<u>OPENING STATEMENT</u>
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Subcommittee on Environment
"Examining the Nation's Current and Next Generation Weather Satellite Programs"
July 7, 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome to our witnesses. I am pleased to see both Dr. Volz and Mr. Powner here again to provide updates on our Nation's critical weather satellite development programs – J-P-S-S and GOES-R. I am also looking forward to hearing from both Mr. Stoffler and Ms. Chaplain about the relationship between the Department of Defense and NOAA, and how that partnership helps meet both civilian and defense needs.

Let me be clear: NOAA's weather satellite programs play a critical role in ensuring the continued health of our weather forecasting capabilities, and they support weather forecasting activities around the globe.

Although both J-P-S-S and GOES-R have experienced significant cost growth, and management and technical challenges during their development, I am pleased to learn that NOAA has responded to recommendations from GAO and others, and that we expect to have both satellites launched within the year.

However, as we will hear today, there is still more work to be done. Concerns about a potential gap in our satellite coverage must be addressed, and NOAA must apply lessons learned to ensure future programs do not face identical challenges. As I have said before, we must take all necessary steps to ensure there is not a gap in satellite coverage in support of our weather forecasting capabilities.

The successful launch of these satellites is critical to ensure our Nation maintains its weather forecasting capabilities. However, it represents the first step, not the last, in NOAA's ever evolving efforts to protect the American lives, property, and critical infrastructure. I look forward to hearing more about NOAA's plans to maintain and improve the Nation's weather forecasting capabilities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.