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July 12, 2024 › Agency Capture › Censorship/Surveillance › News

## COVID

# Mandating COVID Shots 'One of the Greatest Mistakes,' Former CDC Chief Says

*In a Senate hearing Thursday, ex-CDC Director Robert Redfield said mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are "toxic" and should not have been mandated. He also called for a pause on gain-of-function research.*

by John-Michael Dumais

JULY 12, 2024



Former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Robert Redfield confirmed the dangers of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines in a U.S. Senate hearing Thursday, calling them “**toxic**” and saying they should never have been mandated.

Redfield’s admissions came during a **Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs** hearing on government oversight of taxpayer-funded high-risk virus research.

The late admission of vaccine injuries underscores the failure of **public health agencies** and the medical establishment to provide informed consent to the billions of vaccine recipients worldwide.

“It’s important that he is telling the truth now,” vaccine researcher **Jessica Rose, Ph.D.**, told **The Defender**. “Adverse events were hidden and still are being hidden to prevent injection hesitancy.”

Redfield, who led the CDC from 2018 to 2021, didn’t stop there. He declared biosecurity “our nation’s greatest national security threat,” calling for a halt to **gain-of-function research** pending further debate.

The hearing, which featured contentious exchanges between senators and witnesses, also touched on controversial topics such as the **COVID-19** origins lab-leak theory and allegations that health agencies suppressed data.

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### mRNA vax ‘should have been open to personal choice’

During the hearing **Redfield, who oversaw the CDC** during the crucial early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, elaborated on his recent statements about mRNA vaccine safety.

"I do think one of the greatest mistakes that was made, of course, was **mandating these vaccines**," Redfield said. "They should have never been mandated. It should have been open to personal choice."

Redfield went further, admitting that the **spike protein** produced by **mRNA vaccines** is "toxic to the body" and triggers "a very strong pro-inflammatory response."

He noted that in his own medical practice, he doesn't administer mRNA vaccines, preferring "**killed protein vaccines**" instead.

Redfield's statements stand in stark contrast to the **CDC's official stance** during his tenure, which strongly promoted mRNA vaccine uptake as safe and effective.

Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) pressed Redfield on the issue, highlighting concerning data from the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (**VAERS**). Johnson presented figures showing over 37,000 **deaths reported following COVID-19 vaccination**, with 24% occurring within two days of injection.

Redfield acknowledged there was "not appropriate transparency from the beginning about the potential **side effects of these vaccines**." He criticized attempts to "underreport any side effects because they argued that would make the public less likely to get vaccinated."

**Senator Ron Johnson**  

@SenRonJohnson · [Follow](#)

I truly appreciated Dr. Redfield's honesty at the hearing today.

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### 'FDA should release all of the safety data'

Redfield's criticism of data withholding extended beyond vaccine side effects. He expressed disappointment in the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration's** (FDA) handling of vaccine safety information.

"The FDA should release all of the safety data they have," Redfield said. "I was very disappointed to hear that they were planning to hold on to that until 2026. That really creates a sense of total lack of trust in our public health agencies towards vaccination."

Johnson echoed these concerns, revealing his frustration with the lack of follow-through by health agencies and the committee itself.

"I'm not getting cooperation out of the chairman of the permanent subcommittee investigation to issue subpoenas to get this," Johnson said, referring to unreleased data and documents.

The senator displayed a chart comparing adverse event reports for various drugs, including **ivermectin** and **hydroxychloroquine**, to those for COVID-19 vaccines. The stark contrast in reported deaths from these therapeutics — with COVID-19 vaccines showing significantly higher numbers — fueled Johnson's demand for more transparency.

"As important as the **cover-up of the origin story** is, there's a lot more that's being covered up," Johnson asserted. "The public has a right to know. We pay for these agencies. We pay their salaries. We fund these studies."

Redfield agreed with Johnson's assessment, stating that withholding the information is "counterproductive."



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### Redfield doubtful of 'any benefit from [gain-of-function] research'

Redfield's testimony took another controversial turn when he called for a pause on gain-of-function research, experiments that involve making pathogens more infectious or deadly.

"I'm not aware of any advanced therapeutic or vaccine that has come to pass because of gain-of-function research," Redfield said. "I do think there has to be a very aggressive debate of whether there's any benefit from that research."

Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) seized on this point, introducing his **Risky Research Review Act**. The bill aims to establish an independent board within the executive branch to oversee federal funding for high-risk life sciences research.

"If the Risky Research Review Act had been in place, it might have prevented the COVID-19 pandemic," Paul said, citing Redfield's endorsement.

MIT's **Kevin Esvelt, Ph.D.**, inventor of a technique for rapidly evolving proteins and other biomolecules who was also instrumental in developing **CRISPR** gene-editing technology, reinforced these concerns.

Highlighting gaps in current oversight, he described an experiment where his team — with FBI approval — successfully ordered **DNA fragments** of the **1918 influenza** virus from 36 of 38 providers.

“Everything that we did and the companies did was entirely legal,” Esvelt said, underscoring the potential for misuse. “There are no laws regulating DNA synthesis, even though the industry group, the **International Gene Synthesis Consortium**, has requested congressional regulation.”

The hearing revealed a growing consensus among witnesses for stricter oversight of potentially dangerous research, with Redfield suggesting such studies should be “highly regulated” to protect national security.

### **Redfield reaffirms COVID lab-leak theory**

The hearing reignited debate over the origins of COVID-19, with Redfield reaffirming his belief in the **lab-leak theory**.

“Based on my initial analysis, I believe then, and I still believe today, that the COVID infections were the direct result of a biomedical research experiment and subsequent lab leak,” Redfield stated.

This assertion led to a heated exchange between Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) and **Carrie Wolinetz, Ph.D.**, former chief of staff to then-director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) **Francis Collins**. Hawley accused NIH officials of deliberately suppressing the lab-leak theory.

“Your office, **Dr. [Anthony] Fauci** and others tried to actively censor them,” Hawley said. “There was a **propaganda** effort that this paper was the center of, and now everybody says, ‘Oh, well, we just weren’t sure at the time.’”

Hawley referred to the 2020 “**Proximal Origin**” paper that argued against the lab-leak hypothesis.

Wolinetz defended the NIH’s actions. “I do not believe censorship took place, sir.” She maintained that discussions about the virus’s origins were part of normal scientific discourse.

Redfield, however, criticized the lack of thorough investigation into both natural origin and lab-leak hypotheses. “Unfortunately, this didn’t happen,” he said, adding that four years later, he believes there’s no meaningful evidence supporting a natural origin.

The former CDC director also revealed that he did not learn about concerning **biodistribution studies** of the vaccine's **lipid nanoparticles** until as late as the summer of 2021, suggesting a delay in critical information reaching top health officials.

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### **'Biosecurity is our nation's greatest national security threat'**

Redfield emphasized the critical importance of **biosecurity** in national defense.

"In 2024, 2025, biosecurity is our nation's greatest national security threat," Redfield stated. "You need to think of it the same way we thought about the verge of nuclear atomic [sic] in the late 40s, 50s, and 60s."

He called for a proportional response to the threat, suggesting the creation of a dedicated **agency** within the U.S. Department of Energy to address biosecurity concerns.

"We have a \$900 billion Defense Department for the threat of China, North Korea and Russia," Redfield noted. "We don't have really any systematic agency or network of private sector contractors to help us with the biosecurity threat."

Sen. Roger Marshall (R-Kan.) echoed this sentiment. "In my humble mind, a viral biosecurity issue is a bigger issue than China's military threat to us."

**Gerald Parker, DVM, Ph.D.**, associate dean for **Global One Health** at Texas A&M University, supported the call for enhanced oversight, recommending "an independent authority to consolidate secure functions in a single entity with a dedicated mission."

The hearing also touched on the potential for future pandemics, with **Redfield repeating his warnings** about the potential spread of **H5N1 bird flu**.

As the hearing concluded, senators from both parties expressed concern over the lack of transparency and oversight in high-risk research.

Paul summarized the sentiment: "We cannot stand idly by. We must demand accountability, strive for transparency and ensure the safety of our citizens is never again compromised by negligence or deceit."

**Watch the July 11 hearing: 'Risky Research':**



### **John-Michael Dumais**

John-Michael Dumais is a news editor for The Defender. He has been a writer and community organizer on a variety of issues, including the death penalty, war, health freedom and all things related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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