



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

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## Opening Statement

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

Full Committee Hearing:

*The State of U.S. Science and Technology: Ensuring U.S. Global Leadership*

*February 5th, 2025*

Thank you, Chairman Babin. Welcome to all of the new Members on both sides of the aisle, and welcome to the distinguished panel of witnesses. It is my hope, and intent, that this Committee continues to be a place for constructive debate and collaboration that represents the best of what this institution can achieve. While the Science Committee didn't enact enough legislation last Congress, we did pass many good bipartisan bills through committee and worked hard to get them over the finish line, and I stand ready to work with my new Chairman to continue that work.

Having said that, I cannot ignore the reality outside of these four walls. Here we are holding a hearing about U.S. leadership in science and technology, with a widely respected panel of witnesses, while the new administration is actively and with unprecedented speed and ferocity apparently seeking to tear down and undermine some of the very scientific foundations upon which our leadership has been so painstakingly built. I have ultimate and total respect for Chairman Babin who has also sat on this committee for many years, and who I am certain appreciates the importance of the work we do, I am also deeply concerned about reporting that science programs may be targeted as part of reconciliation plans being put together. I just don't know how anyone reconciles rhetoric about competing with China with pulling the rug out from under our own research enterprise.

For many decades there has been bipartisan consensus that the federal role in basic research is essential. That we cannot pull back, and that basic research funding needs to continue if we are take the lead in science in the world.

But in the past two weeks there has been chaos in our science and technology community. Research across the United States was paused because the administration supposedly wanted to weed out the undefined "DEI." Literally, until a court order stopped it. Researchers across America wondered if they could pay their graduate students and postdocs. While Communist China is making unprecedented investments in scientific research AND talent, our government is not supporting our scientists in the way we should. As a united Congress we are going to have to decide whether it's worth standing with Elon Musk if it means surrendering to China.

Soon enough, the American people are going to expect actual results from this Congress and this administration— results that make their lives better, that give them hope that their children’s lives will be better. But our children’s lives will be drastically worse if we lose the AI race with China. Our future economy will be much worse if we lose the clean energy race with China. And our national security will be decidedly worse if we lose the space race with China. My fear is that the chaos the new administration is sowing will be enough to leave our science and technology enterprise in ruins, with China’s Communist leaders in Beijing popping champagne corks.

To the accomplished, serious panel of witnesses sitting before us, who have dedicated your careers in service to the U.S. science and technology enterprise, thank you for that service. Thank you for being here today. Thank you for your testimony and willingness to come before us to answer our questions. I do not blame you if it all feels surreal. We will have serious policy questions for you and I know you will give thoughtful answers.

There are many new members of our committee on both sides of the aisle who may not yet - but will - come to understand the critical importance of federal investments in science and technology because of hearings like this and experts like yourselves. If they don’t yet, they will come to understand that we need to tap into scientific talent from all walks of life across our great nation and from all across the world if we are to remain global leaders in science and innovation. If they don’t yet, they will come to understand that our premier federal laboratories at NIST, DOE, and NASA are decades old and crumbling, and we cannot possibly expect to lead by cutting these agencies further. For decades we have proudly called this committee the Committee of the Future. I hope we continue to live up to that moniker. I stand by as a ready partner in that endeavor.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I yield back.