

**Committee on Science, Space, and Technology**

**Full Committee Markup of H.R. 3834 and H.R. 3199**

**Opening Statement**

**Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson**

Thank you Chairman Hall, and thank you for holding this markup today. As noted, today we are marking up two bills: H.R. 3834, a good bill which is the product of bipartisan negotiation, and H.R. 3199, which, unfortunately, is neither of those things.

H.R. 3834, the *Advancing American's Networking and Information Technology R&D Act* is an important bill. It continues to strengthen and build upon the interagency initiative launched 20 years ago with the High Performance Computing Act of 1991.

H.R. 3834 is an updated version of the bill our Committee passed in 2009 that appropriately reflects changes to the networking and information technology landscape that have occurred since Congress last enacted amendments to the program in 2007.

Advances in NIT are a key driver of our economy, increasing productivity in existing industries and opening the door for the formation of new ones. Small businesses use NIT to connect to a wider consumer base, allowing them to grow. Internet companies such as Google and Facebook are now worth billions of dollars and show how quickly NIT R&D can translate into real world products.

The wireless devices we all carry have changed our lives in profound ways. NIT will improve health care by lowering costs and creating better treatment options through the use of electronic health records, advanced surgical tools, and improved medical research.

NIT protects our brave men and women in the military by improving intelligence gathering and sharing as well as making unmanned aerial missions possible. NIT is truly pervasive in our society.

H.R. 3834 ensures that the federal government develops a coherent vision and strategy for federal investments in NIT R&D, including all of the applications made possible by NIT. The bill also contains provisions that would help facilitate and strengthen public-private partnerships for the benefit of our economy, national security, and overall quality of life.

I am pleased with a new provision in H.R. 3834 that requires federal agencies to come together to examine the R&D needed to make cloud computing a viable, secure,

and efficient tool for science and engineering research and for many sectors of our economy. It is important that this Committee continue to be a leader in this emerging area.

Finally, I want to thank the Chairman for preserving an important amendment offered by Ms. Woolsey in 2009 to ensure that the NITRD program strengthens its role in NIT education and diversity. According to the most recent data available, the number of American students pursuing degrees in computer science continues to fall, with the percentages of female and black students pursuing those degrees falling even further.

In the meantime, IT companies are coming to Congress and telling us that they can't find enough skilled workers, and computer science professors are telling us their students are snatched up into good jobs the moment they graduate. The STEM education problem in this country is much broader than just computer science. But given the importance of IT to every sector of our economy, we cannot afford to leave computer science out of the conversations around STEM at any level.

The private sector spends much more overall in NIT R&D than the federal agencies do. But industry research and innovation is built on the foundation of R&D supported by the agencies and largely carried out in our universities and federal laboratories. And industry hires the students trained in our universities under federal research grants. The NITRD program plays a central role in this ecosystem and this bill continues to strengthen the NITRD program and ensure that the federal agencies can respond quickly to emerging R&D and education needs as the industry continues to grow and evolve. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3834.

Mr. Chairman, it had been my hope that this second session of Congress would begin with a constructive markup of bipartisan and non-controversial legislation by our Committee that could be enacted into law.

The productive development of H.R. 3834 provides an example that we would do well to follow in the remaining months of this Congress. Unfortunately, the second bill we will consider at today's markup provides us with nothing more than political theater.

H.R. 3199 is a wolf in sheep's clothing. What looks to be an innocent attempt to provide a scientific assessment on mid-level blends of ethanol is nothing more than an effort to obstruct EPA from finishing their activities related to an existing Clean Air Act regulatory process already underway. Nothing about delaying EPA's regulatory authority is non-controversial.

This attack on the EPA is not just an attack on the EPA's regulatory process, it is also an attack on increasing our supply of clean domestic energy. This country cannot continue to rely solely on fossil fuels for our energy needs.

We must work to develop new transportation fuels like ethanol, renewable diesel, and other clean fuels that have not yet been invented. We have to develop all the energy sources we have if we want to have a secure energy future.

I am disappointed that we are considering this bill today. I think this bill is less about ethanol and more about attacking the EPA. This bill has no chance of going anywhere in the Senate. It has no chance of being signed by the President. So all we are doing today is engaging in political theater at the expense of the EPA and at the expense of our clean energy future. Such political theater is not the best use of this Committee's time, and I hope that this will be the last such bill we consider.

I yield back.