

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, DC 20515

April 24, 2020

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

Thank you for your strong leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and your efforts to help all Americans during this crisis. We write in support of your recent decision to halt funding to the World Health Organization (WHO) while U.S. officials investigate the organization's handling of the coronavirus.

On behalf of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the WHO stood idly by and lied about the threat posed by COVID-19. Now, over 600,000 Americans have contracted the virus and over 30,000 have lost their lives. If the CCP and the WHO had taken earlier steps to combat the virus, more American lives could have been saved.

A recent study shows the number of COVID-19 cases could have been reduced by a staggering 95 percent if the CCP had acted three weeks earlier to stop the spread.<sup>1</sup> When the virus was in its infancy, the CCP silenced scientific researchers, most notably Dr. Zhang Jixian and the late Dr. Li Wenliang, who tragically lost his life to the coronavirus. In addition, the CCP manipulated reporting statistics, destroyed early samples of the virus' genetic data, and refused to permit American access to the epicenter of the outbreak. Further, they lied about the risk of human transmission, delayed the implementation of restricted travel from Wuhan Province, and propagated false claims that COVID-19 was spread by soldiers of the U.S. Army inside China.

Not only do the CCP's actions fit a long pattern of malfeasance and warrant global condemnation, the WHO was a willing accomplice to the CCP's coverup scheme and played a critical role in spreading their lies and misinformation. As the single largest contributor to the WHO, the U.S. must hold the organization accountable for failing its mission to identify, mitigate, and manage public health risks.

On December 30, 2019, Taiwan sounded the alarm directly to the WHO that COVID-19 was potentially spread via human-to-human transmission. On January 14, despite possessing this information, the WHO tweeted, "preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel #coronavirus."<sup>2</sup> It was not until March 12, 2020 that the WHO finally declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic, even though the virus had been spreading globally via human contact for at least four

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<sup>1</sup> "Early and combined interventions crucial in tackling Covid-19 spread in China," University of Southampton, March 11, 2020, <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/news/2020/03/covid-19-china.page>

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization, <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1217043229427761152>

months. Moreover, in response to your decision to rightly restrict international travel to the United States, the WHO stated that imposing such restrictions would only increase fear and stigma with little public health benefit.

Further, Director-General Tedros Ghebreyesus, the CCP's handpicked candidate to lead the WHO, has been found responsible for a previous global health failure. While serving as the Minister of Health for Ethiopia, Director-General Tedros reportedly covered up cholera epidemics in Ethiopia. In 2006, 2009, and 2011, Ethiopia recorded no cholera outbreaks, instead choosing to list cases describing a specific symptom of cholera. One current WHO official stated, "he had a duty to speak truth to power and to honestly identify and report verified cholera outbreaks over an extended period."<sup>3</sup>

Even more troubling, Director-General Tedros has a public record of embracing CCP propaganda and policies. Prior to his role as WHO Director-General, he gave a public speech at a Chinese university in Beijing where he praised China for its global health and disease control work. The day after securing the position of Director-General, he announced that the WHO would follow the "One China" policy, which ultimately banned Taiwan from participating in any WHO forums. In January, Director-General Tedros stated, "the Chinese government is to be congratulated for the extraordinary measures it has taken to contain the outbreak...I left in absolutely no doubt about China's commitment to transparency, and to protecting the world's people."<sup>4</sup> Due to his unwavering commitment to the CCP's communist agenda rather than promoting global health, we believe Director-General Tedros is not fit to lead the WHO.

We again applaud your decisions to withhold Fiscal Year 2020 voluntary contributions to the WHO, and request that you continue to do so until Director-General Tedros resigns, an international investigation, led by the United States, is conducted into the mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the WHO commits to holding the CCP accountable for their missteps leading to this global pandemic.

With great respect,



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Bill Flores  
Member of Congress (TX-17)



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Guy Reschenthaler  
Member of Congress (PA-14)

***Additional Signatories on Following Page***

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<sup>3</sup> Ortiz-Lytle, Carly "Flashback: WHO's Tedros was accused of covering up cholera outbreaks in Ethiopia," Washington Examiner, April 15, 2020, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/flashback-whos-tedros-was-accused-of-covering-up-cholera-outbreaks-in-ethiopia>

<sup>4</sup> "WHO Director-General's statement on IHR Emergency Committee on Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)," World Health Organization, January 30, 2020, [https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ih-er-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)](https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-statement-on-ih-er-emergency-committee-on-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov))

## ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES

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