



COMMITTEE ON

SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

Opening Statement of Ranking Member Frank Lucas

Energy Subcommittee Hearing – Bioenergy Research and Development for the Fuels
and Chemicals of Tomorrow

March 16, 2022

Thank you, Mr. Casten.

I would like to express my appreciation to Chairwoman Johnson and the entire majority staff for their work to hold this hearing in hybrid format. This is an exciting step towards transitioning back to in-person hearings, and I look forward to seeing the rest of my colleagues and future witnesses in our hearing room sometime soon.

Even before serving as Ranking Member of the Science Committee, I've been an advocate for an all-of-the-above approach to our energy security. Bioenergy, which is one component of that mix, carries tremendous potential as an energy resource for our country, especially given our nation's strong agricultural capacity. However, additional research and development, particularly fundamental research and cross-sector collaboration, is needed to unlock its full potential. But that must be done in a responsible, targeted manner.

To that end, I was proud to help lead the Science Committee's bipartisan efforts to support the Department of Energy's Office of Science's Biological and Environmental Research, or "BER" program, by passing the DOE Science for the Future Act in the House last year. Among many things, this legislation modernizes the BER program and provides additional guidance to our Bioenergy Research Centers. It helps them address cutting-edge challenges for the expansion of the biofuel and bio-based materials industry.

We still don't have certainty on the path ahead for the DOE Science for the Future Act. It's been four months since Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi announced we would go to conference on competitiveness legislation. And we're still waiting.

The BER program is just one among many strategic and bipartisan initiatives that we in this Committee room worked on carefully together. I'd like to move it forward soon. So I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both chambers to find a way to get this legislation across the finish line.

I want to thank our witnesses for sharing their expertise and discussing strategies to address the most critical bioenergy R&D needs. Thank you, Mr. Casten, I yield back the balance of my time.