

OPENING STATEMENT
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Subcommittee on Space
“*Are We Losing the Space Race to China*”
September 27, 2016

Good morning and welcome to our witnesses.

This morning’s hearing poses an interesting question, “Are We Losing the Space Race with China?” This question presupposes that we are in a space race with China, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on whether they agree with that premise.

In any event, the reality is that China is an emerging power in space, and is advancing in both its civil and military space capabilities. As a result, I think that the most pertinent questions are, what does China’s progress in space mean for the United States and, in particular, for the U.S. space program—and how should we respond to that progress?

The National Academies in its 2014 report, “*Pathways to Exploration*” recommended that NASA should “*Vigorously pursue opportunities for international and commercial collaboration in order to leverage financial resources and capabilities of other nations and commercial entities. International collaboration would be open to the inclusion of China...*”

The experts assembled by the National Academies suggest that collaboration with China and other nations will be important in pursuing our goal of sending humans to Mars. Their conclusion requires careful consideration and so I’m glad, Mr. Chairman, that we have the opportunity this morning to begin to discuss China’s space activities.

The question of what, if anything, Congress needs to do with respect to China’s advances in space, and the implications of any potential decisions to cooperate or not cooperate with China in space are not easy questions to address. I welcome the perspectives and insights of our witnesses on this topic, and I look forward to their testimony.

Mr. Chairman, our nation’s international cooperation in space has been a hallmark of America’s approach to space exploration since the beginning of the Space Age.

I hope our discussion today is just the beginning of what will be further conversations on how our space cooperation may need to evolve to help serve our nation’s goals in space and promote the global good.

Thank you, and I yield back.