

Senate committee holds Fauci in contempt as multiple outbreaks rage across the US

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The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee voted along party lines Thursday to hold Anthony Fauci in contempt of Congress. Fascistic committee chairman Rand Paul announced that his office would hand-deliver the referral to the Justice Department that same afternoon, bypassing a vote of the full Senate. The referral of the country's most prominent public health official for criminal prosecution is not an inquiry into the origins of COVID-19 but an effort to establish the precedent that any scientific advice which constrains profit is a criminal act.

Fauci, who directed the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) for 38 years, was hauled before the committee under subpoena on July 29 for a proceeding convened to manufacture grounds for his prosecution. Paul, having published days earlier more than 1,100 pages of Fauci's private diaries, opened the hearing by telling him that the pandemic lockdowns "could never have been inflicted without you aiding and abetting the crime," and then ordered Capitol Police to remove Fauci's attorney from the room when he attempted to speak.

The *World Socialist Web Site* has opposed this witch-hunt at every stage, from the corporate media's seizure on Fauci's released emails in June 2021 through the persecution of Peter Daszak and Kristian Andersen. What those emails documented was the ordinary conduct of science: the consideration and rejection of a hypothesis on the basis of evidence. What is at stake is the scientific method itself, against a state that has resolved to criminalize it.

Paul has spent five years assembling that criminalization in coordination with Trump and Kennedy, and Fauci is only its most prominent target. Daszak, whose EcoHealth Alliance conducted the bat

coronavirus surveillance in China that was seized upon by the proponents of the Wuhan Lab conspiracy theory, was fired and debarred from federal funding for five years in January 2025, his organization destroyed.

In June, NIH virologist Vincent Munster and a research fellow were arrested for carrying deactivated mpox samples through a Detroit airport on their way back from an outbreak in the Republic of Congo. Last month, Paul released the private Slack messages of Andersen and his co-authors on the "Proximal Origin" paper, and Republicans at once demanded criminal referrals, the offense being that scientists had weighed a hypothesis in private before the evidence ruled it out.

The persecution of David Morens shows most clearly what the campaign is prepared to do. Morens, a 78-year-old epidemiologist who advised Fauci for two decades, was indicted in April on five counts including conspiracy against the United States and faces the prospect of dying in prison. The conduct at issue is that he routed correspondence through a personal Gmail account to keep it out of a politically driven records process, and that he accepted wine from Daszak, named as a co-conspirator. No public money was stolen and no research was falsified.

What Fauci faces now rests with the Justice Department, which is under no obligation to act on a congressional referral but is directed by an administration that has made the prosecution of scientists a matter of policy. The US attorney in Washington must decide whether to seek an indictment on a charge carrying up to a year in jail. Paul's case turns on the claim that Biden's January 2025 pardon of Fauci, covering only conduct through the date it was signed, leaves him exposed for everything since, an argument Paul concedes has never been tested in court and which constitutional scholars reject.

The significance of the hearing is underscored by the objective context in which it was staged. While the committee assembled its case against the scientists who studied infectious disease, multiple outbreaks are raging across the United States on a scale unseen in decades.

Cyclosporiasis has now been reported in 47 states, with 10,468 laboratory-confirmed cases between May 1 and August 3, more than 12,255 awaiting confirmation and two deaths in Michigan, as of August 4. Measles has reached its highest US total since 1991, putting under review the elimination status won in 2000. A major salmonella outbreak has now sickened 345 people across 27 states in an outbreak the CDC traced Wednesday to jalapeños imported from Sinaloa, Mexico after a second salmonella outbreak in shell eggs forced the recall of more than 1.5 million dozen eggs in July.

These preventable diseases are flourishing because the institutions built to stop them are being torn down. Within a month of Trump's second inauguration the administration fired thousands of health department employees in a single day, and by last October a quarter of all employees at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) were gone. More than 1,700 NIH grants were terminated, wastewater surveillance was defunded and in January the United States withdrew from the World Health Organization. On July 1, 2025, months before the largest outbreak of the parasite in American history, the CDC made cyclosporiasis reporting optional.

The destruction of surveillance and the prosecution of scientists proceed from the subordination of science to private profit, expressed most sharply in the COVID-19 pandemic, which has now killed roughly 1.4 million people in the United States and some 30 million worldwide. No president, governor or corporate executive has been charged for the policy of mass infection that produced those deaths. The man referred for prosecution is the one who, at least initially, opposed it. Fauci's later capitulation to that policy is a matter of record, but he is being persecuted for having told the American people that COVID-19 was real and that the government owed them protection from it.

The claim that the virus was engineered in a Chinese laboratory takes those who died off the books of American policy and turns the scientists who traced it

to its animal origins into accomplices in a supposed cover-up. Having originated as a far-right conspiracy theory, the Wuhan Lab Lie was increasingly adopted by both parties and broad sections of the corporate media, becoming state doctrine in April 2025, when the Trump administration repurposed covid.gov as a page titled "Lab Leak: The True Origins of COVID-19." The underlying aims are bound up with the preparations of US imperialism for war with China. If Beijing engineered the virus, a mass death produced by American boardrooms becomes an act of foreign aggression.

The Democrats built this frame-up alongside the Republicans. The House select subcommittee endorsed the lab-leak findings with Democratic votes in December 2024, and Biden, who had campaigned on following the science, presided over 900,000 further deaths and answered the frame-up his own party had certified by pardoning Fauci alone, leaving Morens, Daszak and others to the prosecutors.

Securing the right to health and to scientific truth requires a revolutionary program. Rank-and-file committees must be built in the hospitals, health departments, fields and plants, independent of the union bureaucracies and the professional societies, with the power to enforce infection control and restore surveillance. Research must be publicly funded and freed from corporate control, and the food monopolies placed under the democratic control of the working class. These struggles must be unified through the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) and the building of sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The scientists facing prosecution cannot defend themselves, and the parties that presided over the mass death will not defend them. The only social force capable of defending science, and of putting its findings at the service of humanity, is the international working class.



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