https://www.citizen.org/news/nih-agrees-with-public-citizen-will-conduct-preclinical-trials-of-the-potential-covid-19-treatment-gs-441524/

NIH Agrees With Public Citizen, Will Conduct Preclinical Trials of the Potential COVID-19 Treatment GS-441524

Drug May Have Significant Advantages Over Remdesivir

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will expeditiously conduct preclinical studies of GS-441524 as a treatment for COVID-19 and will make the results readily available to the scientific community, as requested in a letter sent to the agency by Public Citizen.

On Aug. 4, Public Citizen and two university-based drug researchers urged Gilead Sciences, Inc. and several government agencies, including the NIH, to advance development of GS-441524 as a potential treatment for COVID-19, because evidence shows it may offer significant advantages over the closely related antiviral drug remdesivir.

Public Citizen received a response letter from the director of the NIH's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences, Dr. Christopher Austin, on Aug. 22, stating that "Scientists in our Division of Preclinical Innovation have reviewed the literature and agree that [GS-441524] merits further exploration," and that NIH scientists will quickly conduct preclinical studies of the drug.

"Public Citizen applauds the NIH's commitment to conducting the necessary preclinical studies of GS-441524 as a potential treatment for COVID-19, and we await those results with great anticipation," said Michael Abrams, health researcher at Public Citizen and lead author of the letter. "Such further study of the drug is long overdue, especially given the evidence that GS-441524 may be cheaper and easier to manufacture and more amenable to administration in inhaled or oral forms than remdesivir."

"We hope that Gilead will respond similarly and commit to working collaboratively with the NIH to study the potential of GS-441524, even if it means the company may reap lower profits than expected from the marketing of remdesivir," Abrams added.