



Rep. Chip Roy (R-Texas) speaks at a press conference about the National Defense Authorization Bill at the U.S. Capitol on Sept. 22, 2021. (Kevin Dietsch/Getty Images)

PREMIUM **COVER-UP**

EXCLUSIVE: Rep. Chip Roy Questions Top Texas University Scientist Over Links to Wuhan Lab

By [Joseph Lord](#) | July 6, 2022 Updated: July 8, 2022

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Rep. Chip Roy (R-Texas) has accused Dr. James LeDuc, the former director of the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB), of violating federal and state law in an [agreement LeDuc signed](#) with the Wuhan Institute of Virology in China, under which the facilities agreed to destroy any documents related to their joint research upon the request of the other.

“I am writing today to seek answers to questions raised in the wake of University of Texas Medical Branch documents released under the Texas Public Information Act to the U.S. Right to Know nonprofit organization,” Roy wrote to LeDuc in a July 6 letter, which which was exclusively obtained by The Epoch Times.

“The documents raise important questions regarding your involvement in agreements and compromising connections with the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences.”

He wrote that one document signed between UTMB and the WIV “is particularly concerning.”

That document, a “Memorandum of Understanding,” contained a so-called memory-hole provision ([pdf](#)).

“The confidentiality obligation shall be applicable throughout the duration of the [Memorandum of Understanding] and after it has been terminated,” the provision reads. “The party is entitled to ask the other to destroy and/or return the secret files, materials and equipment without any backups.”

In other words, under the terms of the agreement, either party involved in the agreement could demand that all files related to the joint research be destroyed. This agreement violates not only National Institutes of Health policy, but is also in contravention of state and federal laws requiring the retention of records, Roy said.

“The November 2016 and October 2017 National Institutes of Health Grants Policy Statement requires recipients to ‘retain financial and programmatic records supporting documents, statistical records, and all records that are required by the terms of the grant.’

“Recipients that have a qualified foreign component are required to receive prior approval from the NIH. UTMB is also required to retain records under Federal and Texas law, including what is laid out under UTMB’s Records Retention Schedule. The [Memorandum of Understanding] you signed between UTMB and the WIV appears to conflict with these requirements.

“The federal government has awarded over \$2.5 billion in grants from the National Institutes of Health plus hundreds of millions in grants and contracts from other federal agencies to UTMB. It is concerning that any public institution receiving federal government funding would enter into a cooperation agreement with an entity controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

“Further, it raises serious concerns that a prominent recipient of federal taxpayer dollars would enter into an agreement with any foreign entity—but especially an adversary—with such a glaring ‘memory hole’ provision that authorizes research materials and files to be destroyed upon request.”

Although Dr. Anthony Fauci and other top virologists initially dismissed the “lab leak” origin theory of the origins of COVID-19—a theory pushed heavily by former President Donald Trump, which held that the virus leaked from the Wuhan lab, not from a wet market elsewhere in the city—that theory has become increasingly accepted.

In view of this fact, Roy said, “It is essential to have a clear understanding of knowledge transfers between China and the United States.

He also noted that even before COVID-19 came to U.S. shores, the WIV had scrubbed its largest database of viral sequences in September 2019, a few months before COVID-19 was identified in public. This fact “raises serious questions about WIV’s intent to participate in a fair research data exchange with the [United States].”

“As Congress looks to safeguard Americans from national security risks, it is essential that we understand why federal grant recipients are entering into partnerships with institutions in adversarial countries and under what circumstances,” Roy said.

“Therefore, we request information from you regarding the interactions and agreements between UTMB and the WIV under your leadership.”

Roy then laid out a litany of questions, including whether LeDuc destroyed any files consonant with the agreement, whether the agreement was later modified, whether UTMB staff thought the agreement was in accordance with the law, and whether UTMB entered similar agreements with China or other countries, among other inquiries.

LeDuc, who has received funding from the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), has been in the headlines before for his connection with the Wuhan lab.

Near the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, while NIAID head Dr. Anthony Fauci and his allies were dismissing the “lab leak” theory of the origins of the coronavirus, LeDuc was privately [calling for an investigation](#) into whether the virus had indeed originated in the Wuhan lab.

LeDuc didn't respond by press time to a request by The Epoch Times for comment.