



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

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## Opening Statement

**Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)**

Full Committee Hearing:  
*The Science Behind Impacts of the Climate Crisis*

March 12, 2021

Good morning and welcome to the first climate change hearing of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee in the 117th Congress. I want to thank our esteemed panel for joining us today.

Our communities are already dealing with the very clear and present danger of climate change impacts. NOAA found that 2020 set a new record of 22 weather and climate disasters that each exceeded \$1 billion in damages. This unprecedented year included the most active Atlantic Hurricane Season, multiple damaging severe weather events across the Midwest, and a record-setting wildfire season in the West. And my own state of Texas has also seen the impacts of extreme weather over the past year.

As this Committee discussed last Congress, many of these devastating impacts fall hardest on our most vulnerable populations.

We know that in many cases, climate change is making these weather and climate events more intense and more frequent. Our ability to predict extreme events, and our confidence in attributing some of them to climate change, has improved over time. With that knowledge, we need to act to both mitigate and adapt to these impacts before it is too late.

Climate solutions are built on a foundation of robust, sustained, and long-term investment in climate science, observations, and modeling. In addition, we need to develop climate solutions that take into consideration multiple disciplines—not only the physical and natural sciences, but the social sciences as well. Finally, we need to ensure that those disadvantaged communities that are hit first, worst, and hardest by the impacts of climate change are at the table when potential solutions are being developed and implemented.

Addressing the climate crisis is a unique opportunity to help put America back to work. Given the economic downturn our country has faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is vital that Congress prioritize federal investments that will provide well-paying and long-lasting jobs for Americans across the country.

Last Congress, this Committee had great success in moving 15 bipartisan energy innovation bills in the Energy Act of 2020 that were enacted into law. While this was a significant accomplishment, our work is not done, and I hope to build off this strong bipartisan work. This hearing is simply the first step in our Committee's efforts to address the climate crisis in the 117th Congress. I am looking forward to working with our subcommittee leadership, and Committee Members on both sides of the aisle, to develop and move strong, bipartisan, and impactful legislation to address the climate crisis and create actionable climate solutions.

We have much to consider today, and I again want to thank our witnesses for participating in today's hearing.

I now yield to Ranking Member Lucas for his opening statement.