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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6150

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February 28, 2023

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Secretary Granholm,

I write to request that the Department of Energy (Department) provides expedited answers to questions regarding the Department's release of an intelligence report concluding a lab leak was the most likely origin of the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

The Wall Street Journal reported "key members of Congress" were given this report. However, as Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, a committee of jurisdiction on this sensitive matter, I was never provided this report nor informed of its conclusions. This is inexcusable.

Accordingly, I am requesting the Department immediately schedule a classified briefing to provide all members of Congress information pertaining to this report, as well as provide the "new intelligence" that serves as the basis for the Department's new lab leak determination.

Given the critical nature of the Department's report, I request answers to the attached questions be provided no later than March 7, 2023. Additionally, I request that the Department provides its classified briefing to members of Congress no later than March 8, 2023.

Sincerely,

  
John Barrasso, M.D.  
Ranking Member

CC: The Honorable Joe Manchin III, Chairman

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<sup>1</sup> Michael R Gordon and Warren P Strobel, "Lab Leak Most Likely Origin of Covid-19 Pandemic, Energy Department Now Says," The Wall Street Journal (Dow Jones & Company, February 26, 2023), [https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid-origin-china-lab-leak-807b7b0a?mod=article\\_inline](https://www.wsj.com/articles/covid-origin-china-lab-leak-807b7b0a?mod=article_inline).

## Questions

1. On what date did the Department begin its efforts to determine the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. On what date did the Department reach the conclusion the Covid-19 pandemic originated from a lab leak?
3. Please list the external government agencies the Department partnered with that aided in the Department's lab leak conclusion.
4. Did the Department work with any research institutions and/or universities in the course of its work to determine Covid-19's origins?
  - a. If so, please list these entities.
5. Was the Department at any point encouraged by any government employee or any private citizen to delay or withhold its findings surrounding its lab leak conclusion?
6. Did the Department work with the Chinese government or any Chinese government-sponsored individual or entity in any capacity during its Covid-19 origins research?
  - a. If so, please describe these interactions in detail.
7. Did the Department work with the World Health Organization (WHO) in any capacity over the course of its Covid-19 origins research?
  - a. If so, please describe these interactions in detail.
8. Does the Department plan to coordinate with the FBI and other members of the intelligence community to gather pertinent information in order to strengthen its determination stemming from its Covid-19 origins research?