



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

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Emilia Sykes (D-OH)

Investigations & Oversight Subcommittee Hearing:

*“Research Security:
Examining the Implementation of the CHIPS and Science Act and NSPM-33”*

December 18, 2025

Thank you, Chairman McCormick. And thank you to all of our witnesses for appearing today.

Research security has long been a productive, bipartisan topic on this Committee. We have been able to put aside a lot of the noise coming from Committees and Members who are less serious about understanding the nuances of this issue, and we have a lot of successful legislation to show for that. Our scientific enterprise is better off for it.

However, there is only so long we can close the shutters, mute our phones, and pretend we don't see what's happening outside these doors. This is the second time this subcommittee has met on this topic this year – and this is only our third hearing. Perhaps if our subcommittee were a bit more active, and if there were bipartisan interest in exerting our oversight authority over this Administration, we could have discussed the myriad issues that are directly compromising our agencies' and institutions' ability to address research security as forcefully as existing law requires.

All our science agencies have experienced massive brain drain of career civil servants who were fired or coerced out of the federal workforce. We would be naïve to think that hasn't impacted our research security readiness. Inspectors General have been fired across the government. How can we claim to take research security seriously if there are Members unwilling to call out the Trump administration for firing the very people who hold agencies accountable for following the laws, and who investigate bad actors in our federal research enterprise? At the agency level, *CHIPS & Science* mandates that NSF have five full-time research security staffers, and it is my understanding that that law is not being followed.

Additionally, science agencies are in the process of imposing a 15% cap on indirect costs, falling in line with the edict first proposed in Project 2025. Do the authors of Project 2025 know what indirect costs fund? Does OMB Director Vought know, or Stephen Miller? I hope my Majority colleagues who are so concerned about research security can pick up the phone and tell them that university compliance officers, responsible for ensuring that grant-receiving institutions are following agency policies, are paid out of indirects.

The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Michael Kratsios, should know all of this. And he should be representing the interests of the scientific community in pushing back on harmful Administration proposals while supporting agencies in harmonizing their policies, per *CHIPS & Science*. However, OSTP has been entirely absent as others in the White House take a flamethrower to our federal scientific ecosystem.

This is not an ivory tower problem removed from kitchen-table consequences. We on the Science Committee have consistently reaffirmed National Security Decision Directive 189, which states that fundamental research should be unrestricted to the maximum extent possible. I'm proud to say that Akron, Ohio, demonstrates how fundamental research can lay the groundwork for economic prosperity. Researchers at the University of Akron have conducted world-class research in fundamental chemistry. That research is at the core of Akron's Sustainable Polymers Tech Hub. That tech hub is estimated to produce a \$5 billion economic impact, and over 4,000 new jobs over the next decade. Standing up for fundamental science now is standing up for thousands and thousands of jobs that will come from innovation.

As a matter of fact, we're already seeing this failure to follow through on investing in science-based jobs. Intel was supposed to be starting operations on a plant in Ohio this year, but now they are saying it will be delayed for at least five years. We on the Science Committee should be holding companies accountable for breaking these promises, because we dedicated federal tax dollars to these programs, and those dollars need to be spent as intended so the American people can benefit.

I truly hope I can count on my Science Committee colleagues across the aisle to reject any policy claiming to bolster research security while making it harder for the next great breakthrough to lead to American jobs. There is a lot of talk out of this Administration about onshoring jobs and outclassing China in innovation, manufacturing, and prosperity. If we continue to forfeit our scientific excellence, then that is really all it is – talk.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.