

January 26, 2023

Dr. Albert Bourla  
Chief Executive Officer and Chairman  
Pfizer Inc.  
235 East 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Dr. Bourla:

I write in response to troubling reports on Pfizer's intention to mutate the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID) virus through gain-of-function, or "directed evolution," as detailed by Pfizer Director of Research and Development, Jordan Walker.<sup>1</sup> As has been proven time and time again, attempts to mutate a virus, particularly one as potent as COVID, are dangerous. If the claims detailed in the video are true, Pfizer has put its desire for profit over the concern of national and global health and must hold itself accountable.

In a video released by Project Veritas on January 25, 2023, Mr. Walker laid out Pfizer's plans to develop new vaccines for future variants of COVID by mutating the virus through directed evolution, a process that uses protein engineering to impose natural selection on a living organism or other biological materials, including viruses. Though he claimed the research is currently "exploratory," he detailed how the research would proceed, such as how scientists would inject the mutated viruses into monkeys and collect serial samples from other monkeys who are infected.

Whether it's gain of function research, or selected structure mutations through directed evolution, as Mr. Walker claimed would occur, any effort to make a virus more transmittable and deadlier is careless and dangerous. Further, Mr. Walker stated that Pfizer is willing to engage in this dangerous research because COVID and its variants are "a cash cow" for the company and regulators will go easy on their efforts because a significant percentage of government officials aim to work for Pfizer and other biopharmaceutical companies and do not want to compromise their future job prospects.

As a company that claims to "innovate every day to make the world a healthier place," these claims from your leadership charged with research and development are alarming. As the American people deserve to know, I request that you provide the following information:

1. What efforts is Pfizer currently, or planning to, engage in to mutate the SARS-CoV-2 virus?

2. Does Pfizer intend to continue mutating the SARS-CoV-2 virus through gain-of-function, or directed evolution research, with the purpose of creating new vaccines before the variant is present in the greater population?
3. Has Pfizer engaged with federal officials engaged regarding their plans to oversee this research? Please provide the names and agencies for these individuals.
4. What steps has Pfizer taken to ensure the mutated virus does not leak from the laboratory and infect the greater population?
5. Has Pfizer engaged with other biopharmaceutical companies to collaborate on this research effort? Please list the entities that you have been in contact with.
6. Will you commit to halting any future research that mutates the SARS-CoV-2 vaccine as substantial evidence has indicated that similar dangerous research at the Wuhan Institute of Virology very likely led to the initial emergence and global spread of the virus?

As a leader in global public health and development of the COVID vaccine, with American taxpayer dollars, it is critical that Pfizer is accountable for their actions and be transparent with the public on the substance and intent of their research.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.projectveritas.com/news/pfizer-executive-mutate-covid-via-directed-evolution-for-company-to-continue/>