

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO
EASTERN DIVISION**

CARLO M. CROCE

Plaintiff,

vs.

DAVID A. SANDERS

Defendant.

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Case No. 2:17-cv-00338

Judge James L. Graham

Magistrate Judge Preston Deavers

**Exhibit 12 to Defendant's Appendix in Support of
Motion for Summary Judgment – 12/12/2016 Carlo
Croce Letter to Daniel Salisbury**

**DESIGNATED AS CONFIDENTIAL BY
PLAINTIFF**

FILED UNDER SEAL



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

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December 12, 2016

Dear Mr. Salisbury,

Thank you for your message of December 5, 2016 concerning our 2005 paper by Fabbri et al (titled "WVOX gene restoration prevents lung cancer growth in vitro and in vivo"), that we discussed previously (Fabbri rebuttal_2014.pdf). Apparently you received new information concerning potential duplication of images within fig. 1B and you would like to revisit the matter. I include the response to your message to me by my former post-doctoral fellow, Muller Fabbri, who is the first author of the paper. In summary the analysis of the pixel patterns and band shapes (done on the images presented by the PNAS whistleblower's analysis) shows differences that are not compatible with image duplication. The original blot was done by Dimitrios Iliopoulos, a graduate student in Kay Huebner's laboratory, who is now the Founding Director of UCLA Center for Systems Biomedicine and an Associate Professor of Digestive Diseases/Gastroenterology at UCLA.

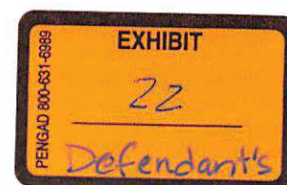
To be satisfied, two years ago I asked Dr. Fabbri to repeat the experiment, since, as mentioned previously, unfortunately we could not find the original of the blot. OSU regulations require we keep the originals for 5 years. The results are shown at the end of Dr. Fabbri's letter. The new experiment showed the same result of the one published in PNAS in 2005. Thus I consider the matter closed.

However, I would like to express some considerations. In view of a letter I received from Mr. James Glanz, a journalist of the New York Times, the whistleblower is Dr. David A. Sanders, an Associate Professor at Purdue University, who apparently advises Mr. Glanz as "expert" on western blotting and is known for denouncing many scientists for scientific misconduct and plagiarism. I googled Dr. Sanders and found that he published only 3 papers as senior author in the past 11 years and none in the last 5 years. The last time he was funded by a federal research grant was 1999. I also tried to get his H Index and could not find it, meaning that his scientific impact has been close to zero. My H Index is 201 and I am one of the most cited scientists in the world. Thus I have serious doubts that Dr. Sanders is an "expert". This latest accusation of our PNAS 2005 paper supports my opinion.

Since Fig. 1B of our paper is right and we have repeated the experiment showing the same result, I do not see any need to withdraw the paper or to correct the figure (the paper is just fine!!), as you seem to suggest. In fact, I would counteract such action by litigation in a court of law, where at least we would get a fair hearing.



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Personally I find it appalling that PNAS listens to people like Dr. Sanders and Claire Francis (another, perhaps the same, anonymous professional whistleblower). This shows extremely poor judgement which results in considerable loss of time and reagents for the research scientists accused by false and frivolous claims. It is even worse when a journalist of the New York Times uses as an advisor an "expert" such as Dr. Sanders. Whistleblowers, like those mentioned, corrupt the way science and scientists are seen. Bowing to political correctness, PNAS shows lack of courage and spine instead of being objective and forthright. I hope you will share this letter with the Board of PNAS.

Sincerely,



Carlo M. Croce, MD
Distinguished University Professor
The John W. Wolfe Chair in Human Cancer Genetics

