

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

1 November 2021

Dr. Francis Collins, Director  
National Institutes of Health  
9000 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Collins:

We write to request the following information about an update made to the website of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on or about October 20, 2021.

1. Do you acknowledge that the page previously titled “Gain-of-Function Research Involving Potential Pandemic Pathogens” (archived here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20211019065407/https://www.nih.gov/news-events/gain-function-research-involving-potential-pandemic-pathogens>) was changed on or about October 20, 2021 to remove the phrase “Gain-of-Function” from the page heading?
2. Do you acknowledge that the information provided on the web page identified above was altered, and that among the alterations was the removal of a section with the heading “Gain-of-Function Research,” which defined gain-of-function research as “a type of research that modifies a biological agent so that it confers new or enhanced activity to that agent”?
3. Was the decision to remove the section of the NIH website entitled “Gain-of-Function Research” on or about October 20, 2021, motivated by, or in any way related to, the October 20, 2021 letter from NIH to Rep. James Comer in which Principal Deputy Director Lawrence Tabak acknowledged that NIH funds were sub-awarded to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to study bat coronaviruses?
4. Please provide the name(s) and title(s) of each official within the NIH or elsewhere in the U.S. government who authorized the changes to the NIH website noted above.
5. Please provide any and all internal communications regarding the changes noted above to the NIH website on or about October 20, 2021.
6. Please provide a detailed explanation of the reason or reasons for making the changes noted above to the NIH website on or about October 20, 2021.

We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,



Rand Paul, M.D.  
United States Senator



James Comer  
Member of Congress