



Opening Statement *(As Prepared for Delivery)*

**Rep. Kathy Castor (D-FL), Chair
U.S. House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis**

**Colorado's Roadmap for Clean Energy Action: Lessons from State and Local Leaders
August 1, 2019**

Good morning and thank you for joining us for our first field hearing. I'm excited to be in the great State of Colorado because as this committee works on a national climate plan, we need to build on what's working in our states.

We are here on Colorado Day – the 143rd anniversary of Colorado becoming a state. Natural resources have always been a critical part of Colorado's economy. In the 21st century, those also include the intellectual and entrepreneurial resources we have seen in the past few days visiting national and state scientists, who are doing cutting edge research on the climate crisis and solutions for it. We are also honored that our recent House of Representatives colleague, now Governor Polis, is spending part of his first Colorado Day as governor with us.

When we say the states are laboratories of democracy, we mean that literally here. Colorado is home to some of the leading research in climate change and clean energy. And one of the most important things we can do as policymakers is make sure clean technology can move from the lab to the market – that's what creates jobs, that's what cuts pollution, that's what makes America a leader in the clean energy economy we have to build to solve the climate crisis.

Colorado in particular has been a leader in the clean energy revolution. In the 2019 legislative session, the governor and Colorado legislature have added to Colorado's clean energy legacy by enacting several bills focused on deploying more energy efficiency, renewable energy and electric vehicles. Equally important, they also created new programs to support the energy workforce. Today we will be learning more about those policies and their benefits from a variety of perspectives to inform the Select Committee's work.

The climate crisis is a huge problem. When we confront it, it makes us realize that we're all in this together. And that it will take creativity, innovation and persistence by everyone to solve it.

Those same qualities are what helped America land the first men on the moon. Recently, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission. Those first steps on the moon proved that America can do anything when we work together. I've always found an extra measure of inspiration in Apollo because I'm from Florida, and because when I first came to Congress, I had to honor of inheriting John F. Kennedy's former office.

A lot of people don't know this, but JFK was also the first president to receive [a warning](#) about how humans were changing our climate. Every president since then has received starker and starker warnings from the scientific community about the consequences of carbon pollution and climate change.

Landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth was a grand challenge. Making Earth's atmosphere safe for everyone is an even grander one.

The Apollo program was a national effort that mobilized our scientific and engineering capabilities in the federal government, academic institutions and private industry. The climate crisis requires that same commitment and more. As we will hear today the solutions have already started with our state and local governments. We need to act as swiftly as possible to follow your lead.

Our next moonshot is solving the climate crisis. I know we can do it. And I know Colorado is going to help us lead the way.