

To: Collins, Francis (NIH/OD) [E] (b) (6); (b) (6); Garry, Robert F <rfgarry@TULANE.EDU>; spond@temple.edu; rasmus_nielsen@berkeley.edu; tbedford@fredhutch.org
Cc: Fauci, Anthony (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6); Bloom PhD, Jesse D <jbloom@fredhutch.org>; Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E] (b) (6)
Subject: Re: URGENT: Seeking your expert advice

Colleagues,

When: tomorrow (Sunday 6/20) at 3 PM EDT

Please call: (b) (6)

Passcode: (b) (6)

Many thanks,
Larry

From: Francis Collins (b) (6)
Date: Saturday, June 19, 2021 at 11:07 AM
To: (b) (6), "Garry, Robert F" <rfgarry@TULANE.EDU>, "spond@temple.edu" <spond@temple.edu>, "rasmus_nielsen@berkeley.edu" <rasmus_nielsen@berkeley.edu>, "tbedford@fredhutch.org" <tbedford@fredhutch.org>
Cc: Anthony Fauci (b) (6), "Bloom PhD, Jesse D" <jbloom@fredhutch.org>, "Embry, Alan (NIH/NIAID) [E]" (b) (6), "Tabak, Lawrence (NIH/OD) [E]" (b) (6)
Subject: URGENT: Seeking your expert advice

Hi Kristian, Bob, Sergei, Rasmus, and Trevor,

Tony Fauci and I would like to get your advice on the interpretation and significance of a preprint that Jesse Bloom has just submitted to BioRxiv (attached). As you will see, through some clever sleuthing, Jesse has been able to discover 13 sequences of SARS-CoV-2 spike protein that were deposited (and then deleted) from the SRA by a Chinese investigator at Wuhan University. The sequences are incomplete but interesting, in that they appear to represent a slightly closer relationship to RaTG13 than the prior root of the phylogenetic tree.

Would you be willing to have a close read of the paper and then join a conference call with Jesse, Tony, and me tomorrow (Sunday 6/20) at 3 PM EDT? Steve Sherry of NCBI will also join – he has been digging out information about how these reads were removed from SRA by a request from the submitter, and assessing whether there might have been any other similar requests in early 2020.

Let me know if you can be available.

Thanks, Francis