



# U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON **SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**

## Opening Statement

**Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)**

**Full Committee Markup of:**

H.R. 2984, ASTRO Act  
H.R. 2600, ASCEND Act  
H.R. 2313, Celestial Time Standardization Act  
H.R. 2613, Next Generation Pipelines Research and Development Act  
H.R. 1223, ANCHOR Act  
H.R. 3029, Nucleic Acid Standards for Biosecurity Act

April 29, 2025

*Good morning, Chairman Babin, and thank you for holding today's markup, the first Science Committee markup of the 119<sup>th</sup> congress. Unfortunately, this Congress has already revealed itself to be one of the most challenging in my tenure. Regardless, I remain committed to the type of bipartisan cooperation that has made this committee exceptionally productive no matter who is in the Majority. It is my sincerest hope that in this room we can continue to do the good work that our nation relies on, where we support scientific advancement, and invest in innovation that will help create a healthy, safe, fruitful future for all Americans.*

*With that in mind I will briefly address the good bipartisan bills we are considering today, all of which we have already considered in this committee.*

*First up is the "Astronaut Safe Temporary Ride Options Act" or the "ASTRO Act." This bill 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 Chairman Babin for taking the initiative on this issue.*

*H.R. 2600, the "Accessing Satellite Data to Enable New Discoveries Act" or the "ASCEND Act," led by Representatives Hurd and Bonamici, would codify an existing program begun after a NASA pilot program 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 is The Celestial Time Standardization Act, and it seeks to solve a fairly common question on earth that becomes a more head scratching problem in deep space – that is "what time is it?" Or, to put it more technically, this bill directs NASA and OSTP to develop celestial time standardization for future operations on the Moon and other celestial bodies.*

*Then we will consider H.R.2613, the “Next Generation Pipeline Research and Development Act”, introduced by Mr. Weber and Ms. Ross. 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 ensure that we are doing all we can to minimize the risks associated with our ageing pipeline infrastructure. It will help protect the health of communities across this country while also minimizing impacts to our ecosystems.*

*Next is the “ANCHOR Act” sponsored by Mr. Fong 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.*

*Our last bill is the Nucleic Acid Standards for Biosecurity Act, introduced by Ms. Salinas and Mr. McCormick. This bill directs NIST to support the development of best practices for nucleic acid screening. It also directs the development of technical standards for screening of these molecules by a consortium of interested stakeholders.*

*These are all important efforts and I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their leadership on these bills. I will also take this opportunity to remind my colleagues on the other side that all but one of these bills require funding that we must also be willing to support to see them to fruition.*

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