

**Opening Statement**  
**Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson**  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
*Hearing on the FY 2014 R&D Budget Request*

April 17, 2013

Thank you, Chairman Smith, for holding this hearing and welcome, Dr. Holdren. It's good to have you back before the Committee as we begin to digest the President's FY 2014 R-and-D budget proposals.

I am pleased that the President remains committed to prioritizing investments in research and development and STEM education in his request. Even in these fiscally challenging times we must set priorities, and there are few more important investments we can make than in our nation's brain power.

The scientists, engineers, and innovators of today make discoveries and develop technologies that generate whole new industries and jobs, improve the quality of life and security of our citizens, and keep our nation thriving in a competitive world economy. They also help to give our children the grounding in science and technology they will need to become the innovators of the future, or simply to be prepared for the high-skilled jobs of the future.

Specifically, I applaud the President's continued commitment to keeping the budgets of NSF, NIST, and DOE's Office of Science on sustained upward trajectories initiated in the *America COMPETES Act*. These agencies, among others, help to ensure our long-term economic growth through their support for cutting edge basic research and STEM education.

I am also pleased with the Administration's increased support for advanced manufacturing. The last few years have proven that we cannot be just a service economy and continue to grow. We must also maintain a strong base of American manufacturing. While we will have questions about some of the specific initiatives as we proceed with a series of agency budget hearings, I firmly believe the key to maintaining and rebuilding our manufacturing capacity is through strategic investments in advanced manufacturing R-and-D and workforce development.

I also support the increased funding for the U.S. Global Change Research Program, including the proposed increase for NASA's climate research. Scientists are telling us that the climate is changing and I don't understand why some of us keep fighting them. The significant increase in extreme weather events across the globe in recent years and the empirical records of increased global temperatures and greenhouse gas concentrations should be evidence enough. I hope we act before it is too late to direct our nation's great brainpower to developing solutions to reduce the warming and mitigate the impacts in our most vulnerable communities.

Finally, I want to address the Administration's sweeping proposal to reorganize Federal STEM Education programs. I support the Administration's effort to develop a coherent vision and strategy for federal investments in STEM. I firmly believe in a federal role in STEM education, but I also believe we must hold ourselves and our agencies accountable for these investments.

We need to prioritize and we need to focus on outcomes, not outputs or dollars spent. This is exactly what we asked you to do in the 2010 *COMPETES Act* and I am happy that you took this task seriously.

At the same time, the release of this proposal before we have the strategic plan in hand makes it very difficult for us to understand and evaluate all of decisions and realignments. I hope, Dr. Holdren, that you will be able to elucidate more of this for us today, and I implore you to prioritize getting us the full report. I am supportive of your process and I want to be supportive of your outcome, but the longer you wait to share your detailed plans and justifications, the greater the chance that Member and stakeholder concerns will grow and your tremendous efforts will be set back at least a year, if not longer.

That being said, we will have some concerns and disagreements across the federal R&D budget proposal, but let me be clear. This is a good budget for research, innovation, and education. I look forward to working with the President and my colleagues in the months ahead to make sure that the FY 2014 appropriations bills that this Congress will eventually pass continue to reflect the need to invest in our future.

Thank you Dr. Holdren for being here today and thank you for your contributions to ensuring continued U.S. leadership in science and technology.