

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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**MEMORANDUM**

October 13, 2023

**To: Members, Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic**

**From: Select Subcommittee Staff**

**Re: Hearing on “Strengthening Biosafety and Biosecurity Standards: Protecting Against Future Pandemics”**

On **Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 10:00 AM ET in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building**, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic will hold a hearing titled “Strengthening Biosafety and Biosecurity Standards: Protecting Against Future Pandemics.”

**I. BACKGROUND:**

In January 2018, U.S. Embassy officials flagged concerning biosafety issues at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV). Within two years, COVID-19 was identified in Wuhan, China—only miles away from the WIV.

As the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic continues to uncover evidence suggesting that COVID-19 may have leaked from the WIV and, further, may have been genetically engineered, the central question becomes what should be done to avoid similar catastrophes from happening again in the future.

The intent of this hearing is to examine the multiple, overlapping U.S. regulatory frameworks for biosafety and security to ensure sufficient oversight of high-containment laboratories—including by life science research—to enable the Select Subcommittee to learn from policy failures and improve readiness future pandemics.

**II. HEARING PURPOSE:**

This hearing will examine the need for enhanced biosafety and biosecurity standards in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**III. WITNESSES:**

**Gerald W. Parker, Jr., DVM, PhD**

Associate Dean for Global One Health

College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences

Texas A&M University

*Additional witnesses to be announced.*