

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

Majority (202) 225-5074
Minority (202) 225-5051

May 8, 2024

Jeffrey Sturchio, Ph.D.
JLS Consulting, LLC
1100 Custis St.
Alexandria, VA 22308

Dear Dr. Sturchio:

As you know, the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic (Select Subcommittee) is investigating EcoHealth Alliance, Inc.'s (EcoHealth) activities at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), failures to comply with required grant policies, and facilitation of gain-of-function research. EcoHealth has proven to be less than cooperative with this investigation. The Select Subcommittee has documents suggesting Dr. Peter Daszak, President of EcoHealth, has been deliberately delaying and obstructing this investigation, and that he has employed you as a communications consultant to potentially further this obstruction.

On November 14, 2023, Dr. Daszak sat before the Select Subcommittee for a transcribed interview. During this interview, he testified that he employed you as a public relations or communications consultant.¹

Dr. Peter Daszak (November 14, 2023)

- Q. And then my last question would be, does EcoHealth retain public relations firms and scientific communication firms? And we'll go from autumn 2019 to the present.
- A. EcoHealth does not retain a public relations firm as part of -- during that time period.
- Q. Outside contractor scientific communications assistance?
- A. We have worked with communication specialists.
- Q. Do you recall who those are?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Could you list them?

¹ Transcribed Interview of Peter Daszak, Ph.D., President, EcoHealth Alliance, Inc. (Nov. 14, 2023).

A. Sure. Dr. Sturchio is one of them.²

Further, documents in possession of the Select Subcommittee suggest that Dr. Daszak, possibly with your assistance, acted intentionally to obstruct and delay this investigation. On April 20, 2024, Dr. Daszak wrote the following e-mail:³

Date: Sat, 20 Apr 2024 10:15:09 AM -0400
Sent: Sat, 20 Apr 2024 10:14:14 AM -0400
Subject: RE: Today's news...
From: Peter Daszak <[REDACTED]@ecohealthalliance.org>
To: Keusch, Gerald <[REDACTED]@bu.edu>; Hotez, Peter Jay <[REDACTED]@bcm.edu>; [REDACTED]@proton.me>; Jeff Sturchio <[REDACTED]@msn.com>; Roberts, Rich <[REDACTED]@neb.com>;
CC: [REDACTED]@cugh.org; Aleksei Chmura <[REDACTED]@ecohealthalliance.org>; John Feigelson <[REDACTED]@ecohealthalliance.org>

Great strategy Jerry. Each day of delay helps. They're trying to book David in for a public hearing between mine (May 1st) and Fauci's (June 3rd). David's lawyers are trying to negotiate and delay his til after Tony.

We're getting continued tightening of the screws from the SSCP - we responded to their demands for an outrageous dump of emails and documents before my hearing, giving them a few docs, but letting them know that most are already in the NIH FOIA library (<https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/freedom-information-act-office/nih-foia-library/> - click on "Past productions of COVID-19 records" for tons of EcoHealth docs).

The SSCP are outraged by our response, threatening a subpoena, and we're now trying to make sure they get enough material so that we can avoid a subpoena, because as you all saw with David's they use a subpoena to create faux anger in press releases - e.g. stating that David Morens "abruptly ceased cooperating" etc.

It's a Stalinesque game of ginning up the public and wheeling out alleged 'traitors' to be insulted and humiliated for their entertainment.

Cheers,

Peter

In this email, Dr. Daszak references his unsatisfactory record of responsiveness to the Select Subcommittee, specifically that, instead of providing responsive documents, he had provided the Select Subcommittee with links to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) library.

On April 4, 2024, the Select Subcommittee, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce (together "the Committees") sent Dr. Daszak a letter memorializing his upcoming hearing and, as an accommodation, added

² *Id* at 37-38.

³ E-Mail from Peter Daszak, Ph.D., President, EcoHealth Alliance, Inc., to Gerald Keusch, M.D., et. al. (Apr. 20, 2024).

specificity to previously articulated requests.⁴ This letter provided Dr. Daszak with staggered production dates, the first of which was April 11 and the next was April 18.

On April 11, Dr. Daszak did not produce any documents, but instead, sent the Committees a letter signed by himself and *not* sent through his counsel (Enclosed).⁵ This letter showed an apparent misunderstanding of the constitutionally mandated Congressional oversight process. For example, in response to numerous document requests, Dr. Daszak provided the Committees with a link to the NIH FOIA library. The production of documents to a third-party requestor via FOIA does not relieve EcoHealth of its duty to comply with a Congressional demand. Further, some of the Committees' requests were for documents solely between parties that are not subject to FOIA. By providing a public link to a federal agency's FOIA library, Dr. Daszak showed a complete disregard for the authority of Congress and the Committees' constitutional oversight authority and our responsibility to the American people—the people who fund Dr. Daszak's work. We are concerned you were involved in this obstructionist letter.

When considering the clearly bad faith and dilatory motivations Dr. Daszak proudly shared with his colleagues, this response letter, on which we suspect you advised EcoHealth, it is imperative upon the Select Subcommittee to evaluate whether Dr. Daszak has obstructed this investigation in other ways.

Based on Dr. Daszak's testimony and documents in the Select Subcommittee's possession, we have reason to believe you could have participated in EcoHealth's efforts to obstruct our investigation. Accordingly, the Select Subcommittee requests the following documents and information in your custody or control, including any responsive records retained in your personal e-mail(s), cell phone(s), or other electronic device(s) as soon as possible but no later than May 22, 2024:

1. All documents and communications between or among you and EcoHealth Alliance, Inc, including any of its subsidiaries or affiliated individuals between January 1, 2020 and present regarding:
 - a. The origins of COVID-19;
 - b. The Wuhan Institute of Virology;
 - c. EcoHealth's responses to NIH or NIAID regarding ongoing compliance efforts of grant number R01AI110964;
 - d. EcoHealth's responses to NIH or NIAID regarding the April 2023 reinstatement of grant number R01AI110964;
 - e. EcoHealth's responses to Congressional activity, including oversight letters, hearings, and transcribed interviews;⁶

⁴ Letter from the Hon. Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M., H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, Select Subcomm. on the Coronavirus Pandemic, et al., to Dr. Peter Daszak, Ph. D., President, EcoHealth Alliance (Apr. 4, 2024).

⁵ Letter from Dr. Peter Daszak, Ph. D., President, EcoHealth Alliance to the Hon. Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M., H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, Select Subcomm. on the Coronavirus Pandemic, et al., (Apr. 11, 2024).

⁶ As an accommodation, the Select Subcommittee is willing to provide you with a list of activities that fall under this request.

Jeffrey Sturchio, Ph.D.

May 8, 2024

Page 4

- f. EcoHealth's preparation for Dr. Daszak's testimony on November 14, 2023 before the Select Subcommittee; and
 - g. EcoHealth's preparation for Dr. Daszak's testimony on May 1, 2024 before the Select Subcommittee.
2. All documents and communications with the Department of Health and Human Services, including but not limited to the National Institutes of Health and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, between January 1, 2020 and present regarding the issues listed in Request (1).

The Select Subcommittee is authorized to investigate “the origins of the Coronavirus pandemic, including but not limited to the Federal Government’s funding of gain-of function research” and “cooperation by the executive branch and others with Congress” under H. Res. 5.⁷ To ask any follow-up or related questions, please contact Select Subcommittee staff at (202) 225-5074.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,



Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Raul Ruiz, M.D., Ranking Member
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

Enclosure:

EcoHealth letter to Select Subcommittee, *et al.* (Apr. 11, 2024).

⁷ H. Res. 5 § 4(a)(2023).