



COMMITTEE ON

**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY**

REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

## **Opening Statement of Ranking Member Frank Lucas**

Full Committee Markup of H.R. 6845, H.R. 3952, H.R. 7077, H.R. 3588, and H.R. 6933

*April 5, 2022*

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Thank you, Chairwoman Johnson, for holding today's markup. This morning we will consider five bipartisan bills. These are what I'd call workhorse bills instead of show horse bills. They're great examples of the consensus work we can do across the aisle to improve American science and research.

Our first bill is the Commercial Remote Sensing Amendment, which I sponsored. I'll go into more detail when we consider that bill, but for now I'd like to thank Rep. Perlmutter for working with me to support this growing industry.

Next on the docket is a bill to codify the role of Chief Scientist at NOAA. The Chief Scientist plays an important role at NOAA, advising the Administrator, providing scientific advice, and leading scientific integrity efforts. The Chief Scientist has long been a critical position at NOAA, and this bill simply recognizes the value of that role by making its current duties and responsibilities law. It also puts a process in place for naming an acting Chief Scientist when the role is empty. In short, it ensures NOAA and its leadership will continue to receive the best scientific advice as they conduct all of NOAA's important missions around environmental and weather research, monitoring, prediction, and restoration. I'd like to thank Representative Sherrill for sponsoring this bill and Representative Feenstra for leading the Republican side.

Next up is a bill to empower the U.S. Fire Administration. The Fire Administration is housed within FEMA and it helps strengthen our ability to prevent and respond to fires through research and education. This bill will make it easier for the U.S. Fire Administration to provide their expertise to local authorities by granting it the authority to send specialists, researchers, investigators, and fire protection engineers to assist with investigations of major fires. The U.S. Fire Administration has valuable resources in preventing, responding to, and investigating fires and this bill ensures that state and local governments can access their knowledge and – hopefully – prevent major fires in the future. I'd like to thank Representative Torres for his work on this, as well as the

original cosponsors from our Committee – Representatives Stevens, Meijer, and Gonzalez.

Following that bill, we'll consider the Mathematical and Statistical Modeling Education Act, which will help improve STEM education for U.S. students. Mathematical and statistical modeling is a skillset with broad applications across all STEM fields and even the social sciences. Statistical modeling can help us describe past events, understand current developments, and predict future outcomes. Teaching advanced modeling will prepare students to work with complex data sets. That in turn sets us up for a more competitive, flexible workforce. I appreciate Representative Houlihan and Representative Baird for bringing this before the Committee.

Finally, we'll consider the Cost-Share Accountability Act. This is a good-government bill meant to improve accountability and transparency. It requires the Department of Energy to submit reports to Congress detailing when it has decided to modify or eliminate cost-sharing requirements for its research, development, demonstration, and commercial application activities. It doesn't hinder DOE's ability to modify cost-sharing requirements when necessary – instead, it just makes those decisions transparent and publicly available. This in turn makes it easier for Congress to conduct oversight. It's smart policy, and I thank Representative Obernolte for developing this bill following oversight hearings on this authority last year, and Representative Foster for working across the aisle with him.

I'm looking forward to a relatively quick markup today because of the bipartisan nature and thorough vetting of each bill under consideration. With that, I'll end my remarks so we can get to work.