

## OPENING STATEMENT

Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Full Committee Markup of S. 1254, *the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2013*

May 21, 2014

Thank you, Chairman Smith. The first bill we are marking up today is S. 1254, *the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act*. I want to commend Subcommittee Ranking Member Bonamici and Congressman Posey for working together to advance this important issue. S. 1254 is very similar to legislation passed by the Committee and the House in both the 111<sup>th</sup> and the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress.

I am hopeful that the third time will be the charm and we can finally get this bill signed by the President.

While NOAA and the research community have made great strides in advancing our understanding of harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, the need for continued research and public awareness is greater than ever before. The distribution and frequency of harmful algal blooms has increased dramatically in recent years.

Today, nearly every state is threatened by toxic algae, and it is clear that both the factors that contribute to the development of blooms as well as the solutions to control blooms vary widely by region.

Scientific discoveries made under the program reauthorized by this bill will improve coastal and inland water management practices as well as our forecasting and early warning capabilities.

While I am very supportive of the legislation and the bipartisan amendment we will discussing next, I would be remiss if I didn't note my disappointment that this bill was not considered through regular order.

While some of us have worked on this topic for a number of years, more than half of the members of the Committee have never even participated in a hearing on harmful algal blooms. Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that we do our best to build a legislative record and engage both our subcommittees as well as the full membership of this Committee before we mark up any legislation within our jurisdiction.

Nonetheless, I am supportive of the legislation and the bipartisan manager's amendment and I yield back.