U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Opening Statement

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)

Full Committee Markup of:

H.R. 272, the Astronaut Safe Temporary Ride Options Act (ASTRO Act)
H.R. 6219, the Accessing Satellite Data to Enable New Discoveries Act (ASCEND Act)
H.R. 7687, the NASA Streamlining Partnerships for Research and Education for Engineering and Science Act (SPREES Act)
H.R. 4152, the Space Resources Institute Act
H.R. 7630, the Accelerating Networking, Cyberinfrastructure, and Hardware for Oceanic Research Act (ANCHOR Act)
H.R. 7686, the Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Program Definition Clarification
H.R. 7073, the Next Generation Pipelines Research and Development Act
H.R. 7685, the Innovative Mitigation Partnerships for Asphalt and Concrete Technologies Act (IMPACT Act)

March 20, 2024

Thank you, Chairman Lucas. Good morning, everyone, I am happy that we are back in the Committee room today to consider several bipartisan bills. I look forward to supporting all of these good bills.

First up, the "Astronaut Safe Temporary Ride Options Act" or the "ASTRO Act" would eliminate a burdensome and unnecessary bureaucratic complication having to do with provision of home-to-work transportation for astronauts while they remain under medical supervision following a mission. This bill has been a long-time coming, and I thank Mr. Babin and Mr. Jackson for taking the initiative.

H.R. 6219, the "Accessing Satellite Data to Enable New Discoveries Act" or the "ASCEND Act," led by Representatives Kean and Bonamici, would codify an existing program began after a NASA pilot successfully demonstrated the viability of purchasing commercial small-satellite data to support NASA's Earth system science programs. This bill capitalizes on the remarkable accomplishments of the pilot by making the program permanent.

Next, we will consider the "NASA Streamlining Partnerships for Research and Education for Engineering and Science Act," introduced by Mr. Sorensen. This bill would give NASA the authority to receive and merge funds for the awarding of grants or cooperative agreements through collaborative scientific or engineering research or education projects with other agencies. H.R. 7687 will facilitate greater efficiency through interagency partnerships, a win-win for everyone involved.

Our next bill, the "Space Resources Institute Act" was introduced by Ms. Caraveo and Mr. Lamborn. Utilizing local available resources on celestial bodies is considered a crucial means to enabling sustainable deep space exploration. This bill directs NASA and the Department of Commerce to evaluate creating a hub at an academic institution to help organize and advance U.S. research and technology development efforts around space resources. This is yet another good example of the Science Committee anticipating the technological needs of the future.

Next is the "ANCHOR Act" sponsored by Mr. Garcia and Ms. Stevens. The U.S. Academic Research Fleet is made up of 18 oceanographic vessels. This fleet struggles with both networking and cybersecurity challenges, hindering scientific output and putting critical ocean science projects at risk.

This bill directs the National Science Foundation to collaborate with other appropriate agencies and vessel operators on a networking and cybersecurity improvement plan to address these challenges.

H.R. 7686, the "Malign Foreign Talents Recruitment Program Act," introduced by Mr. Garcia and Ms. Stevens, reflects our committee's good faith deliberations around how to protect our nation's research enterprise. This legislation seeks to clarify the CHIPS and Science Act definition of a "malign foreign talent recruitment program" so that research institutions and their faculty can responsibly comply. It came about because these institutions provided feedback that the existing definition is causing confusion in ways we did not anticipate. Even with the best of intentions and vetting, sometimes we don't get things quite right the first time. I am grateful for the sponsors' effort to fix this.

Next, we will consider H.R. 7073, the "Next Generation Pipeline Research and Development Act", introduced by Mr. Weber and Ms. Caraveo. Our nation's infrastructure includes nearly 2.8 million miles of pipeline. Half of these pipelines are over 60 years old and susceptible to leaks and other defects. This bill is critical to ensuring that we are doing all we can to minimize the risks associated with our aging pipeline infrastructure. It will help protect the health of communities across this country while also minimizing impacts to our ecosystems.

Our final bill, sponsored by Mr. Miller and Ms. Foushee, is the "Innovative Mitigation Partnerships for Asphalt and Concrete Technologies Act" or "IMPACT Act". Globally, cement facilities account for 8% of carbon dioxide emissions, equivalent to roughly one-third of all power plant emissions. Projected demand for cement is expected to increase 12% by 2050. To address this pressing challenge, the IMPACT Act establishes a program at DOE to support research and development in next-generation cement, concrete, and asphalt emission reduction technologies and provide technical assistance to help increase the efficiency of current production processes. This bill will both strengthen the competitiveness of American manufacturing and address our climate challenge.

And with that I look forward to getting started, I thank the Chairman again, and I yield back.