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Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives

*A Panel Discussion on Climate Change:
How Climate Change Affects Texas and How Texas Can Adapt and Prosper*

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Good Morning and welcome to today's panel discussion on climate change. Specifically, how climate change affects Texas and how Texans can adapt and prosper.

I'd like thank all of our distinguished panelists for being here today. I'd also like to thank UT Southwestern Medical Center for graciously allowing us to host this morning's event on their campus. Most importantly, I want to thank all of you in the audience for joining us for this important discussion.

Climate change is perhaps the biggest environmental challenge of our time. As Ranking Member of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, the Committee with jurisdiction over agencies that have a direct role in addressing climate change like NASA, NOAA, the EPA and the National Science Foundation, I have the privilege of working on the research activities and priorities of those agencies as well as others.

The Committee also has jurisdiction over the research and development programs at the Department of Energy that work on renewable energy; energy-saving homes, buildings, and manufacturing; and sustainable transportation that will help us reduce our carbon footprint over the long-term. In my role as Ranking Member, I have tried to ensure that these agencies have the resources they need to appropriately address this critical challenge. I must say, though, that this is a bit of an uphill battle in the current Congress.

And while climate change is an issue that must be addressed by the Federal government, first and foremost, I am a Texan, and climate change's impacts and effects will be felt locally. From increased drought in the Panhandle to concerns over extreme flooding along our coasts and rivers, to the increased risk of wild fires across the state, climate change is an issue that we cannot ignore. Not only will climate change affect the Texas economy, it will impact Texans on a personal level. I've seen first-hand Texan families faced with the task of putting their lives back together after a disaster, and that's something we can ill afford to have happen more often than it already does.

Today's discussion is meant to look at the climate change effects that may have already occurred and the actions we can take in the future to both address and adapt to climate change. While climate change is a challenge that we must overcome, it is also an opportunity. An opportunity to create jobs in Texas. An opportunity to lower our dependence on foreign oil, whether from the Middle East, Venezuela, or Russia. An opportunity to spur research and innovation in our

universities and technology hubs. With Texas's abundant wind, solar, hydro, and natural gas resources we should be positioning our state to become a world leader in clean and renewable energy. I would like to see Texas companies not only install, but build and sell wind turbines and solar panels.

I would like to see Texas cities take the lead in adopting clean energy technologies and creating systems to minimize water and carbon use. I would like to know that our health system is prepared to address the changes that may be wrought by our changing climate. This is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.

I hope that today's discussion will lead to affirmative steps and concrete actions that we can take to mitigate the damage already done and to adapt to the changes that will occur. Ultimately, we're all in this together, and by working together we can achieve our shared goals of a robust economy, a healthier public, and a cleaner environment.

I want to thank everyone for being here today and I look forward to this important dialogue.