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Retraction: TMEM88 inhibits fibrosis in renal proximal tubular epithelial cells by suppressing the transforming growth factor- β 1/Smad signaling pathway

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Retraction of 'TMEM88 inhibits fibrosis in renal proximal tubular epithelial cells by suppressing the transforming growth factor- β 1/Smad signaling pathway' by Huicong Li *et al.*, *RSC Adv.*, 2019, 9, 6928–6934, DOI: 10.1039/C8RA10369K.

The Royal Society of Chemistry hereby wholly retracts this *RSC Advances* article due to concerns with the reliability of the data. The images in the article were screened by an image integrity expert. The appearance of some of the individual western blot bands does not look consistent with other bands within the same figures. Many of the panels are over-contrasted, have no visible background, and the bands do not look genuine. Furthermore, the western blots and many other features of the article were found to be unexpectedly similar to western blots and features in a number of other papers with no overlapping authors.

The authors were asked to provide the raw data for this article, but did not respond. Given the significance of the concerns about the validity of the data, and the lack of raw data, the findings presented in this paper are not reliable.

The authors have been informed but have not responded to any correspondence regarding the retraction.

Signed: Laura Fisher, Executive Editor, *RSC Advances*

Date: 15th January 2021

