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ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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April 13, 2022

Dr. Alondra Nelson  
White House Office of Science and Technology Policy  
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20502

Dr. Nelson:

We are investigating the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic and examining coronavirus research funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Based on our current oversight efforts, it is apparent that there is a lack of transparency in in the U.S. over this virus research.

In addition, the Biden administration has requested additional spending for the COVID-19 response, including support for coronavirus research. Before committing to additional COVID-19 spending, the U.S. government must make previously funded virus discovery work transparent and accountable.

Your office can play a vital role by coordinating efforts to provide transparency on a key issue that has emerged in our investigation: the furin cleavage site in SARS CoV-2 and whether U.S. agencies funded any research related to cleavage sites. The furin cleavage site is an unusual feature in the virus that has spurred concerns that such a site may have been the result of a laboratory intervention as opposed to natural origin. Virus experts have noted that this feature is the key to SARS CoV-2 pathogenesis.<sup>1</sup> Concerns about the plausibility of a lab-related

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<sup>1</sup> Bryan A. Johnson, *et al*, Loss of furin cleavage site attenuates SARS-CoV-2 pathogenesis, *Nature*, 293 (January 25, 2021), <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-03237-4>

pandemic cause were highlighted by the September 2021 disclosure that the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) had declined in 2018 to fund a proposal that included a plan to insert a furin cleavage site into a bat coronavirus genetic sequence.

To provide public confidence and trust in coronavirus research, we request that your office survey all federal agencies and request that they respond to the following by May 31, 2022:

1. Since April 1, 2017, has your agency received a proposal, reviewed a proposal, or funded a proposal that had anything to do with cleavage sites or furin with regards to coronaviruses? The proposal does not need to involve insertion explicitly.
  - a. If so, please identify these proposals and provide a summary of the proposal or a copy of the proposal. Please include in the summary: project title, administering office, type of funding involved, date of funding (if any), organization name, fiscal year, and total cost.

Please forward the survey results to us by May 31, 2022. Your assistance is appreciated.

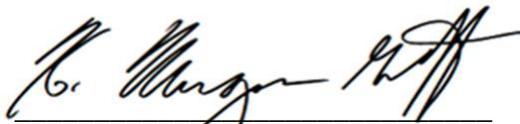
Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Brett Guthrie  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Health



H. Morgan Griffith  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight and  
Investigations