

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 7, 2022

The Honorable Sethuraman Panchanathan
Director
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Dear Director Panchanathan:

We write regarding the National Science Foundation's (NSF) recent decision to award a \$1 million grant for a project that will include EcoHealth Alliance Inc. (EcoHealth) for Predictive Intelligence for Pandemic Prevention (PIPP) Phase 1.¹ While EcoHealth is not the primary recipient, the organization is expected to receive \$90,000 from the grant. According to government records, it is our understanding that NSF plans to provide an additional grant in the amount of \$263,801 to EcoHealth in January 2023.² These funding announcements are deeply concerning given EcoHealth's lengthy history of reporting failures and collaboration with the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV).

As you may know, the WIV is a Chinese Communist Party (CCP) laboratory and the likely origin of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2017, the WIV has engaged in classified research with the Chinese military and has a history of safety concerns at their high-containment laboratory.³ In August of 2021, the Director of National Intelligence concluded in their COVID-19 Origins assessment that “one Intelligence Community element assesses with moderate confidence that the first human infection with SARS-CoV-2 most likely was the result of a laboratory-associated incident, probably involving experimentation, animal handling, or sampling by the Wuhan Institute of Virology.”⁴ It is worth noting that the National Intelligence Council (NIC) and four other intelligence agencies assessed with low confidence that the pandemic had natural origins, while three other agencies could not reach a conclusion on either theory.⁵ The NIC agreed that a lab leak and natural origins were plausible scenarios for causing the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) acknowledged that EcoHealth provided \$1.1 million to the WIV from October 2009 to May 2019.⁶ This funding utilized gain-of-function (GOF) research to create a hybrid, man-made virus by inserting a spiked protein from a wild coronavirus into a mouse-adapted SARS-CoV backbone, which could infect human

¹ <https://www.ecohealthalliance.org/2022/08/ecohealth-alliance-and-boston-university-awarded-1-million-grant>

² https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_2225023_4900

³ <https://gop-foreignaffairs.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Final-Minority-Report-on-the-Origins-of-the-COVID-19-Global-Pandemic-Including-the-Roles-of-the-CCP-and-WHO-9.20.20-Coverpage.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/Unclassified-Summary-of-Assessment-on-COVID-19-Origins.pdf>

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ <https://reschenthaler.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/reschenthaler.house.gov//files/Rep.%20Reschenthaler%20EcoHealth%20RESPONSE.pdf>

airways by binding to the ACE2⁷. It is worth noting that in October 2014, the Obama Administration paused GOF research activities and funding.⁸

According to government records, this is not the only time EcoHealth transferred taxpayer dollars to the WIV. Between 2015 and 2019, the WIV received approximately \$598,500 from EcoHealth for a National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases-funded study on the risk of bat coronavirus emergence.⁹

In addition to funding a CCP laboratory with connection to classified Chinese military research, EcoHealth and its president, Peter Daszak, have a history of failing to comply with federal law and grant requirements. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Peter Daszak led an unsubstantiated, coordinated effort to deflect blame from the WIV and EcoHealth.¹⁰ In a January 2022 letter, the National Institute of Health (NIH) wrote, “EcoHealth’s inability or unwillingness to provide...documentation to us upon request raises questions about the quality and rigor of EcoHealth’s record-keeping.”¹¹ Further, the NIH stated, “EcoHealth has demonstrated a history of failure to comply with several elements of the terms and conditions of grant awards.”¹²

Due to their failings, dishonesty, and collaboration with the CCP, Congress has taken bipartisan action to investigate and restrict funding to EcoHealth. For example, Congress passed, and President Biden signed into law, language prohibiting the Department of Defense funding from being used to support EcoHealth grants for work performed in China in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (P.L. 117-81).

Given the strong bipartisan opposition to EcoHealth’s research and the federal government’s noted compliance failures by the organization, we request that you end this grant relationship with EcoHealth to protect taxpayer funding and end dangerous experiments that jeopardize public health. Additionally, we respectfully request answers in writing to the following questions:

1. Did NSF consider EcoHealth’s collaboration with the WIV when awarding the organization multiple grant opportunities?
2. Will any NSF funding be used for research in China or collaboration with researchers in China?
3. Does EcoHealth plan to use this funding to study coronaviruses or to conduct gain-of-function experiments?
4. How does NSF plan to ensure EcoHealth administers the funding by the grant guidelines and reporting requirements after past failures?
5. Is EcoHealth a current recipient or sub-awardee for any other NSF grants? If so, could you identify those projects and the amount EcoHealth is expected to be paid from each?

⁷ <https://gop-foreignaffairs.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Final-Minority-Report-on-the-Origins-of-the-COVID-19-Global-Pandemic-Including-the-Roles-of-the-CCP-and-WHO-9.20.20-Coverpage.pdf>

⁸ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/10/17/doing-diligence-assess-risks-and-benefits-life-sciences-gain-function-research>

⁹ https://www.usaspending.gov/award/ASST_NON_R01AI110964_7529

¹⁰ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/nih-presses-u-s-nonprofit-for-information-on-wuhan-virology-lab-11597829400>

¹¹ <https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/January-2022-To-EcoHealth-R01AI110964-final1.pdf>

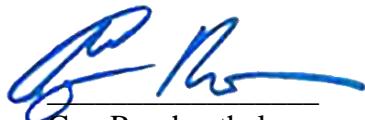
¹² *Id.*

We appreciate your consideration of our request. We look forward to your prompt response.

Very respectfully,



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



Guy Reschenthaler
Member of Congress



Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator



Lisa McClain
Member of Congress



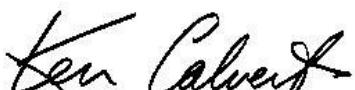
Tom Cottom
United States Senator



Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress



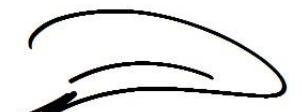
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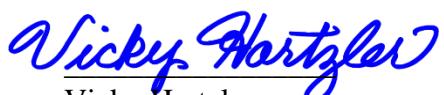
Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
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Michael Guest
Member of Congress



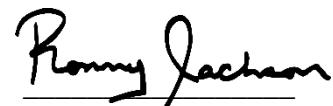
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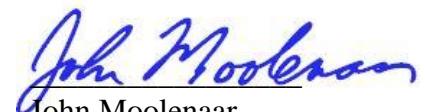
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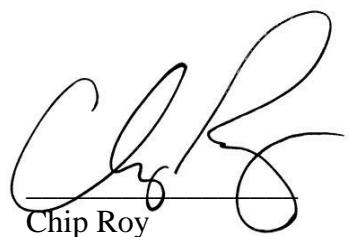
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Scott Perry
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Bill Posey
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Chip Roy
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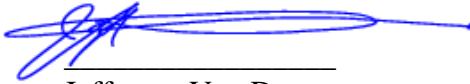
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