

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

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
“James Webb Space Telescope: Program Breach and its Implications”
July 26, 2018

Good morning. Welcome Mr. Bush and welcome back, Mr. Young.

The recently announced cost growth and schedule delay for James Webb Space Telescope is not good news, and Northrop Grumman shares responsibility with NASA for the situation we are facing. The human errors at Northrop Grumman that contributed to the cost and schedule growth on the project are indeed troubling.

But let me be clear. I am not here today to berate Northrop Grumman and its associated subcontractors, but rather to see what needs to be done to keep this from happening again. In addition, this Committee, in its oversight capacity, needs to take a hard look at whether appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure accountability at both Northrop Grumman and NASA for the cost growth and delays to the James Webb Space Telescope project.

So, I hope this morning’s discussion will shed light on several issues, including, the biggest risks to meeting the March 30, 2021 launch date and how much confidence Congress should have in Northrop Grumman’s ability to meet that date. I also want to know what changes are being made to address the Independent Review Board’s findings and recommendations on management communication on the James Webb Space Telescope project.

Before I close, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the hundreds of employees at Northrop Grumman and NASA who are working tirelessly toward a successful completion and commissioning of the James Webb Space Telescope.

Many of them have worked long-shifts, weekends, and have given up time with their families to meet the demands of this extraordinary project. We appreciate their important contribution. This project and the scientific discoveries it will enable would not be possible without them.

Thank you, and I yield back.