/public/resources/documents/EcoHealth%20letter%20(1).pdf).

<sup>84</sup> House Committee on Oversight and Reform Republicans, *NIH July 8, 2020 Letter to Ecohealth Alliance* (May 2021) available at <https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Eco-Health-Lab-letter-July-8.pdf>.

Dr. Daszak's October 26, 2021, letter to NIH, suggests that EcoHealth only reported the humanized mice experiment to NIH after completion of the experiment, instead of during the experiment when there were about three more logs of enhanced virus growth in one of the chimeras compared to the wild strain two days post-infection in a two-week experiment, well past the one log notification policy. If that is the case, this reinforces concerns that Dr. Daszak as the PI did not exercise adequate oversight with real-time awareness of WIV research in case he had to notify the NIH.

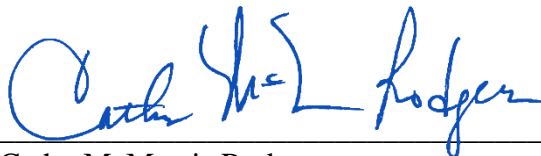
EcoHealth, under Dr. Daszak, and WIV openly engaged in coronavirus research in sub-standard biosafety levels. For example, in 2016, the WIV and EcoHealth Alliance published a study partially funded by the NIAID grant that noted that the coronavirus experiment was conducted in a BSL-2 laboratory level, which follows the safety procedures similar to a dentist's office. The experiment is described as the following:

The SL-CoV WIV1 strain (GenBank accession number KF367457) and other viruses were propagated as described previously. Sendai virus (SeV) strain Cantell (kindly provided by Hanzhong Wang) was propagated in 10-day-old embryonated chicken eggs at 37°C for 48 h (24). All experiments using live virus was conducted under biosafety level 2 (BSL2) conditions.<sup>85</sup>

In light of Dr. Daszak's concerning conduct, we urge the NAM to suspend immediately Dr. Daszak's status and affiliation and proceed with an investigation into his conduct to determine whether he should be expelled. Further, we urge the NAM to enlist an independent review of all NAM and NASEM projects and articles in which Dr. Daszak has been involved to determine the extent of his influence and update each with appropriate disclaimers and determinations of whether or not the related findings should be reevaluated or retracted. If you have any questions, please contact Alan Slobodin or Diane Cutler of the Minority Committee staff.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



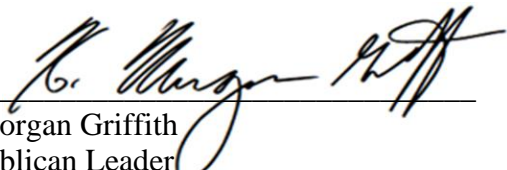
Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Republican Leader  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Brett Guthrie  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Health

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<sup>85</sup> Lei-Ping Zeng, et al, Bat Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Like Coronavirus WIV1 Encodes an Extra Accessory Protein, ORFA, *Involved in Modulation of the Host Immune Response*, Journal of Virology, (Jul. 15, 2016) available at <https://archive.ph/dQRTH#selection-1225.0-1245.93>.



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H. Morgan Griffith  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

CC: The Honorable Frank Pallone, Chairman  
The Honorable Anna Eshoo, Chair, Subcommittee on Health  
The Honorable Diana DeGette, Chair, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations