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Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

*Testimony before the Committee on House
Administration*

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Good morning, Chairwoman Miller, Ranking Member Brady, and Members of the Committee. I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak today about our Committee funding for the 114th Congress.

Chairman Smith has already presented an overview of the Committee's finances, so I will make brief remarks on the Minority budget.

I would like to note that the funding level in the second session of the 113th Congress provided

some much needed stability to our budget after the Committee absorbed a disproportionate cut relative to other Committees to start the 113th Congress.

That 26.2% reduction in our budget from 2010 to 2013 forced us to defer filling staff slots as well as to cut the salaries of most of the staff who were retained from previous Congresses. We also had to significantly limit Committee oversight travel by Members and staff. Thankfully, in the 113th, we were able to hire valuable new staff Members and complete several important oversight trips. Members or staff visited NASA, NSF, and DOE facilities and advanced manufacturing facilities.

In the 114th Congress, the Committee will need to develop and advance legislation to reauthorize many of the agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction, including NASA, NSF, NIST, FAA's R&D programs, and Department of Energy programs, among others. It is also anticipated that there will be a range of significant oversight initiatives undertaken by the Committee in the 114th Congress, including some that will result in the need to develop additional legislation.

I place a high priority on making sure that Minority Members and staff will be appropriately informed and engaged in the legislative and oversight activities of the Committee.

We made full use of our payroll and travel funds to carry out our responsibilities in the 113th Congress, and there will be no reduction in the need for at least the level of resources provided in the 113th Congress. Indeed, despite the slight budget increase, due to the resource constraints faced in the 113th Congress, we still have unfilled staffing slots, and that staffing shortfall affects our ability to carry out our legislative and oversight activities. It also affects our ability to compete with the private sector for skilled professional staff. In addition, though Members and staff were able to do some oversight visits, the constrained travel budget still limits the ability of Members and staff to undertake

the oversight visits to government research facilities, laboratories, etc. under the jurisdiction of the Committee that should be done. This especially impacts our new Members, who have not been to many of the places over which the Committee has jurisdiction. That is a particular concern, given the number of new Minority Members joining the Committee in the 114th Congress.

As a result, any cuts to the overall Committee budget in the 114th Congress would likely force staffing reductions and further reductions in needed oversight travel, both of which would have a serious negative impact on Minority Members' ability to carry out their legislative and oversight responsibilities.