



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

Opening Statement

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Full Committee Hearing:
An Update on the Climate Crisis: From Science to Solutions

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

Good morning. I'd like to welcome everyone here to the first hearing of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology in the second session of the 116th Congress. I'd also like to welcome our expert witnesses and thank them for their participation. As was the case at the first hearing that this Committee held in the 116th Congress, we are focusing on the climate crisis. Specifically, we are discussing the latest science and the solutions we urgently need to implement.

Since that inaugural climate hearing in February 2019, I am proud to say that this Committee has held numerous hearings examining the climate crisis and moved a number of important climate-related bills through the Committee so far. The hearings have discussed major climate reports, considered technological and energy solutions, and assessed how the U.S. can remain a global leader in weather and climate science. Members have been hard at work on a suite of legislative proposals that will improve our earth system science and deep decarbonization efforts, including the authorization of strategic increases in funding for clean energy research and development where it is most needed.

Despite these accomplishments, there remains more work to do to ensure that the United States can better understand, mitigate, and adapt to climate change. Today, our expert witnesses will testify that time is quickly running out to prevent devastating impacts to humans and ecosystems globally. However, I hope they will also emphasize that though the situation is urgent, it is not hopeless. There is much that we can achieve with our current technologies, and other potential solutions ripe for further investment.

Climate change is not just a future issue. Our witnesses will testify about the real and devastating impacts that are being felt now in communities across the U.S. and the world. Record heat and drought in Australia, which current science links to human-caused climate change, have created catastrophic fires that continue to blaze.

Though this Administration has so far abdicated its role as a leader in addressing the climate crisis, many of us in Congress are committed to addressing all aspects of this global threat. Last month, a number of my colleagues and I attended the 25th UN Conference of Parties, or COP 25

in Madrid, Spain. We went to demonstrate the U.S.'s continuing commitment to the ideals laid out in the Paris Agreement. While it was disappointing to see the outcome of the COP, I look forward to continuing our efforts to act on climate change here in this Committee, and in the Congress as a whole.

During this second session, I hope to continue collaborating across the aisle to pass legislation that helps us address climate change, and this hearing is an important step in that process.