

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL-RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Dr. Ralph Baric

Email: rbaric@email.unc.edu

Re: Notice of Suspension and Proposed Debarment of Ralph Baric, PhD

Dear Dr. Ralph Baric:

This is to notify you that, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), I have suspended you and initiated proceedings to debar you from participating in Federal Government procurement and nonprocurement programs. This action is initiated pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180, which HHS adopted and gave regulatory effect to at 2 C.F.R. Subpart 376.10. Copies of the referenced regulations are enclosed for your information. Also enclosed is a copy of an Action Referral Memorandum (ARM), dated the same date as this Notice of Suspension and Proposed Debarment (Notice), which sets forth the basis for the suspension and proposed debarment. The information in the ARM indicates that you lack the present responsibility to participate in Federal procurement and nonprocurement programs.

The suspension and proposed debarment for Dr. Ralph Baric is based on information from the following: 1) an April 15, 2026, Referral of Information (ROI), from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office of Extramural Research (OER), Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), recommending that the HHS Suspension and Debarment Official (SDO) consider initiating suspension and debarment proceedings against Dr. Ralph Baric; 2) NIH Notice Number: NOT-OD-15-011, Funding Pause for Certain Types of Gain-of-Function Research Projects, issued on October 17, 2014,¹ and an October 17, 2014, U.S. Government Gain-of-Function Pause on Selected Research Involving Influenza, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Viruses dated October 17, 2014; 3) an October 21, 2014, Letter from the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) regarding Grant Number 5U19AI107810-02; 4) Dr. Ralph Baric's Response to NIAID Gain of Function (GoF) Pause Letter for Grant Number 5U19AI17810-02, submitted to the NIH on January 20, 2015; 5) A *Nature Medicine* journal article, "A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence," published online on November 9, 2015, with Dr. Ralph Baric as co-author;² 6) Summary of Wellcome Trust Grant # 203268/Z/16/Z, "Why do Norovirus pandemics occur and how can we control them?," funding period January 1, 2017 through October 30, 2023; 7) an April 7, 2025, Letter from the NIH to UNC Regarding Dr. Ralph Baric's Salary Restriction; 8) an April 18, 2025, Summary of Dr. Ralph Baric, prepared by the NIH Office of Extramural Research – Research Integrity (OER-RI); 9) a May 21, 2025,

¹ Available online at: www.grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-15-011.html.

² Available online at: www.nature.com/articles/nm.3985#change-history.

Letter from UNC to the NIH, providing notification to the NIH that Dr. Ralph Baric was on extended leave from UNC; 10) Executive Order 14292, “Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research, issued on May 5, 2025;³ 11) NIH Notice Number: NOT-OD-25-112, Implementation Update: Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research, issued on May 7, 2025;⁴ and 12) a December 11, 2025, Letter from the NIH to UNC, requesting that UNC and Dr. Ralph Baric provide data comparing SARS-CoV Urbani, SARS-CoV MA15 and SHC014-S MA15 in human airway epithelial (HAE) cultures, in order to understand whether the addition of the SHC014 spike to SARS-CoV MA15 enhanced virus titers in vitro.

As further explained in the ARM, the information from this record provides cause for the suspension under 2 C.F.R. § 180.700(b) and (c), and for the debarment cause provided in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(d).

If you wish to contest this action, you, or a representative acting on your behalf, must either send or make arrangements to appear and present information and argument to me, the HHS SDO, within 30 days after you receive this Notice. *See* 2 C.F.R. §§ 180.725(b) and 180.820 (addressing when a Notice is considered to be received).

Any response contesting this suspension action may include any information and argument in opposition to the suspension that you would like considered by me, the HHS SDO, and should provide information responsive to 2 C.F.R. § 180.730(a)(1)-(4). Additional information about contesting the suspension is available at 2 C.F.R. Part 180, Subparts F and G, generally, and specifically, 2 C.F.R. § 180.720 *et seq.*

Any response contesting this proposed debarment action may include any information and argument in opposition to the suspension and proposed debarment that you would like to be considered by me, and should provide information responsive to 2 C.F.R. §§ 180.825(a)(1)(2). Additional information about contesting the proposed debarment is available at 2 C.F.R. § 180, Subparts G and H, generally, and specifically, 2 C.F.R. § 180.815, *et seq.*

Any response to this Notice should also include specific information that may raise a genuine dispute over facts material to the suspension and proposed debarment. A general denial is insufficient to raise a genuine dispute over facts material to the suspension and proposed debarment. If it is found that the information or argument submitted raises a genuine dispute over such material facts, fact-finding may be conducted to resolve the disputed facts. However, please note, actions based on conviction or civil judgment are not subject to dispute in this proceeding.

If you choose to designate a representative to respond on your behalf, please notify HHS Exclusion Inquiries at exclusioninquiries@hhs.gov, or in writing, of the identity of said representative. The designation should specifically state the names and addresses of all individuals or companies the designee has the authority to represent in this matter.

³ Available online at: www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/05/improving-the-safety-and-security-of-biological-research/.

⁴ Available online at: www.grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-25-112.html.

The suspension is effective as of the date of this Notice and enclosed ARM. The suspension and debarment, if ultimately imposed, has the following consequences pursuant to the authorities of 2 C.F.R. § 180 and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) (under the reciprocal effect provision of 2 C.F.R. § 180.140).

1. Your name, Dr. Ralph Baric, will be published in the General Services Administration's web-based System for Award Management (SAM), available at www.sam.gov. SAM contains the names of contractors debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible by any federal agency. Suspension and proposed debarment are effective throughout the executive branch of the Federal Government and apply to procurement and nonprocurement programs.
2. Offers will not be solicited from, contracts will not be awarded to, existing contracts will not be renewed or otherwise extended for, and subcontracts requiring Federal Government approval will not be approved for you by any agency in the executive branch of the Federal Government, unless the head of the agency taking the contracting action determines that there is a compelling reason for such action.
3. You may not conduct business with the Federal Government as an agent or representative of other contractors, or as an agent or representative of other participants in federal assistance programs, nor may you act as an individual surety to other government contractors.
4. No government contractor may award to you a subcontract equal to or in excess of \$30,000, except for certain subcontracts for commercially available off-the-shelf items, unless there is a compelling reason to do so and the contractor first notifies the contracting officer and further complies with the provisions of FAR 9.405-2(b).
5. Your affiliation with, or relationship to, any organization doing business with the Federal Government will be carefully examined to determine the impact of those ties on the responsibility of that organization to be a government contractor or subcontractor.
6. You are prohibited from acting as a participant in Federal agency transactions that are covered transactions unless an exception applies, and prohibited from acting as a principal of a participant in those covered transactions. *See* 2 C.F.R. §§ 180.130, 180.200, and 180.980. Covered transactions include certain procurement and certain nonprocurement transactions. *See* 2 C.F.R. 180.200.
7. You are prohibited from participating in certain non-procurement transactions which include but are not limited to grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, contracts of assistance, loans, loan guarantees, subsidies, insurances, payments for specified uses, and donation agreements. *See* 2 C.F.R. § 180.970.
8. No agency in the executive branch shall enter into, renew, or extend, primary or lower-tier covered transactions in which you are either a participant or principal, unless the head of the agency grants an exception in writing.

As noted in the ARM, this suspension is a temporary action. Suspension is used where immediate action is necessary to protect the integrity of federal procurement and nonprocurement activities. The suspension is effective until the conclusion of debarment proceedings pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.760(a).

The determination to debar you is discretionary and will be made on the basis of an administrative record. Any written information submitted by you will become a part of this administrative record, as will any information added to the record by the Federal Government. A copy of the administrative record will be furnished upon request to exclusioninquiries@hhs.gov.

Debarment is generally for a period not to exceed three years; however, regardless of whether you contest this action or respond to this Notice, I may impose debarment for a longer period or shorter period as the circumstances warrant. The length of debarment, if ultimately imposed, will be based on the seriousness of the cause for debarment, as provided by 2 C.F.R. § 180.865. I may also consider any mitigating or aggravating factors that may apply, as provided by 2 C.F.R. § 180.860.

Suspension and debarment proceedings are not punitive. Accordingly, I will consider any information you wish to provide.

Any communications regarding this matter should be addressed to HHS Exclusion Inquiries at exclusioninquiries@hhs.gov. Written submissions should be addressed to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Acquisitions, Office of Recipient Integrity Coordination, 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Mailstop 533H, Washington, D.C. 20201.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer D. Johnson". Below the signature is a blue horizontal line.

Jennifer D. Johnson

Suspension and Debarment Official and
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisitions

Enclosures: Action Referral Memorandum
Copy of 2 C.F.R. Part 180
Copy of 2 C.F.R. Part 376

**ACTION REFERRAL MEMORANDUM**

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), I hereby suspend and propose for debarment Ralph Baric, PhD (Dr. Ralph Baric) from participating in federal procurement and nonprocurement programs. This action is initiated pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180, which HHS adopted and gave regulatory effect to at 2 C.F.R. Subpart 376.10.

The suspension and proposed debarment for Dr. Ralph Baric is based on information from the following: 1) an April 15, 2026, Referral of Information (ROI), from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Office of Extramural Research (OER), Office of Policy for Extramural Research Administration (OPERA), recommending that the HHS Suspension and Debarment Official (SDO) consider initiating suspension and debarment proceedings against Dr. Ralph Baric; 2) NIH Notice Number: NOT-OD-15-011, Funding Pause for Certain Types of Gain-of-Function Research Projects, issued on October 17, 2014,¹ and an October 17, 2014, U.S. Government Gain-of-Function Pause on Selected Research Involving Influenza, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Viruses dated October 17, 2014; 3) an October 21, 2014, Letter from the NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) regarding Grant Number 5U19AI107810-02; 4) Dr. Ralph Baric's Response to NIAID Gain of Function (GoF) Pause Letter for Grant Number 5U19AI17810-02, submitted to the NIH on January 20, 2015; 5) A *Nature Medicine* journal article, "A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence," published online on November 9, 2015, with Dr. Ralph Baric as co-author;² 6) Summary of Wellcome Trust Grant # 203268/Z/16/Z, "Why do Norovirus pandemics occur and how can we control them?," funding period January 1, 2017 through October 30, 2023; 7) an April 7, 2025, Letter from the NIH to UNC Regarding Dr. Ralph Baric's Salary Restriction; 8) an April 18, 2025, Summary of Dr. Ralph Baric, prepared by the NIH Office of Extramural Research – Research Integrity (OER-RI); 9) a May 21, 2025, Letter from UNC to the NIH, providing notification to the NIH that Dr. Ralph Baric was on extended leave from UNC; 10) Executive Order 14292, "Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research, issued on May 5, 2025;³ 11) NIH Notice Number: NOT-OD-25-112, Implementation Update: Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research, issued on May 7, 2025;⁴ and 12) a December 11, 2025, Letter from the NIH to UNC, requesting that UNC and Dr. Ralph Baric provide data comparing SARS-CoV Urbani, SARS-CoV MA15 and SHC014-S MA15 in human airway epithelial (HAE) cultures, in order to understand whether the addition of the SHC014 spike to SARS-CoV MA15 enhanced virus titers in vitro.

The information summarized below indicates that Dr. Ralph Baric lacks the present responsibility to participate in federal procurement and nonprocurement programs.

¹ Available online at: www.grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/not-od-15-011.html.

² Available online at: www.nature.com/articles/nm.3985#change-history.

³ Available online at: www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/05/improving-the-safety-and-security-of-biological-research/.

⁴ Available online at: www.grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-25-112.html.

INFORMATION IN THE RECORD

A summary of the information in the record upon which the suspension and proposed debarment is based appears below:

1. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, Dr. Ralph Baric is a Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and the Department of Microbiology & Immunology at UNC. He began his career at UNC in 1986 as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Ralph Baric's research focuses on coronaviruses, using them as models to study the genetics of RNA virus transcription, replication, persistence, pathogenesis, genetics and cross-species transmission.
2. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, Dr. Ralph Baric is co-founder and Scientific Adviser of the Rapidly Emerging Antiviral Drug Development Initiative (READDI), a nonprofit biotechnology company dedicated to preventing global catastrophes caused by viruses.
3. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, on October 17, 2014, the U.S. Government announced that it would be instituting a funding pause on GoF research projects that reasonably may be anticipated to confer attributes to influenza, MERS, or SARS viruses, such that the resulting virus has enhanced pathogenicity and/or transmissibility (via the respiratory route) in mammals. The funding pause was implemented after several biosafety incidents at U.S. Government laboratories prompted a reassessment of the risks and benefits associated with certain types of GoF research involving high-risk pathogens. Along with pausing funding, the U.S. Government announced it would undertake a deliberative review to evaluate the potential benefits and risks of these studies and to support the development of a framework to guide future funding decisions. As such, also on October 17, 2014, the NIH issued Notice Number: NOT-OD-15-011, Funding Pause for Certain Types of Gain-of-Function Research Projects, for the purpose of notifying NIH applicants that, in accordance with the October 17, 2014, White House announcement, the NIH was instituting a funding pause on the provision of new funding for certain GoF research projects, federalwide.
4. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, in a letter dated October 21, 2014, NIAID notified UNC that it had determined that Project 1's Specific Aims 2 and 3 of NIH/NIAID Grant Number 5U19AI107810-02, with Dr. Ralph Baric as Principal Investigator (PI), may include GoF research that was subject to the October 17, 2014, U.S. Government funding pause.
5. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, on January 20, 2015, Dr. Ralph Baric submitted a response to the response to NIAID's October 21, 2014, letter. In his response, Dr. Ralph Baric stated, "As the insertion of the WIV1 and SHC014 S glycoprotein genes attenuated in vivo pathogenesis, these viruses fall outside the current pause." However, the NIAID found Dr. Baric's response to be "deceptive," because he did not mention that the SHC014 spike within the MA15 background demonstrates a "gain in pathogenesis" compared to the Urbani spike (wild type spike)

- in the MA15 background, as stated in the 2015 *Nature Medicine* article, “A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence,” published online on November 9, 2015, with Dr. Ralph Baric as co-author.
6. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, Dr. Ralph Baric’s January 20, 2015, response to NIAID stated that “the proposed experiments are not GoF studies” because the SARS-CoV mutants “are either attenuated compared to wild-type virus or can be reasonably anticipated to be attenuated.” However, Figure 2 included in the response did not report wild-type virus as the comparator; instead, the mouse-attenuated strain SARS-CoV MA15 was labeled as the comparator for both human and mouse studies (left figure below). When the same data was submitted to NIAID on March 31, 2015, in the progress report for Grant Number 5U19AI107810-03, the same comparator was instead labeled SARS-CoV Urbani.
 7. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, these data were later published in the 2015 *Nature Medicine* article, “A SARS-like cluster of circulating bat coronaviruses shows potential for human emergence,” as Figure 1c-f with SARS-CoV Urbani labeled as the comparator for Calu3 cells and HAE cultures and SARS-CoV MA15 labeled as the comparator for the mice studies.
 8. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, on December 15, 2014, prior to his response to NIAID, Dr. Ralph Baric participated in a panel at the National Academies Symposium on Potential Risks and Benefits of Gain of Function Research entitled, “Potential Benefits of GOF Research II: Treatment and Response.” During the session, Dr. Ralph Baric described the SHC014 chimeric virus as a “a chimeric gain of function virus.” In addition, the symposium’s proceedings also described Dr. Ralph Baric’s work on chimeric virus as gain of function: “While studies using pseudotypes and structure-based prediction confirmed the existence of a bat SL-CoV that can infect human cells, only studies using GoF chimeric virus identified an additional bat SL-CoV as a potential threat.” The NIAID found Dr. Ralph Baric’s public statements at the meeting and in the 2015 *Nature Medicine* article to be in direct conflict with his statements to the NIH, and, therefore, appeared to demonstrate a pattern of deception.
 9. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, the NIAID also found Dr. Ralph Baric to be “engaged in deception” regarding certain grants/awards that he has been affiliated with. For example, Wellcome Trust Grant # 203268/Z/16/Z (01/01/2017 – 10/30/2023) “Why do Norovirus pandemics occur and how can we control them?” awarded to University College London, United Kingdom (UK), with Dr. Judith Breuer as PI and Dr. Ralph Baric, and five others from the UK, as Co-PIs, is not consistently disclosed or accurately described in documents submitted to the NIH as follows:
 - Dr. Ralph Baric’s publications in which he is corresponding author attribute the Wellcome Trust award to him. However, the funding organization is reported to the NIH as “Burroughs Welcome Trust.” Burroughs Welcome Fund is a US-based nonprofit funding organization; while the Wellcome Trust is a UK-based research funding charity, the NIAID found this to be “a clear attempt at deception.”

- The Wellcome Trust award appears similar to Dr. Ralph Baric's NIH award, R01AI148260 (03/05/2020 – 02/28/2026) "Antibody Landscape following Human Norovirus Infection and Vaccination." However, the Wellcome Trust award was not disclosed as other support in Just-In-Time (JIT) documents submitted to the NIH, for Grant Number R01AI148260, on 02/12/2020.
10. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, in a letter dated April 7, 2025, the NIH notified UNC that Dr. Ralph Baric's salary would be restricted on NIH-funded grants while the NIH conducted a compliance review of grant awards awarded to UNC with Dr. Ralph Baric as PI or any senior key capacity.
 11. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, in a letter dated May 21, 2025, UNC notified the NIH that Dr. Ralph Baric was on extended leave with no end date and would be absent from his NIH-funded grants.
 12. On May 5, 2025, the President Trump issued Executive Order 14292, "Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research," which immediately paused federal funding for dangerous GoF research, restricted funding for research in specific countries of concern, and directed the development of a stricter oversight policy within 120 days, for the purpose of preventing enhancements to pathogen transmissibility or virulence and mandating stricter screening for synthetic nucleic acid procurement. The purpose of the Executive Order was to implement additional steps to strengthen oversight of research that could or will make a naturally occurring pathogen or toxin more dangerous to American citizens, and directed the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and the National Security Advisor to work with federal agencies to revise or replace existing policies overseeing this research.
 13. On May 7, 2025, the NIH issued Notice Number: NOT-OD-25-112, Implementation Update: Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research.
 14. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, the NIH provided a letter to UNC, dated December 11, 2025, following up on responses UNC submitted in response to an NIH inquiry regarding disclosures of foreign support, financial conflicts of interest, and GoF research related to Dr. Ralph Baric. In the letter, the NIH requested that UNC and Dr. Ralph Baric provide data comparing SARS-CoV Urbani, SARS-CoV MA15 and SHC014-S MA15 in HAE cultures, in order to understand whether the addition of the SHC014 spike to SARS-CoV MA15 enhanced virus titers in vitro. The NIH found that Dr. Ralph Baric failed to provide this requested data in his response, and found that he minimized the concern about a potential increase infectivity in human cells.

15. According to the April 15, 2026, NIH ROI, the following are active and pending NIH grants associated with Dr. Ralph Baric:

Grant Number	Role	Status	Project Period	Institution
5R01AI148260-05	PI	Awarded	03/05/2020 – 02/28/2026	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2R01AI148260-06	PI	Pending Award	03/05/2020 – 11/30/2030	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
1U19AI171292-01	PI	Contact-PI	05/16/2022 – 04/30/2026	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2P01AI106695-11	Project Lead & Subcontract PI	Awarded	07/29/2015 – 07/31/2030	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
1U19AI181960-01	Co-Investigator	Awarded	08/12/2024 – 07/31/2027	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
5U19AI116484-10	Subaward PI	Awarded	03/01/2015 – 03/31/2026	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
R21AI196622-01	Co-Investigator	To be Paid	12/01/2025 – 11/30/2027	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
1R01AI195963-01	Subaward PI	Pending Award	12/01/2025 – 11/30/2023	University of Pennsylvania
1R01AI195640-01	Co-Investigator	Pending Award	12/01/2025 – 11/30/2030	Duke University
2P01AI158571-02	Project Lead	Awarded	09/16/2021 – 01/31/2031	Duke University
2R01AI157155-06	MPI	Awarded	09/15/2020 – 08/31/2030	Washington University
2R01AI127845-06A1	Co-Investigator	Pending Award	09/27/2016 – 11/30/2030	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
2R01AI089728-11A1	MPI	Pending Award	05/15/2010 – 11/30/2030	University of Minnesota
2R01AI157253-06	MPI	Pending Award	09/25/2020 – 06/30/2030	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
1P01AI167966-01	Project Lead	Awarded	09/02/2022 – 08/31/2026	Washington University

SUSPENSION FINDINGS AND BASIS FOR THE PROPOSED DEBARMENT

Based on the information in the record identified above, I have determined that there is adequate evidence which provides cause for the suspension and proposed debarment of Dr. Ralph Baric, pursuant to the Nonprocurement Common Rule, found at 2 C.F.R. § 180. Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.700, a suspending and debarring official may immediately suspend an individual or entity when “there exists adequate evidence to suspect any other cause for debarment listed under § 180.800(b)-(d), which includes “Any other cause that is so serious or compelling in nature that it affects your present responsibility.” *See* 2 C.F.R. §§ 180.700(b); 180.800(d). In addition, the suspending and debarring official may immediately suspend an individual or entity when “immediate action is necessary to protect the public interest.” *See* 2 C.F.R. § 180.700(c). It is important to note that suspension is a temporary action, used where immediate action is necessary to protect the integrity of United States Federal Government procurement and nonprocurement activities.

As stated in the information in the record, the NIH found that, based on his own statements and published research, Dr. Ralph Baric was engaged in GoF research that was subject to the October 17, 2014, U.S. Government funding pause and NIH Notice Number: NOT-OD-15-011, Funding Pause for Certain Types of Gain-of-Function Research Projects to that effect, and continued to participate in in GoF research even after being notified of this by the NIH. Also, the NIH found that Dr. Ralph Baric was not forthcoming surrounding his Wellcome Trust grant in documents submitted to the NIH. Furthermore, as established in the information in the record, Dr. Ralph Baric is associated with multiple active NIH-funded grant awards.

While GoF research can help scientists understand diseases, it can also be extremely dangerous and introduce serious risks, with the potential to cause disease by enhancing its pathogenicity or increasing its transmissibility. If left unrestricted, its effects can include widespread mortality, an impaired public health system, disrupted American livelihoods, and diminished economic and national security. No matter how many safety precautions are taken, there is always a chance that a never-before-seen virus can escape and trigger an outbreak, with the potential to significantly endanger the lives of American citizens.

Therefore, I have determined that the information in the record provides cause for Dr. Ralph Baric's suspension, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. §§ 180.700(b) and 180.700(c), and proposed debarment, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(d).

DECISION

Pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 180, which was adopted and given regulatory effect by HHS at 2 C.F.R. Subpart 376.10, and based upon the administrative record and the findings herein, Dr. Ralph Baric is hereby suspended and proposed for debarment, effective as of the date of this Action Referral Memorandum and enclosed Notice of Suspension and Proposed Debarment. The suspension of Dr. Ralph Baric is effective until the conclusion of debarment proceedings, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 180.760(a).



Jennifer D. Johnson

Suspension and Debarment Official and
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Acquisitions