

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Subcommittee on Research and Technology
Strategic Planning for Manufacturing Competitiveness
July 10, 2013

Opening Statement
By
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This afternoon we are examining legislation –introduced by my colleague Mr. Lipinski– that would require the development of a national strategic plan for manufacturing.

I strongly believe that if the United States is to remain competitive in the long-term, we need to ensure that American companies maintain their capacity to manufacture new and innovative products here at home.

While the United States is struggling to sustain its competitive edge other countries are focusing their full attention on manufacturing. They are aggressively investing in research and development.

And they are implementing the policies and programs necessary to build a 21st century economy now.

We simply cannot afford to stand idly by and watch our competitors position themselves ahead of us. A robust and healthy manufacturing sector is just too important for our economy and our national security. That’s why I am pleased that we are examining Mr. Lipinski’s legislation today. We need to create a strategy that outlines a vision and set of goals for manufacturing.

I had hoped that my Republican colleagues would have agreed to my request to broaden the scope of today’s hearing to include manufacturing legislation that I authored. It would have also been useful for the Committee to hear from the witnesses on proposals that may well be part of such a strategy.

However, that being said, I’ve been recently been informed that my colleagues plan to hold a hearing on my bill in September.

My legislation, the *Advancing Innovative Manufacturing Act of 2013* – or the AIM Act, makes strategic investments in manufacturing research, development, and education. It brings the public and private sectors together to tackle the research needs of industry. It provides small and medium-sized manufacturers with innovation vouchers that will allow them to make their companies and products more competitive. And finally, it ensures that our community colleges are preparing students for the manufacturing jobs of the future.

We need our manufacturing sector to be the most sophisticated in the world, using the newest technologies and the most efficient methods and processes. By doing this, we can ensure the survival of our manufacturing sector and maintain our global leadership.

I am hopeful that while not specifically asked to comment on what should or should not be a part of our efforts to revitalize American manufacturing, today's witnesses can offer the Committee some recommendations on what areas we should prioritize.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to having a more detailed discussion of the programs proposed in my legislation in September as the Chairman has committed to me.