



March 12, 2024

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman, Senate Committee on  
Agriculture  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boozman  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on  
Agriculture  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Glenn Thompson  
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture  
1301 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Scott  
Ranking Member, House Committee on  
Agriculture  
1010 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson, Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, and Ranking Member Scott:

We write regarding the Farm Bill currently under consideration with a proposal to help achieve the bipartisan and widely supported goals of protecting national security, animal and human health, and taxpayer dollars. **We respectfully request Farm Bill language prohibiting the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from spending taxpayers’ money to fund research conducted in, or in collaboration with, animal laboratories in China, Russia, and other adversarial nations.**

A recent investigation uncovered that the USDA has spent at least \$1 million of taxpayers’ money on dangerous bird flu experiments conducted in collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Chinese Communist Party-controlled parent organization of the Wuhan Institute of Virology.<sup>1,2</sup> The USDA’s current experiments with CAS and a researcher tied to the Wuhan lab use a gain-of-function technique of repeatedly infecting animals with bird flu viruses to force the pathogens to evolve into unnatural lab-created strains and study their “potential to jump into mammalian hosts.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-13089105/US-Chinese-scientists-bird-flu-strains-infectious-Covid.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/2879601/is-the-department-of-agriculture-funding-the-next-pandemic/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2024/02/15/wcw-investigation-1m-usda-ccp-program-souping-up-bird-flu-with-wuhan-experimenter-sen-ernst-demands-answers/>

Especially after China’s reckless gain-of-function animal research that experts believe caused COVID and its non-cooperation with investigations into the U.S. taxpayer-funded experiments, Congress should ensure that no more tax dollars are funneled to China’s or other foreign adversaries’ animal labs. The Commerce Department currently lists adversarial nations as China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia and the Maduro regime in Venezuela.<sup>4</sup> The State Department also maintains a list of “countries of particular concern” that includes these hostile countries and several others.<sup>5</sup>

Prohibitions on the use of taxpayer dollars in labs in adversarial nations were included in FY2024 Appropriations bills funding the National Institutes of Health, the State Department, and the Pentagon. Bipartisan standalone legislation has been introduced to accomplish the same.<sup>6</sup>

We urge the Senate and House Agriculture Committees to consider this Farm Bill proposal to defund foreign adversaries’ animal labs as a significant way to protect national security, animal and human health, and taxpayer dollars.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Justin Goodman  
Senior Vice President  
White Coat Waste Project

John Dennis  
Chairman  
Republican Liberty Caucus

David Williams  
President  
Taxpayers Protection Alliance

Sal Nuzzo  
Senior Vice President  
The James Madison Institute

Jason Pye  
Senior Policy Adviser  
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Vanessa Shakib  
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Matt Kibbe  
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Senior Fellow in Healthcare policy  
The Heritage Foundation\*

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Chief Operating Officer  
Young Americans for Liberty

*\*The Heritage Foundation is listed for identification purposes only. The views expressed in this letter are my own and do not reflect and institutional position for The Heritage Foundation or its Board of Trustees.*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-15/subtitle-A/part-7/subpart-A/section-7.4>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.state.gov/countries-of-particular-concern-special-watch-list-countries-entities-of-particular-concern/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://blog.whitecoatwaste.org/2023/07/31/bipartisan-afar-act-targets-foreign-enemies-animal-labs/>