

FNC's *Fox & Friends: Weekend*

07/26/26

8:00:29 a.m. [TEASE]

19 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Pandemic Origin Probe]

CHARLES HURT: It's 8 a.m. hour of *Fox & Friends Weekend* starting with this. The Covid origin debate is back in the spotlight. Dr. Anthony Fauci testifies with lawmakers promising to get answers and Senator Rand Paul once again leading the charge.

ANTHONY FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: You are implying that what we did was responsible for the deaths of individual — I totally resent that.

SENATOR RAND PAUL (R-KY) [on 07/20/21]: But it could happen. It could have been.

FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: And if anyone is lying here, senator, it is you.

(...)

8:28:26 a.m.

5 minutes

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Flashback; 2021: Senator Rand Paul & Dr. Fauci Clash Over Gain-of-Function Research]

GRIFF JENKINS: Well, Dr. Anthony Fauci will be back in front of lawmakers this week when he testifies before Senator Rand Paul's committee again on the origins of COVID-19. And remember, the last time that happened, we pulled the tape watch.

FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: I want everyone to understand that if you look at those viruses and that's judged by qualified virologists and evolutionary biologists, those viruses are molecularly impossible —

PAUL [on 07/20/21]: No one's saying they are. No one's saying those —

FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: — to result in SARS-COVID-2.

PAUL [on 07/20/21]: — viruses caused the pandemic.

SENATOR PATTY MURRAY (D-WA) [on 07/20/21]: Senator Paul!

PAUL [on 07/20/21]: We're saying they are gain of function viruses because they're animal viruses that became more transmissible in human and you funded it and you won't admit the truth.

[SCREEN-WIPE]

FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: And you are implying that what we did was responsible for the deaths of individual — I totally resent that.

SENATOR RAND PAUL (R-KY) [on 07/20/21]: But it could happen. It could have been.

FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: And if anyone is lying here, senator, it is you.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Dr. Fauci Set to Testify Before Senate This Week]

JENKINS: Fauci denies all wrongdoing, including claims he directed NIH employees to destroy federal records. Jamie Metzel has been called the original COVID-19 whistleblower, And was the lead Democrat on the Heritage Foundation's COVID-19 Origins Commission. He joins us now. So Jamie, what do you anticipate we're going to see this week when Fauci gets before Rand Paul again?

JAMIE METZL: Well, we're going to see more of this combative back and forth between Senator Paul and Tony, Dr Fauci. And frankly, I think we should just be open-minded about a few things. One is that the COVID-19 pandemic was a terrible and totally avoidable pandemic. Two, that the United States government gave some funding to the Wuhan lab where it looks like the COVID-19 pandemic originated. Three, that by the terms of our grants, those grants directly could not have led to — to COVID-19. But that doesn't mean we should look at everything. And should we be funding labs in China where we don't have complete transparency? I've said repeatedly that we need to look at everything and everything. This is primarily a Chinese virus, meaning that the Chinese state is primarily responsible for COVID-19 pandemic. But that doesn't mean that there aren't flaws and shortcomings on our side and we need to look at everything.

JENKINS: You know, I'm glad you framed it that way, Jamie, so we can show our viewers just looking kind of at COVID-19 during the pandemic then versus now, we've learned a couple of very important points. One is, in 2020, natural immunity was downplayed. That lab leak theory was not only dismissed, but you were just labeled a conspiracy theorist and ridiculed if nyou were even suggesting that, masks were widely recommended. We all had to wear this mask. Lockdowns and school closures were supported. Fast forward to what we know now, natural immunity actually provides protection. The lab origin is considered once again, a plausible cause mask off or limited protection, we've learned, and lockdowns came with major socioeconomic costs that we will be feeling for years. So, you know, do you anticipate that we will at least see a more forthcoming Dr. Anthony Fauci about what we've learned or do you think he just digs his heels in?

METZL: Well, we collectively have learned a lot since the earliest days of COVID when so many people were dying and we didn't have a nlot of answers. I personally support masking. I think the vaccines that Dr. Fauci led the creation of save tens of millions of lives globally, and I think being careful in those early days was absolutely essential. But what happened, what I think was wrong was that Dr. Fauci presented a level of certainty saying here things that we know,

which we didn't fully know. And on COVID origins, I agree that his statement in early that you that you played earlier saying we know that this comes from a natural origin, we believe it comes from a natural origin. That's wrong. Look, I'm a Democrat. I was one of the first people to say, hey, wait a second. Let's not take this market origin hypothesis at face value because all the evidence, as I was seeing, it was pointing toward a lab accident. So, again, nobody's perfect. Dr. Fauci isn't perfect. I believe he's a national hero for the tens of millions of lives he saved. But that doesn't mean any of us should not have our records reviewed. And I think the United States got it — some things right, like Operation Warp Speed, developing the vaccines in record time in the early days of COVID, and we got some things wrong, potentially included the massive school closures and a lot of other things. So, we need to be learning. But if we only look at ourselves, if we only say that COVID origins is a U.S. problem and not a China problem and a global problem, that's like an autoimmune disease. And the only entity that that's helping is China.

JENKINS: Jimmy Metzl, we shall be watching this hearing. Dr. Fauci will be under oath. Hopefully, he will be fully forthcoming. Thank you for coming on, and sharing your insights.

METZL: Thank you.