

**Opening Statement**  
**Ranking Member Miller**

***Joint Subcommittee Hearing:***  
***Continuing Oversight of the Nation's Weather Satellite Programs:***  
***An Update on JPSS and GOES-R***  
**Wednesday, June 27, 2012**

I want to thank both Chairs of the Subcommittees for holding today's hearing on two satellite programs – JPSS and GOES-R - that have been central to our Committee's oversight responsibilities for years.

Though seldom the headline-grabber, it is hard to overstate the effect that the satellite programs has on the life of Americans. For instance, satellite-based weather and climate forecasts tell us not only how to dress for the day, but also where to fly airplanes, what crops to plant, when to run our power plants, how to plan military missions, and when to take cover from deadly storms. When they are more timely and accurate, we are more prosperous and safer. When satellite programs falter, we put lives, property, infrastructure, and our economic health at risk.

During my tenure as Chairman of the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee we kept a very close eye on these programs - particularly the Joint Polar Satellite System, or JPSS - recognizing that poor management and wasteful spending put more than federal jobs and money at stake. Until recently, we have been profoundly disappointed. Even now the data gap that threatens our forecasting capabilities is simply inexcusable.

But, today, I am cautiously optimistic that the work the Administration put into reorganizing and re-scoping JPSS has put the project on a new path to mission success. Time will tell. But, until then, we should focus on the real and viable options we will need to use in order to get us through a difficult period.

At the same time we have to keep a watchful eye on NOAA's progress on the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite System – R series, or GOES-R. From their stations above the

equator, the GOES system tracks weather across the Western Hemisphere.

While the GOES program has not suffered from the same mismanagement and mistakes that have plagued the polar satellite program, we have seen the preliminary cost estimate for these satellites double and, as a result, NOAA found it necessary to cut in half the number of satellites to be ordered. Even so, we remain cautious to ensure this program remains within budget and on schedule.

As with JPSS, we need to take a hard look at the necessary funding levels and reserves required to keep overall costs down and the project on-time.

I look forward to hearing our witnesses from GAO, NOAA, and NASA discuss how the relevant agencies can keep these programs on track, and in the process fulfill their promise of keeping Americans safer and our economy more efficient and productive.