



Anthony Fauci defends funding Wuhan bat coronavirus research that focused on gain-of-function breakthroughs to infect human cells

Description

USA: Dr. Anthony Fauci, the chief medical advisor to the Biden administration, defended the *National Institute of Health* (NIH) for giving \$600,000 to a Wuhan laboratory in 2014. In CNN's "State of the Union," Fauci told host Jake Tapper that it would be "negligent" not to fund the research of whether or not bat coronaviruses could be transmitted to humans. According to the *Daily Mail*, this came after Kentucky Republican Senator Rand Paul accused Fauci of being [liable for the origin of the SARS-CoV-2](#) virus. Fauci then accused Paul of being a liar who doesn't know what he's talking about.

Fauci, the director of the *NIH Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)*, insisted that the US-funded research was not gain of function, which involves modifying viruses to potentially make them deadlier. He also stated that he had confidence in the *NIH's* reason to fund it.

Fauci said, "If you go back to when this research really started, and look at the scientific rationale for it, it was a peer-reviewed proposal that was peer-reviewed and given a very high rating for the importance of why it should be done, to be able to go and do a survey of what was going on among the bat population, because everyone in the world was trying to figure out what the original source of the original SARS-CoV-1 was."

In the research context, Fauci also said that it was very regulated and reviewed and was given progress reports. The research was published in open literature. "So, I think if you look at the ultimate backed rationale, why that was started, it was almost as if, you didn't pursue that research, you would be negligent because we were trying to find out how you can prevent this from happening again." (Related: [Fauci Virus: Shocking new evidence proves covid-19 began with Dr. Anthony Fauci and NIAID.](#))

Bat coronavirus not a gain of function research

Gain of Function Research (GOF) is a controversial practice that alters viruses or pathogens to study the development and transmission of new diseases. Ultimately, this kind of research can make the virus more contagious or more deadly in a lab.

At the “State of the Nation” on Sunday, Tapper brought out the feud between Fauci and Paul. He told Fauci that even though the NIH didn’t specifically fund GOF research, critics say that the experiments were still risky, whether or not they fit in the category. He also said that the Chinese government is not a good-faith partner for not allowing a real investigation.

“Do you still think the U.S. government should collaborate with labs like Wuhan, especially on research that experts consider risky?” he asked Fauci.

“Going forward, we are always going to be very, very careful, go through all kinds of review, including the risk/benefit ratio . . . we are always willing to reexamine the criteria that are used when you do research wherever you do them,” Fauci responded.

Paul accuses Fauci of funding GOF research

Paul accused Fauci on May 11 of misleading Congress by saying that the United States has not funded gain of function research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. He said that the \$3.7 million grant that the NIH gave EcoHealth Alliance, of which nearly \$600,000 was distributed to Wuhan.

“If it turns out this virus came from the Wuhan lab, which it looks like it did, that there’s a great deal of culpability in that he was a big supporter of the funding,” he said.

He also claimed to *Fox News* in early June that [thousands of emails revealed](#) by BuzzFeed News and the Washington Post proved that the director was warned of the possibility of the origins of the virus due to a laboratory leak in Wuhan.

The emails also showed that the NIH was warned several times in 2020 by different experts that the COVID-19 was likely the result of the testing at the Wuhan lab.

Fauci, however, seemed to play down the role of the damaging emails, which did not show Fauci’s take on the theory.

By Mary Villareal

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