

## Conflict of Interest? Whistleblower alleges study by Stanford's John Ioannidis critical of lockdown funded by wealthy corporate donor critical of lockdown

A highly influential [coronavirus](#) antibody study was funded in part by David Neeleman, the JetBlue Airways founder and a vocal proponent of the idea that the pandemic isn't deadly enough to justify continued lockdowns.

That's according to a complaint from an anonymous whistleblower, filed with Stanford University last week and obtained by BuzzFeed News, about the study conducted by the famous scientist John Ioannidis and others. ...

The study — released as a non-peer-reviewed paper, or [preprint, on April 17](#) — made headlines around the world with a dramatic finding: Based on antibodies in thousands of Silicon Valley residents' blood samples, the number of coronavirus infections was up to 85 times higher than believed. This true infection count was so high that it would drive down the virus's local fatality rate to 0.12%–0.2% — far closer to the known death rate for the flu.

Almost immediately, the [study became a flashpoint](#) in the increasingly politicized debate over whether and how to reopen the economy. Although many scientists assailed its methods, leading the authors to [post a revision](#) nearly two weeks later, it was trumpeted by conservative media to support a growing theory: that fears of the coronavirus are overblown.

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And emails cited within the complaint also suggest that the study's authors disregarded warnings raised by two Stanford professors who tried to verify the accuracy of the antibody test used.

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