

OPENING STATEMENT

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Full Committee Markup
H.R. 1119, H.R. 1156, H.R. 1162, H.R. 1158, and H.R. 874

March 4, 2015

Mr. Chairman, the five bills we are marking up today are all bipartisan bills that were introduced in the last Congress, and I plan to support them. That said, I would once again like to call your attention to the fact that we are once again skipping regular order.

It would have been appropriate for these bills to go through a normal subcommittee markup in advance of the full committee markup so that our subcommittees would have had a chance to exercise their expertise and jurisdiction on these matters. There is no urgency to any of these bills that requires bypassing regular order.

In addition, I am concerned that we are spending our time marking up a number of individual small bills that at one time would have been parts of a comprehensive R&D bill such as the America Competes Act.

When Mr. Norman Augustine appeared before our Committee at the end of January he stated in no uncertain terms, and I quote, *"I think America Competes is the most important thing this Committee could take on."* I agree with Mr. Augustine, and rather than continuing to focus on small bills like those before us today—meritorious though they may be—I would hope that we can now turn our focus to working together to hold comprehensive hearings and bipartisan dialogue aimed at reauthorizing America Competes.

There are clear policy differences that we will have to resolve, but I can think of no more important way to spend our time than to work together on a piece of substantive legislation like Competes.

Turning to the bills before us today, I want to thank Mr. Lipinski and Mr. Moolenaar for introducing H.R. 1156, the International Science and Technology Cooperation Act. International collaborations have led to some of the latest discoveries and developments in science and technology, many of which have relevance to our everyday lives.

By ensuring better coordination among our scientific agencies when involved in international collaborations, we will help create the conditions for future achievements.

Next, I want to thank Mr. Beyer and Mr. Johnson for introducing H.R. 1162, the Science Prize Competitions Act. This bill makes it easier for agencies to use the prize competition authority granted to them in the 2010 Competes Act.

Though prize competitions are no substitute for the sustained investment and long-term approach that traditional federal R&D funding provides, prize competitions can play a useful role in advancing the federal R&D enterprise.

I am also pleased to join Ms. Comstock in cosponsoring the Research and Development Efficiency Act, HR 1119. Just the other day I met with prominent leaders from the university community, and they shared with me that one of their top priorities is reducing the regulatory burden on federally funded research.

When researchers are spending more than 40 percent of their time on administrative burdens, we know we are not making the most efficient use of our precious federal research dollars. This bill won't solve the whole problem, but it is an important step in the right direction.

I am also appreciative of the efforts of Mr. Swalwell and Mr. Hultgren in HR 874, the American Super Computing Leadership Act. This legislation authorizes the Secretary of Energy to support research that will increase our nations computing capabilities by two orders of magnitude. Such advances will allow our scientists and engineers to gain insights into diverse fields of study ranging from the surety of our nuclear stockpile to climate change research.

Finally, I am pleased to support the passage of HR 1158, the Department of Energy Laboratory Modernization and Technology Transfer Act of 2015, cosponsored by Mr. Hultgren and Mr. Perlmutter.

This bill has a number of different provisions to help spur the commercialization of new technologies developed by DOE laboratories and programs in partnership with the private sector. Giving the Department and the laboratories more flexibility, as provided in this legislation, will increase the speed with which commercial innovations can reach the American public.

In closing, I want to thank the Chairman for his support of these bipartisan bills, and I look forward to a productive markup.

Thank you.