COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS   Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

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Full Committee Mark-up of H.R. 4373, H.R. 4372, AND H.R. 4355
Opening Statement
September 25, 2019

Thank you, Chairwoman Johnson, for holding this mark-up.

Today we will consider three bipartisan bills.

The first is H.R. 4373, the "Engineering Biology Research and Development Act of 2019."

I was proud to join Chairwoman Johnson as well as Representatives Jim Sensenbrenner and Zoe Lofgren in introducing this bill. H.R. 4373 promotes a national research strategy around engineering biology, to ensure the U.S. remains the global leader in biology and biotechnology.

I will speak further on the bill when it is brought up for consideration in a moment.

Our second bill this morning is H.R. 4372, the "MSI STEM Achievement Act," sponsored by Chairwoman Johnson and Representative Michael Waltz. The bill continues our Committee's bipartisan work to support, encourage and develop the next generation of STEM students.

Minority serving institutions– including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities - have a long record of success in recruiting, retaining and graduating underrepresented students in STEM fields.

In my own district, I have seen the unique value of minority serving institutions. For more than 100 years, Langston University, a historically black college and a land-grant institution, has educated students of all backgrounds, and influenced people's lives beyond the boundaries of the classroom in service to the community in both rural and urban Oklahoma.

This legislation will help schools like Langston prepare their students to fill the STEM jobs of the 21st Century.

I want to thank the Chairwoman and Mr. Waltz for their work on this legislation and urge my colleagues to support it.

Finally, we will consider H.R. 4355, the "Identifying Outputs of Generative Adversarial Networks Act," introduced by Representative Anthony Gonzalez.

Generative Adversarial Networks use machine learning to manipulate videos and other digital content to produce misleading and false products, commonly known as "Deepfakes." These technologies are becoming more sophisticated and in the wrong hands, they present a serious security threat. Bad actors already seek to use disinformation to disrupt civil society and sow divisions among Americans.

This bill supports the fundamental research necessary to better understand the underlying technology, to develop tools to identify manipulated content, and to better understand how humans interact with this generated content.
The bill also tasks NIST with bringing together the private sector and government agencies to discuss how to responsibly advance innovation in this area.

I applaud Mr. Gonzalez's bipartisan work on this bill, and his leadership on the issue of technology and security.

I appreciate his staff working with Committee staff on both sides of the aisle to address technical feedback from the agencies in an Amendment that we will take up later.

Finally, I want to thank the Chairwoman and her staff for   working in a bipartisan and collaborative fashion on these three bills.

Today's mark-up demonstrates what we can accomplish in this Committee when we work together on our shared priority of maintaining American leadership in science and technology.

I yield back.

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