



Opening Statement of Chairman Frank Lucas

Full Committee Hearing
*The United States, China, and the Fight for Global Leadership:
Building a U.S. National Science and Technology Strategy*
February 28, 2023

Good morning, and welcome to the first Science Committee hearing of the 118th Congress.

We're leading off with a discussion about how we can strategically improve U.S. scientific competitiveness and address the threat we face from the Chinese Communist Party.

This is one of the most important challenges facing us at the moment, and I expect that global scientific leadership and competition with China will be a thread that runs through much of our upcoming work.

There are two reasons for that:

First – America's economic strength, national security, and our quality of life all fundamentally depend on our ongoing scientific progress.

In fact, more than 60% of America's economic growth in the last century is due to advances in science and technology. U.S. public investment in R&D adds nearly \$200 billion in economic value. And basic research in particular increases long-term productivity across multiple industries.

The second reason for our focus on this topic, beyond our own economic benefits, is the threat we face from the Chinese Communist Party.

The CCP is determined to overtake us as the global leader in science and technology. They're outspending us, out-publishing us, and out-educating us when it comes to STEM PhD graduates.

What's even more concerning is that they're working to steal the results of our research and innovations – whether that's through cyberattacks, forced intellectual property acquisition, or malicious recruitment initiatives like the Thousand Talents Program.

I want to be very clear about the consequences of allowing the Chinese Communist Party to become the world leader in science and technology.

It means fewer opportunities for American companies to compete in the global economy. It means increased risks to sensitive national security tools. And it means that critical technologies like Artificial Intelligence, quantum information sciences, and cybersecurity tools will be shaped by and embedded with the CCP's values.

If the CCP becomes the global leader in scientific discoveries and technology development, we should expect less privacy, less transparency, less access, and less fairness in how these systems operate.

So we cannot afford to lose this competition.

When I first became Ranking Member of this Committee in 2019, finding a way to address this challenge became one of my first tasks.

That led to the introduction of the Securing American Leadership in Science and Technology Act in 2020—comprehensive legislation to double down on our investment in basic research and develop a national strategy for scientific development.

With SALSTA as a blueprint, our Committee began to develop bipartisan legislation to advance America's scientific and technological capabilities.

There were a number of bumps along the road, but two years later, many of those ideas we first laid out in 2020 were passed into law as part of the CHIPS and Science Act.

When I talk about that bill, I like to point out that while the funding for CHIPS production is going to build factories today, it's the "Science" portion of the legislation that will be the engine of America's economic development for decades to come.

Central to all the investments and modernizations in the CHIPS and Science Act was the creation of a National Science and Technology Strategy.

We directed the Office of Science and Technology Policy – OSTP – to develop a comprehensive strategy for America's scientific and technological development every four years.

The strategy ensures a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to research and development, improving coordination between federal agencies and a more strategic approach to prioritizing our resources.

The national strategy will ensure that our time, energy, and funding for federal research and development will be focused on the most important challenges facing our country.

And, given the increased funding we're giving to federal R&D, this strategy is necessary to maximize the return on our investments and make good use of taxpayer dollars.

Today's hearing should serve a few purposes – first, to give us an overview of our current R&D enterprise. Second, to examine the scope of the threat the CCP poses to our scientific leadership. And finally, to consider how best to develop a National Science and Technology Strategy.

I expect the topics we discuss today to inform much of the work we do over the next year – from reauthorizing NASA, to expanding our domestic drone industry, to strengthening American clean energy technology.

While there are significant challenges ahead, I'm very optimistic about our ability to face them and ensure that America continues to have a thriving scientific enterprise.

In the past four years, we have worked together in a deliberate, transparent, and bipartisan manner to pass meaningful legislation supporting American science and technology.

My goal is to continue that tradition in this Congress. I'm looking forward to getting to work starting now.