

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

Department of Health and Aged Care

Senate Community Affairs References Committee

Inquiry into Excess Mortality

13 June 2024

PDR Number:

Mr Fauci and former CDC Director Redfield testimony

Written

Senator: Malcolm Roberts

Question:

19. Currently Mr Fauci and former CDC Director Redfield have been testifying before Congress. Their testimony includes confirming the gain of function research created COVID, there was no health basis for certain COVID measures including social distancing, sitting -vs- standing, school closures and more. Has the Health Department examined this testimony and have you taken any action as a result?

Answer:

19. The US House Oversight select subcommittee inquiry into their country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the origin of SARS-CoV-2 is a process outside Australia's jurisdiction. Any findings of this inquiry will be considered by the Australian Government once they are published but they primarily have relevance to the US Government.

It should be emphasised that Australia has its own COVID-19 Response inquiry underway which is due to report in late 2024. The Australian Government will be considering the outcomes and recommendations from this inquiry which is focussed on the Australian context and is examining the impact of various measures that were implemented to reduce community transmission.

In relation to the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, despite several investigations internationally, none have definitively confirmed the exact origin.

The joint WHO–China technical report ¹ published in March 2021 rated a zoonotic spillover as a “likely to very likely” source of the virus, cold food–chain products as “possible,” and a laboratory incident as “extremely unlikely”. Both further scientific research and global collaboration is required to reduce uncertainty on this issue.

Preventing spillovers by using a One Health strategy linking animal, human, and environmental health is vital. 60% of outbreaks of diseases previously unseen in humans arise from natural zoonoses. This is likely to happen again in the future. Further information on what the Interim Australian Centre for Disease Control is doing in relation to One Health can be found in the below link².

Footnote 1: www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/origins-of-the-virus

Footnote 2: www.cdc.gov.au/about/what-we-do/one-health