

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Introduces bipartisan bill to freeze funding for GOF research

Posted on Thursday, Mar 30, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Reps. Mike Gallagher (R-WI), Henry Cuellar (D-TX), and Earl L. “Buddy” Carter (R-GA) introduced the bipartisan [Pausing Enhanced Pandemic Pathogen Research Act](#) to ban taxpayer dollars from funding gain-of-function research for five years, providing time to evaluate the risks of this research and for proper safety standards and protocols to be implemented.

Gain-of-function research looks for new ways to combat infectious diseases but does so through risky methods, such as developing and weaponizing deadly viruses, and can include altering a pathogen’s transmissibility, pathogenesis, and host range. Experts warn these practices could lead to wide-spread community infections and deaths.

“Dr. Fauci and the NIH ignored a moratorium on gain-of-function research and sent taxpayer dollars to the WIV to fund this dangerous practice. While we don’t yet know whether this helped cause the pandemic, we do know that this never should have happened in the first place. This bipartisan bill takes long overdue action to formally freeze any federal funding for gain-of-function research until we can understand the risks it entails and the role it played in the pandemic,” **said Rep. Gallagher.**

“For over two years, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our economy, education, and public health. The United States must prepare and invest in preventative measures that help us avert future pandemics and public health emergencies,” **said Rep. Cuellar.** “Gain-of-function research has been directly linked to the spark of the coronavirus pandemic. The bipartisan *Pausing Enhanced*

Pandemic Pathogen Research Act is the best path forward to ensure that we avoid U.S. taxpayer funds from falling into the wrong hands. I look forward to working closely with Congressman Carter, Congressman Gallagher, and my House colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that we pass responsible legislation to prevent future pandemics.”

“The more we learn about the origins of COVID-19, the more it becomes clear that gain-of-function research is an existential threat,” **said Rep. Carter**. “The National Institutes of Health and Dr. Fauci knew the risks but continued to fund this research with taxpayer dollars in America and overseas, including at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. We must double down on our efforts to prevent irresponsible research and protect our communities from future pandemics.”

A 2021 report found that the [EcoHealth Alliance](#), a U.S. based health organization, used federal money to fund gain-of-function bat coronavirus research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China, a potential source of the COVID-19 pandemic, per the Department of Energy’s 2023 [report](#). Furthermore, another [report](#) in January found that EcoHealth Alliance did not effectively monitor how these funds were used.

“We applaud Reps. Carter, Cuellar and Gallagher for their outstanding leadership on bipartisan legislation to defund dangerous gain-of-function experiments that waste money, hurt animals and can cause pandemics. Over the past three years, our investigations first exposed how the NIH wasted tax dollars at the Wuhan lab for treacherous gain-of-function animal experiments in violation of a federal ban and tried to cover it up. Now, lawmakers, the Energy Department, the FBI, former CDC and FDA chiefs, and two-thirds of Democrat and Republican taxpayers believe that Wuhan white coats caused a lab leak and COVID with their risky gain-of-function experiments on bats and humanized mice. Taxpayers should not be forced to bankroll treacherous animal experiments that place public health in peril and recent polls show that a majority of Democrat and Republican voters agree. Stop the money. Stop the madness,” **said Tristan Daedalus, Government Affairs Director for White Coat Waste Project**.

Read the full bill text [here](#).