

Opening Statement
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Subcommittee on Environment
Background Check: Achievability of New Ozone Standards

June 12, 2013

I want to thank Chairman Stewart for holding this hearing on the forthcoming National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ground level ozone and I want to thank the witnesses on the panel.

As someone who has been in the public health field, I am keenly sensitive to the problem poor air quality can have on the health of our citizens, especially the young and the infirm.

As a country, we need to do all that we can to ensure that we have clean air to breathe. The EPA is at the forefront of protecting our citizen's ability to breathe clean air, whether it is in my home State of Texas or here in Washington, D.C. To do its job correctly, the EPA must invest in research, determining how pollutants occur and how they affect the health of our population. The EPA's investment in scientific research helps achieve regulations which are the fairest and most cost-effective way of protecting our citizens from pollutants.

I am looking forward to the testimony from the EPA's witness here today to explain the science behind the EPA's Integrated Science Assessment of Ozone and Related Photochemical Oxidants. This report is another reminder of the importance of investing in research.

If we are going to ask the EPA protect the public health and the environment we must give them the funding to carry out the best research; thereby ensuring that the scientific justifications for any regulations from the EPA are backed by the best science.

It has always seemed simple to me that protecting the health of our citizens ensures a stronger and more vibrant economy. I look forward to hearing about these new ozone air quality standards from our witnesses today.