

# The Story of the Decade

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## STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › According to U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, author of “Deception: The Great COVID Cover-Up,” the COVID-19 pandemic, which killed millions of people, was the result of Anthony Fauci’s decision to fund dangerous gain-of-function research in China
- › New evidence obtained by U.S. Right to Know (USRTK) further strengthens the theory that SARS-CoV-2 was made in a lab
- › The novel features found in SARS-CoV-2 match the research parameters presented in a 2018 grant proposal by EcoHealth Alliance to conduct gain-of-function research on bat coronaviruses
- › EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) were well aware of the potential that this research could spark a human pandemic. A planning memo contains a note stating, “We MUST make it clear in proposal that our approach won’t drive evolution the wrong way, e.g. drive evolution of more virulent strain that then becomes pandemic”
- › At present, gain-of-function research is allowed provided it’s done with the intention of creating a vaccine, which is a logical fallacy. We’ve never been able to preemptively construct a pathogen that later shows up through natural evolution. We’re creating novel pathogens that don’t exist in nature and then developing vaccines against those. In other words, we’re creating bioweapons and antidotes to those bioweapons, and this needs to stop

**According to U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, author of “Deception: The Great COVID Cover-Up,” the COVID-19 pandemic, which killed millions of people, was the result of Anthony Fauci’s**

decision to fund dangerous gain-of-function research in China — research that was officially banned in the U.S. at the time and at bare minimum should have been done with U.S. oversight but wasn't.

Adding insult to injury, Fauci personally profited from the disaster to the tune of about \$5 million. “Congress was misled by Anthony Fauci,” Paul told now-independent journalist Tucker Carlson. “In the end, he deserves to be in prison.”

## **New Evidence Strongly Indicates SARS-CoV-2 Was Created**

In a January 25, 2024, article<sup>1</sup> in the City Journal, science writer, editor and author Nicholas Wade details new evidence<sup>2</sup> obtained by U.S. Right to Know (USRTK) that further strengthens the theory that SARS-CoV-2 was indeed made in a lab.<sup>3</sup>

As noted by Wade, that's the key reason why no one, despite massive testing efforts, has been able to find SARS-CoV-2 in any wild animal, bats or otherwise. It never existed in the natural world, only in the lab.

The newly-obtained documents include what amounts to a recipe for “assembling SARS-type viruses from six synthetic pieces of DNA designed to be a consensus sequence — the genetically most infectious form — of viruses related to SARS1, the bat virus that caused the minor epidemic of 2002,” Wade writes. As it turns out, SARS-CoV-2 has this exact six-section structure.

The documents also show that “American scientists planned to work with the Wuhan Institute of Virology to engineer novel coronaviruses with the features of SARS-CoV-2 the year before the virus emerged from that city,” USRTK reporter Emily Kopp writes.<sup>4</sup>

## **The DEFUSE Proposal Provides the Recipe**

In March 2018, the EcoHealth Alliance, led by Peter Daszak, applied for a \$14.2 million grant to conduct gain-of-function research on bat coronaviruses in research labs in

California, North Carolina, New York, Wisconsin, Singapore and Wuhan. The proposal, dubbed “Project DEFUSE,” describes how scientists would:<sup>5</sup>

- Insert furin cleavage sites at the S1/S2 junction of the spike protein
- Assemble synthetic viruses in six segments
- Identify coronaviruses that were no more than 25% different from SARS1
- Select for receptor binding domains adept at infecting human ACE2 receptors

## **SARS-CoV-2 Matches DEFUSE Research Parameters**

As explained by Kopp,<sup>6</sup> SARS-CoV-2 matches these research parameters to the T. It has a furin cleavage site in the spike protein at the S1/S2 junction, and its genome can be divided into six evenly spaced strings of DNA using restriction enzymes called BsaI and BsmBI. This even spacing is unlikely to occur in the genomes of natural viruses.

The reason scientists splice viruses together using evenly spaced DNA pieces is because it’s easier to manipulate. It allows them to synthesize the individual pieces chemically and then string them together to create a complete genome.

This telltale synthetic “fingerprint,” found in the genome of SARS-CoV-2, was detailed in a 2022 preprint by Bruttel et. al.<sup>7</sup> As noted by Wade,<sup>8</sup> the bottom line is that “if your virus has evenly spaced recognition sites, it’s a pretty good bet that it was made in a lab.” As it turns out, the DEFUSE draft proposal even included an order form for BsmBI — a fact highlighted by Bruttel in a Twitter/X post.<sup>9</sup>

The genomic variations of SARS-CoV-2’s are also within the 25% range indicated in the proposal, and its receptor binding domains were optimized for human ACE2 receptors from the start, which is what allowed it to spread like wildfire. Wade writes:<sup>10</sup>

*“Discovery of the new recipe certainly strengthens the possibility that the regular spacing of BsaI and BsmBI recognition sites in SARS2 is the signature of synthetic origin.*

*Indeed, Richard H. Ebright, a molecular biologist at Rutgers University who had called the 2022 paper 'noteworthy ... but not decisive,' now says that the evidence in the new documents 'elevates the evidence provided by the genome sequence from the level of noteworthy to the level of a smoking gun.'"*

Matt Ridley, coauthor of "Viral: The Search for the Origin of COVID-19" agrees, noting that all of the novel features of SARS-CoV-2 are explained by the proposed research methods detailed in the DEFUSE documents.

*"Game over." Ridley wrote.<sup>11</sup> "The latest revelations provide precise confirmation that all the many suspicious features of SARS-CoV-2 which imply it was man made were set out in exhaustive detail in the DEFUSE proposal to which Wuhan Institute of Virology was a partner."*

## **EcoHealth Was Well Aware of Pandemic Risks**

According to the DEFUSE draft USRTK obtained, the plan was to synthesize anywhere from eight to 16 strains of SARS-type bat viruses with human spillover potential, in order to create a vaccine that would then be used on bats in regions where there is military activity.

Importantly, EcoHealth and the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) were well aware of the potential that this research could spark a human pandemic. A planning memo contains a note stating, "We MUST make it clear in proposal that our approach won't drive evolution the wrong way, e.g. drive evolution of more virulent strain that then becomes pandemic."<sup>12</sup>

At present, it would appear that's exactly what happened. A synthetic virus was concocted, and somehow escaped from the WIV. Whether it was intentional or not is another matter. Either way, the moral of the story is that gain-of-function research poses enormous risks to public health, and if pandemic risk exists, then the research probably shouldn't be allowed.

## Documents Show Deceptive Practices to Gain Grants

Another thing these new documents reveal is how Daszak used misdirection in an effort to deceive the U.S. government about where this obviously risky research would be conducted. While he had every intention of having much of the work done at the WIV, he downplayed the role of the Chinese researchers and made it seem as though the research would be conducted in the U.S.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) ultimately rejected<sup>13</sup> the proposal due to “significant weaknesses,” including the fact that the proposal lacked any kind of risk assessment and risk mitigation plan. Whether someone else provided the funding, and if so, who, remains an open question. As reported by Wade:<sup>14</sup>

*“The DEFUSE proposal was authored by Peter Daszak, head of the EcoHealth Alliance in New York, with partners including Shi Zhengli of the Wuhan Institute of Virology and Ralph Baric of the University of North Carolina ...*

*Some observers believe that when DARPA declined to fund the project, the Chinese members of the group may have decided to find their own financing and go ahead unilaterally. This is plausible, as Baric and Shi were collaborators but also rivals. With Baric blocked for lack of DARPA funds, Shi may have seen the chance to race ahead if she could acquire funds from Chinese sources.*

*Daszak, the project leader, had planned in any case to have much of the work undertaken by Shi’s team in Wuhan, even though it meant deceiving the Defense Department into thinking the bulk of the research would be done by Baric in the United States.*

*In a note found in the new documents, Daszak wrote, ‘If we win this contract, I do not propose that all of this work will necessarily be conducted by Ralph, but I do want to stress the US side of this proposal so that DARPA are comfortable with our team. Once we get the funds, we can then allocate who does what exact work, and I believe that a lot of these assays can be done in Wuhan.’*

*Daszak is a research manager, not a virologist, and perhaps did not fully understand the consequences of this decision. The DEFUSE project, if undertaken by Baric, would have gone forward in the second-highest level of safety conditions, known as BSL-3, because Baric believed that the manipulation of SARS-related viruses was dangerous work and did his research in a BSL-3 lab.*

*The Chinese were less impressed with the dangers. Shi worked on SARS-related viruses mostly in BSL-2 labs, which have minimal safety requirements, though she did test the viruses on humanized mice under BSL-3 conditions.*

*When SARS2 first appeared in the world, it had all the unique properties that would be expected of a virus made according to the DEFUSE recipe. Instead of slowly evolving the ability to attack human cells, as natural viruses must do when they jump from animals to humans, SARS2 was immediately infectious to people, possibly because it had already been adapted in humanized laboratory mice to the human cell receptors ...*

*Despite intensive search, no precursors for SARS2 have been found in the natural world. Given the 2018 date of the DEFUSE proposal, the researchers in Wuhan could have synthesized the virus by 2019, accounting perfectly for the otherwise unexplained timing of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as its place of origin. It all fits.”*

## **Lessons From the Great COVID Cover-Up**

In a November 1, 2023, article, Sen. Paul reviewed what we have learned from “the great COVID cover-up”:<sup>15</sup>

*“The COVID cover-up began in China. But in a way we make too big a deal of that. No one should be surprised that a totalitarian government run by the Chinese Communist Party would seek to cover up its responsibility for a worldwide pandemic. What was mind-jarring – and what we should focus our*

*attention on – is the cover-up in our own country spearheaded by Dr. Anthony Fauci and his fellow public health bureaucrats.*

*And they might have gotten away with their deception if a federal judge hadn't ordered their emails released. In brief, these emails reveal that at the same time Dr. Fauci and other public health 'experts' were publicly disavowing the idea that the COVID virus originated with a leak from the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China, they were in general agreement among themselves that that was likely what had happened. So why hide the fact?"*

According to Paul, Fauci and his collaborators chose to hide the truth because the truth would reveal their potentially criminal actions. As director of the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), Fauci had been funding risky gain-of-function research at the WIV – a substandard lab in terms of safety.

Moreover, he allowed this research to move forward even though there was a moratorium on gain-of-function research in the U.S. The moratorium was put in place for the very reason that experts feared the risk of creating a human pandemic was too high.

## **Is Fauci Hiding a Guilty Conscience?**

In hindsight, they were correct, and if SARS-CoV-2 was admitted to be a manmade virus leaked from a lab, the only rational response would be to hold the responsible parties accountable and shut this kind of research down for good. No doubt, this prospect would have terrified Fauci and everyone else involved.

According to Paul, that Fauci's conscience was keeping him awake can be seen in the fact that he was sending emails in the middle of the night in the early days of the pandemic instead of being snugly tucked in his bed. One 3 a.m. email was sent to Robert Kadlec, then-Secretary for Preparedness and Response at Health and Human Services.

"This just came out today. Gives a balanced view," Fauci wrote. Attached was a Science article arguing for a zoonotic origin of the virus and discrediting the lab leak theory.

*“When this email came to light, I was initially puzzled about its timing and urgency,” Paul writes. “But then I learned that one of Kadlec’s duties was to chair the committee responsible for screening gain-of-function proposals for safety purposes – and that the Wuhan coronavirus research proposal never came before his committee!”*

In other words, Paul believes Fauci sent this email to Kadlec to hide the fact that he’d OK’d gain-of-function research that should have ended up on Kadlec’s desk for a safety review, but didn’t.

## **Behavior Befitting a Conspiracy**

Other behaviors also suggest Fauci and collaborators were panicking over the possibility that COVID might be traced back to their own activities. Paul writes:

*“Jeremy Farrar, the Anthony Fauci of the UK, told his brother that in the early stages of the pandemic, ‘a few scientists, including me, were beginning to suspect this might be a lab accident.’*

*Farrar writes in his book Spike: ‘During that period, I would do things I had never done before: acquire a burner phone, hold clandestine meetings, keep difficult secrets.’*

*Indeed, many Western bureaucrats, especially in the U.S., began using various forms of communication to shield their messages from future records requests. We have an email from one of Fauci’s assistants instructing other government employees to avoid using government email addresses. Which, by the way, is a crime.”*

And then there are the papers published in scientific journals “debunking” – without presenting a shred of evidence – the idea that SARS-CoV-2 might be manmade, and condemning “conspiracy theories suggesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin.” Upon deeper investigation, they too have been linked to key culprits who have a strong incentive to hide the truth, including Fauci.



# **We Must Put an End to Gain-of-Function Research**

As noted by Paul, the number of scientists worrying about another lab leak with far more dire consequences is growing:<sup>16</sup>

*“With COVID, the mortality rate was far less than one percent. Experiments are now being carried out with viruses that have the potential for mortality rates between 15 and 50 percent. In 2021, MIT biochemist Kevin Esvelt wrote:*

*‘Once we consider the possibility of misuse [of gain-of-function research], let alone creative misuse, such research looks like a gamble that civilization can’t afford to risk ... I implore every scientist, funder, and nation working in this field: Please stop.*

*No more trying to discover or make pandemic-capable viruses, enhance their virulence, or assemble them more easily. No more attempting to learn which components allow viruses to efficiently infect or replicate within human cells, or to devise inheritable ways to evade immunity. No more experiments likely to disseminate blueprints for plagues.’*

*The potential for disaster cannot be overstated. Right now, people can order synthetic DNA on the internet, and if they know what they’re doing, they can make the polio virus, among many others ...*

*The required information is publicly available due to taxpayer-funded initiatives to identify all the viruses in the world. With the support of people like Peter Daszak and Bill Gates, the U.S. has been the top international funder of pandemic virus identification for decades.*

*This should give us pause: these programs involve digging rare viruses out of caves where humans might never encounter them and transporting them to major metropolitan areas, manipulating viruses to make them more dangerous and transmissible, and publishing the resulting knowledge to the world.*

*Even if the goal is preventing future pandemics, the risk-benefit ratio doesn't add up. While advocates for identifying the world's viruses argue that the knowledge gained will aid in developing vaccines, decades of virus identification have been fruitless, as no human vaccine has been developed in advance of a human epidemic.*

*If we continue down this path, Esvelt believes that 'deliberate pandemics' will kill 'many more people than identification could save.' To think that we can prevent future pandemics, even as we continue to seek, catalog, and manipulate dangerous viruses, is the height of hubris.*

*Over the last few years, public health 'experts' were wrong about almost everything. If we are to avoid these kinds of catastrophes in the future, we must reform government and rein in out-of-control scientists and their enablers."*

I couldn't agree more. We need to put an end to gain-of-function research for the safety of humanity, and not allow greed or sheer scientific curiosity lead to the creation of a pathogen that might wipe out humanity.

The 2022 spending bill contains a directive to the secretary of Health and Human Services on page 3,354 to "not fund research conducted by a foreign entity at a facility located in a country of concern ... involving pathogens of pandemic potential or biological agents or toxins."<sup>17</sup>

This is a step in the right direction, but as noted by Paul, "Americans and their representatives must watch carefully to see whether our public health agencies attempt to sidestep it."

To that end, a Gain-of-Function Reform Group is now recommending that gain-of-function experiments that confer "efficient human transmissibility" on a pathogen ought to be regulated. Doing so would "explicitly stop bureaucrats like Fauci from dancing around the gain-of-function definition and looking the other way as researchers create viruses that spread more easily in humans," Paul writes.

**“We’re creating bioweapons and antidotes to those bioweapons, and this needs to stop.”**

At present, gain-of-function research is allowed provided it’s done with the intention of creating a vaccine, which is a logical fallacy. We’ve never been able to preemptively construct a pathogen that later shows up through natural evolution.

No, we’re creating novel pathogens that don’t exist in nature and then develop vaccines against those. In other words, we’re creating bioweapons and antidotes to those bioweapons, and it needs to stop. For that to happen, the public needs to start “making noise” so that our elected representatives begin to realize that we will not allow this issue to be ignored.

## Sources and References

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