



# COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE SPACE & TECHNOLOGY

## REPUBLICANS

## Opening Statement of Ranking Member Jay Obernolte as Prepared for Delivery

Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee Hearing – Paper Mills and Research  
Misconduct: Facing the Challenges of Scientific Publishing

*July 20, 2022*

---

Good morning. Thank you, Chairman Foster, for convening this hearing. And thanks to our witnesses for appearing before us today.

We are here today to discuss one of the most important aspects of scientific work, and the objective trust it instills, research integrity. As a member of the academic community myself, I am both troubled and perplexed to hear about the issue of paper mills. I am troubled because of the potential harm that these fraudulent papers can do to the scholarly record and perplexed by the motivations of researchers who choose to buy papers from a paper mill.

There is a saying in academia, referenced in today's Hearing Charter: "publish or perish". This mentality, along with other stringent career requirements internationally, seems to be driving some researchers to pad their resumes with paper mill papers. Given our role in authorizing and overseeing the national research enterprise, I think it is important that we recognize this dynamic, while also thinking about how we can prevent this bad behavior. It is vital that publishers and universities remain diligent in preventing these fraudulent publications, and that there are consequences for engaging in this bad behavior.

As so often happens, the advancement of technology is an important tool to help the academic community rise to this challenge. Emerging technologies like AI are being used today to combat fraud by detecting plagiarism and faulty data. We should be wary though, because as these tools advance, so do tools to enable more bad behavior. One stark example is presented today by Chairman Foster's experiment -using an AI tool to create a fake academic paper. Even more problematic – this paper was not flagged as plagiarism by advanced plagiarism tools. Technology brings us new opportunities, but also new challenges. To combat this fraud it is important that the community remains diligent about the strengths and weaknesses of technology, and considers how additional investments in research can help to address this problem.

This is one area where I believe the Federal Government can play an important role – funding additional research on fraud detection. By placing emphasis and resources on

research to create tools to help detect and flag fraudulent papers, federal research agencies can provide valuable input on what methods and tools should be considered best practices.

I am looking forward to hearing from our witnesses today. Each of them represents an important perspective in the academic community on how to combat this issue at a different stage in the process.

Thank you, Chairman Foster, for convening this hearing. And thanks again to our witnesses for appearing before us today. I look forward to our discussion.

I yield back the balance of my time.