

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

U.S. Congressman Jerry F. Costello (D-IL)
Acting Ranking Member of the
Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics

The Next Great Observatory: Assessing the James Webb Space Telescope

**Tuesday, December 6, 2011
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM
2318 Rayburn House Office Building**

Chairman Hall, thank you for holding today's hearing to receive testimony on the progress and challenges of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST).

NASA's astronomy and astrophysics program has revolutionized our understanding of the origins and evolution of the Universe. The program has made incredible progress, including the scientific breakthroughs of the Hubble Space Telescope and the five Nobel Prizes in Physics awarded to U.S. scientists for discoveries enabled by NASA. JWST holds the promise of building on these successes and maintaining our ingenuity and scientific leadership, in cooperation with international partners.

While JWST holds great promise for the future of astronomy and astrophysics, the project has gone well over budget and is far behind schedule. I am pleased that following stringent review by NASA and third parties, the agency is implementing necessary changes to bring the project back on track. But while NASA and its contractors are moving in the right direction, we must match those technical achievements with real progress on the management and cost control of these challenging projects if we are going to sustain our scientific and technical leadership.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on what steps NASA is taking to ensure JWST and its workforce stay on track for a 2018 launch and how Congress and NASA can work together to sustain the astronomy and astrophysics program in the future.

I welcome our witnesses and look forward to their testimony. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.