



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

Floor Statement

Statement by Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
on H.R. 36, *Combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act of 2019*
January 3, 2019

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to be joined by my good friend, Ranking Member Lucas, in introducing the *Combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act of 2019*.

Over the last year, the #MeToo movement emboldened countless women, many who had remained silent for years, to share their experiences. Their stories made it clear that the experience of sexual harassment is much too common across all segments of our society. A recent report by the National Academies of Sciences revealed that sexual harassment is pervasive in the scientific workplace – in lecture halls, laboratories, observatories, and remote field sites. The report also found that sexual harassment stifles the advancement of female scientists.

This bill establishes a research program at the National Science Foundation to examine the prevalence of and factors contributing to sexual harassment in the scientific workforce. Furthermore, this bill directs the Office of Science and Technology Policy to issue uniform policy guidance to Federal science agencies to ensure every agency has clear policies and dedicated resources to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual harassment at academic institutions receiving federal research funding. This legislation also creates an interagency working group to improve coordination and communication among agencies in addressing sexual harassment by federally funded scientists.

Sexual harassment is driving some of our brightest minds away from careers in research at a time when we need them most. If we are to tackle the scientific and technological challenges ahead of us, we must do more to ensure women are free to conduct their research without being degraded, harassed, or abused because of their gender. The *Combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act of 2019* is an important first step in that direction, and I hope Members on both sides of the aisle will support this legislation.