

July 14, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger and Ranking Member Cole:

As Congress exercises its oversight authority over the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we urge you to lead with science. Scientists, who have the appropriate subject-matter expertise, provide the best opportunity to answer key questions regarding the origin and transmission of the pandemic. Congress should follow an evidence-based process to ensure answers are grounded in sound science, are as complete as possible, and based in fact.

We caution against adopting policy changes absent scientific evidence, because doing so could further undermine the public's confidence in science. For future scientific progress, the implications of such proposals extend far beyond the immediate challenge of the pandemic.

We urge you to reject attempts to impose restrictions on federally funded research or the operations of federal science agencies based on premature conclusions about how the pandemic emerged. Such efforts could have serious, negative unintended consequences for potentially lifesaving research. They would harm the very ecosystem that developed the novel tests, vaccines, and medical countermeasures that have brought us through the pandemic. Continued support for research is essential for tackling a number of society's most vexing challenges, including combatting emerging infectious diseases and preventing the next pandemic.

On behalf of the scientists and clinicians our organizations and institutions represent, we urge you to allow the scientific process to play out as we seek to understand how the pandemic began and how we can protect ourselves from future threats to our nation's health and economy.

Sincerely,

American Association for Anatomy
American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
American Dairy Science Association
American Geophysical Union (AGU)
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
American Society for Investigative Pathology
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Virology
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene
Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology
Association for Psychological Science
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of American Medical Colleges
Biophysical Society
Coalition for the Life Sciences
Columbia University Irving Medical Center
Endocrine Society
Entomological Society of America
FASS
HIV Medicine Association
Institute of Food Technologists
International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis (ISTH)
KidneyCAN
National Association for Biomedical Research
Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society
Research!America
Rochester Institute of Technology
Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging
Society of Toxicology
The Gerontological Society of America
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America
The Society for Pediatric Radiology
Veterans for Common Sense
Wayne State University