



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY

Opening Statement

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics Hearing:
Unfolding the Universe: Initial Science Results from the James Webb Space Telescope

November 16, 2022

Good morning.

Thank you, Chairman Beyer, for holding this hearing on such an exciting topic, and welcome to our distinguished witnesses.

This Committee has held multiple hearings throughout the development of the James Webb Space Telescope, or JWST. But today we are finally here to discuss the science that is starting to flow from this amazing observatory.

I want to express my deep appreciation to the thousands of scientists, engineers, and stakeholders who made JWST possible, including those at NASA, in industry, at our universities, and our international partners. Without their work, we would not be here today.

From the release of the first JWST images this past summer, we've gotten breath-taking glimpses of some of the first galaxies in the universe, new and dying stars, and the rings of Neptune.

JWST has even given us visual indications of the DART asteroid impact event.

I look forward to hearing from our esteemed witnesses about JWST's science results so far on the formation of the first stars and galaxies and their evolution over time. I also look forward to hearing more about how JWST's instruments are being leveraged to characterize planets in our own Solar System as well as distant exoplanets.

NASA's Great Observatories have not only expanded our frontiers into the universe, but they have also inspired students and people across the world.

That's a topic about which I'm equally passionate because inspiration is a catalyst for innovation. Our future lies in the next generation of Americans, and I hope JWST will inspire them to continue our leadership and global collaboration in space science and exploration.

I want to thank our witnesses again for taking the time to share what they have learned so far from JWST, and for pointing us to the exciting science that lies ahead.

Finally, before I close, I would like to congratulate NASA and its contractor team on the successful launch of the Space Launch System early this morning. It is a stunning achievement, and I am looking forward to following the progress of the Artemis 1 mission to the moon over the coming days.

Thank you, and I yield back.