

Press Release

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# FINAL REPORT: COVID Select Concludes 2-Year Investigation, Issues 500+ Page Final Report on Lessons Learned and the Path Forward

*The single most thorough review of the pandemic conducted to date*

WASHINGTON – Today, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic concluded its two-year investigation into the COVID-19 pandemic and released a final report titled *“After Action Review of the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Lessons Learned and a Path Forward.”* The final report will serve as a road map for Congress, the Executive Branch, and the private sector to prepare for and respond to future pandemics. Since February 2023, the Select Subcommittee has sent more than 100 investigative letters, conducted more than 30 transcribed interviews and depositions, held 25 hearings and meetings, and reviewed more than one million pages of documents. Members and staff have exposed high-level corruption in America’s public health system, confirmed the most likely origin of the pandemic, held COVID-19 bad actors publicly accountable, fostered bipartisan consensus on consequential pandemic-era issues, and more. This 520-page final report details all findings of the Select Subcommittee’s investigation.

<https://oversight.house.gov/>

*“This work will help the United States, and the world, predict the next pandemic, prepare for the next pandemic, protect ourselves from the next pandemic, and hopefully prevent the next pandemic. Members of the 119th Congress should continue and build off this work, there is more information to find and honest actions to be taken,” wrote Chairman Wenstrup in a letter to Congress. “The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a distrust in leadership. Trust is earned. Accountability, transparency, honesty, and integrity will regain this trust. A future pandemic requires a whole of America response managed by those without personal benefit or bias. We can always do better, and for the sake of future generations of Americans, we must. It can be done.”*

On Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 10:30am, the Select Subcommittee will hold a markup of the final report and officially submit the report to the Congressional record. Ahead of the markup, the Select Subcommittee will also release additional supporting materials and recommendations.

The full, 520-page final report can be found **here** (<https://oversight.house.gov/report/after-action-review-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-the-lessons-learned-and-a-path-forward/>). A

summary of the information can be found below:

## **The Origins of the Coronavirus Pandemic, Including but Not Limited to the Federal Government’s Funding of Gain-of-Function Research**

**COVID-19 ORIGIN:** COVID-19 most likely emerged from a laboratory in Wuhan, China. The FIVE strongest arguments in favor of the “lab leak” theory include:

- 1) The virus possesses a biological characteristic that is not found in nature.

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- 2) Data shows that all COVID-19 cases stem from a single introduction into humans. This runs contrary to previous pandemics where there were multiple spillover events.
  - 3) Wuhan is home to China's foremost SARS research lab, which has a history of conducting gain-of-function research at inadequate biosafety levels.
  - 4) Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) researchers were sick with a COVID-like virus in the fall of 2019, months before COVID-19 was discovered at the wet market.
  - 5) By nearly all measures of science, if there was evidence of a natural origin it would have already surfaced.

**PROXIMAL ORIGIN PUBLICATION:** "The Proximal Origin of SARS-CoV-2" publication — which was used repeatedly by public health officials and the media to discredit the lab leak theory — was prompted by Dr. Fauci to push the preferred narrative that COVID-19 originated in nature.

**GAIN-OF-FUNCTION RESEARCH:** A lab-related incident involving gain-of-function research is most likely the origin of COVID-19. Current government mechanisms for overseeing this dangerous gain-of-function research are incomplete, severely convoluted, and lack global applicability.

**ECOHEALTH ALLIANCE INC. (ECOHEALTH):** EcoHealth — under the leadership of Dr. Peter Daszak — used U.S. taxpayer dollars to facilitate dangerous gain-of-function research in Wuhan, China. After the Select Subcommittee released evidence of EcoHealth violating the terms of its National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) commenced official debarment proceedings and suspended all funding to EcoHealth.

- New evidence also shows that the Department of Justice (DOJ) has opened an investigation into EcoHealth's pandemic-era activities.

**NIH FAILURES:** NIH's procedures for funding and overseeing potentially dangerous research are deficient, unreliable, and pose a serious threat to both public health and national security. Further, NIH fostered an environment that promoted evading federal record keeping laws — as seen through the actions of Dr. David Morens and "FOIA Lady" Marge Moore.

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### **The Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Transparency of the Use of Taxpayer Funds and Relief Programs to Address the Coronavirus Pandemic, Including Any Reports of Waste, Fraud, or Abuse**

**COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING:** Federal and state governments had significant lapses in coordination, were unprepared to oversee the allocation of COVID-19 relief funds, and failed to sufficiently identify waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars during the pandemic.

**PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM:** The Paycheck Protection Program — which offered essential relief to Americans in the form of loans that could be forgiven if the funds were used to offset pandemic-era hardships — was rife with fraudulent claims resulting in at least \$64 billion of taxpayers' dollars lost to fraudsters and criminals.

**FRAUDULENT UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS:** Fraudsters cost the American taxpayer more than \$191 billion dollars by taking advantage of the federal government's unemployment system and exploiting individuals' personally identifiable information.

**SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA) FAILURES:** \$200 million of taxpayers' dollars were lost as a result of the SBA's inability to conduct proper oversight, implement internal controls, and ensure fraud protection measures were enacted.

**TRANSNATIONAL FRAUD:** At least half of the taxpayer dollars lost in COVID-19 relief programs were stolen by international fraudsters.

**COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDING OVERSIGHT:** Expanding relief programs that lacked proper oversight functions exposed severe vulnerabilities in the system and paved the way for fraudsters, international criminals, and foreign adversaries to take advantage of taxpayers.

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**The Implementation or Effectiveness of Any Federal Law or Regulation Applied, Enacted, or Under Consideration to Address the Coronavirus Pandemic and Prepare for Future Pandemics**

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO):** The WHO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was an abject failure because it caved to pressure from the Chinese Communist Party and placed China's political interests ahead of its international duties. Further, the WHO's newest effort to solve the problems exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic — via a "Pandemic Treaty" — may harm the United States.

**SOCIAL DISTANCING:** The "6 feet apart" social distancing recommendation — which shut down schools and small business across the country — was arbitrary and not based on science. During closed door testimony, Dr. Fauci testified that the guidance, "sort of just appeared."

**MASK MANDATES:** There was no conclusive evidence that masks effectively protected Americans from COVID-19. Public health officials flipped-flopped on the efficacy of masks without providing Americans scientific data — causing a massive uptick in public distrust.

**LOCKDOWNS:** Prolonged lockdowns caused immeasurable harm to not only the American economy, but also to the mental and physical health of Americans, with a particularly negative effect on younger citizens. Rather than prioritizing the protection of the most vulnerable populations, federal and state government policies forced millions of Americans to forgo crucial elements of a healthy and financially sound life.

**NEW YORK PANDEMIC FAILURES:** Former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's March 25 Order — which forced nursing homes to accept COVID-19 positive patients — was medical malpractice. Evidence shows that Mr. Cuomo and his Administration worked to cover up the tragic aftermath of their policy decisions in an apparent effort to shield themselves from accountability.

- Evidence suggests Mr. Cuomo knowingly and willfully made false statements to the Select Subcommittee on numerous occasions about material aspects of New York's COVID-19 nursing home disaster and the ensuing cover-up. The Select Subcommittee referred Mr. Cuomo to the DOJ for criminal prosecution.

**TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS:** President Trump's rapidly implemented travel restrictions saved lives. During Dr. Fauci's transcribed interview, he unequivocally agreed with every travel restriction issued by the Trump Administration. This testimony runs counter to the public narrative that the Trump Administration's travel restrictions were xenophobic.

**COVID-19 MISINFORMATION:** Public health officials often spread misinformation through

conflicting messaging, kneejerk reactions, and a lack of transparency. In the most egregious examples of pervasive misinformation campaigns, off-label drug use and the lab leak theory were unjustly demonized by the federal government.

- The Biden Administration even employed undemocratic and likely unconstitutional methods — including pressuring social media companies to censor certain COVID-19 content — to fight what it deemed misinformation.

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### **The Development of Vaccines and Treatments, and the Development and Implementation of Vaccination Policies for Federal Employees and Members of the Armed Forces**

**OPERATION WARP SPEED:** President-elect Trump's Operation Warp Speed — which encouraged the rapid development and authorization of the COVID-19 vaccine — was highly successful and helped save millions of lives.

**COVID-19 VACCINE:** Contrary to what was promised, the COVID-19 vaccine did not stop the spread or transmission of the virus.

**RUSHED COVID-19 VACCINE APPROVAL:** The FDA rushed approval of the COVID-19 vaccine in order to meet the Biden Administration's arbitrary mandate timeline. Two leading FDA scientists warned their colleagues about the dangers of rushing the vaccine approval process and the likelihood of adverse events. They were ignored, and days later, the Biden Administration mandated the vaccine.

**VACCINE MANDATES:** Vaccine mandates were not supported by science and caused more harm than good. The Biden Administration coerced healthy Americans into compliance with COVID-19 vaccine mandates that trampled individual freedoms, harmed military readiness, and disregarded medical freedom to force a novel vaccine on millions of Americans without sufficient evidence to support their policy decisions.

**NATURAL IMMUNITY:** Public health officials engaged in a coordinated effort to ignore natural immunity — which is acquired through previous COVID-19 infection — when developing vaccine guidance and mandates.

**VACCINE INJURY REPORTING SYSTEM:** Vaccine injury reporting systems created confusion, failed to properly inform the American public about vaccine injuries, and deteriorated public trust in vaccine safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**VACCINE INJURY COMPENSATION:** The government is failing to efficiently, fairly, and transparently adjudicate claims for the COVID-19 vaccine injured.

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### **The Economic Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic and Associated Government Response on Individuals, Communities, Small Businesses, Health Care Providers, States, and Local Government Entities**

**BUSINESS IMPACTS:** Federal and state governments imposed mandatory lockdowns that were the primary cause of temporary and permanent business closures. More than 160,000 businesses closed due to the pandemic — with 60% of those closures classified as permanent. For the businesses that stayed or re-opened, the lack of supply chain diversity exacerbated pandemic-era challenges and deepened existing disparities.

**HEALTHCARE IMPACTS:** America's healthcare system was severely damaged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Patients experienced a decreased quality-of-care, longer wait times, shorter medical appointments, and missed diagnoses.

**WORKER IMPACTS:** Unemployment rates surged to levels not seen since the Great Depression. Overly broad mitigation measures — including the now debunked “6 feet apart” guidance — disproportionately impacted sectors with low wage earners.

**FEDERAL RESERVE:** The Federal Reserve's aggressive, early, and unprecedented response to the COVID-19 pandemic prevented a severe economic downturn. This continued approach also contributed to staggering inflation.

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### **The Societal Impact of Decisions to Close Schools, How the Decisions Were Made and Whether There is Evidence of Widespread Learning Loss or Other Negative Effects as a Result of These Decisions**

**COVID-19 SCHOOL CLOSURES:** The “science” never justified prolonged school closures. Children were unlikely to contribute to the spread of COVID-19 or suffer severe illness or mortality. Instead, as a result of school closures, children experienced historic learning loss, higher rates of psychological distress, and decreased physical well-being.

**CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) INFLUENCE:** The Biden Administration's CDC broke precedent and provided a political teachers organization with access to its scientific school reopening guidance. Former CDC Director Rochelle Walensky asked the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to provide specific language for the guidance and even went so far as to accept numerous edits made by AFT.

**AFT INFLUENCE:** Schools remained closed longer than necessary because of AFT's political interference in the CDC's school reopening guidance. AFT is a political union, not a scientific organization, that advocated for mitigation efforts that prolonged school closures — including an automatic closure “trigger.”

- Testimony revealed that AFT President Weingarten had a direct telephone line to contact former CDC Director Walensky.

**LONGTERM IMPACTS:** Standardized test scores show that children lost decades worth of academic progress as a result of COVID-19 school closures. Mental and physical health concerns also skyrocketed — with suicide attempts by 12-17 year-aged girls rising 51%.

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### **Cooperation By the Executive Branch and Others with Congress, the Inspectors General, the Government Accountability Office, and Others in Connection with Oversight of the Preparedness for and Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic**

**HHS OBSTRUCTION:** The Biden Administration's HHS engaged in a multi-year campaign of delay, confusion, and non-responsiveness in an attempt to obstruct the Select Subcommittee's investigation and hide evidence that could incriminate or embarrass senior public health officials. It appears that HHS even intentionally under-resourced its component that responds to legislative oversight requests.

**ECOHEALTH OBSTRUCTION:** EcoHealth President Dr. Peter Daszak obstructed the Select

Subcommittee's investigation by providing publicly available information, instructing his staff to reduce the scope and pace of productions, and doctoring documents before releasing them to the public. Further, Dr. Daszak provided false statements to Congress.

**DR. DAVID MORENS:** Dr. Fauci's Senior Advisor, Dr. David Morens, deliberately obstructed the Select Subcommittee's investigation, likely lied to Congress on multiple occasions, unlawfully deleted federal COVID-19 records, and shared nonpublic information about NIH grant processes with EcoHealth President Dr. Peter Daszak.

**NEW YORK OBSTRUCTION:** New York's Executive Chamber — led presently by Governor Kathy Hochul — redacted documents, offered numerous illegitimate privilege claims, and withheld thousands of documents without an apparent legal basis to obstruct the Select Subcommittee's investigation into former Governor Cuomo's pandemic-era failures.

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**Wenstrup Delivers Remarks at COVID Select's Final Report Markup, Releases Recommendations for a Path Forward**

December 4, 2024

(<https://oversight.house.gov/release/wenstrup-delivers-remarks-at-covid-selects-final-report-markup-releases-recommendations-for-a-path-forward/>)

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**Fallon Opens Second Hearing on Biden-Harris Administration's LNG Export Ban**

December 4, 2024

(<https://oversight.house.gov/release/fallon-opens-second-hearing-on-biden-harris-administrations-lng-export-ban/>)

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**Comer Announces Hearing on Oversight of the U.S. Postal Service**

December 3, 2024

(<https://oversight.house.gov/release/comer-announces-hearing-on-oversight-of-the-u-s-postal-service/>)

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### Chairman Comer's Statement on President Biden's Pardon of Hunter Biden

December 1, 2024

(<https://oversight.house.gov/release/chairman-comers-statement-on-president-bidens-pardon-of-hunter-biden/>)

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