

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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June 3, 2016

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
Chair
Select Investigative Panel
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Chair:

I am deeply concerned by your decision this week to provide FOX News advance copies of letters to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) before sending them to HHS or sharing them with me. In those letters, you again allege wrongdoing by StemExpress based on documents and secret “testimony” that you continue to withhold from Democrats in violation of House rules and without affording the company the opportunity to answer your claims, something it offered to do months ago.

You also released these letters and documents without redacting the names and contact information of doctors and researchers, despite repeatedly claiming that you take individual privacy and safety concerns seriously and would protect names and personal information from public disclosure. Following the Panel’s March 2, 2016 hearing, for example, you had the following exchange with a reporter:

Question: “What do you have to say to the criticism of the subpoenas for the names of the graduate students and researchers?”

Chair Blackburn: “We’re going to continue to have the necessary information and we’re going to do everything possible to protect names and identities. You saw that with the exhibits that we brought forward today.”

Panel Democrats have repeatedly objected to your sweeping documents requests and abuse of unilateral subpoena power, and have asked for rules that limit the information being collected and protect individual privacy and security. You have ignored our requests. As a result, the Panel now has information – including the names of researchers, doctors, and students, the records of victims of rape, and personal financial information – that Congress has no right or need to know.

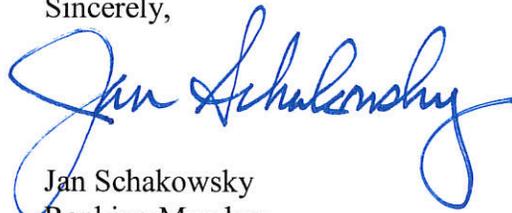
The Honorable Marsha Blackburn

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You have proven the risk of having this information in the hands of Panel Republicans: there is nothing to stop you from publicly releasing any of the information that you collect.

We ask that you immediately redact names, contact information, and other personally identifiable information from the documents that you have posted on your website. We also renew our request for the special meeting that the six Democratic Members previously requested so that we can enact rules that safeguard individual privacy and safety, and bring this investigation to an end.

Sincerely,



Jan Schakowsky
Ranking Member
Select Investigative Panel