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## Upstate congressman to inspect research station at South Pole

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U.S. Rep. Bob Inglis is ringing in the new year by heading south - way south.

Inglis, a Greenville Republican serving on the House Science and Technology Committee, is scheduled to arrive today in Antarctica to observe operations and inspect a new \$153 million South Pole Station.

Inglis first visited the continent in January 2006 and hopes to build on his knowledge to better serve the public via his current position as ranking Republican on the committee's Energy and Environment Subcommittee, said spokesman Price Atkinson.

"It's easy to question the science from afar, but when you see it firsthand, it's hard to deny some of the things that are going on, and I think that a lot of things that he saw (in 2006) helped form his basis on climate change, that it is going on," Atkinson said.

Inglis is part of a 10-member legislative delegation that will inspect the new station, a research and operational center expected to last up to 50 years in extreme weather conditions. They also will visit a new \$19.2 million South Pole Telescope, which was primarily funded by the National Science Foundation and is being used to study "dark" energy.

The telescope, which is 75 feet high and 33 feet wide, was constructed in Texas and then shipped in pieces to Antarctica, Atkinson said.

The delegation is staying at McMurdo Station, a research facility, for three days and will make a brief stop in Australia on the return trip to examine the effects of climate change on the Great Barrier Reef.

While in Antarctica, Inglis will have the opportunity to visit to his son Robert, who is on a five-month assignment with Raytheon Polar Services, a contractor providing support services to the U.S. Antarctic Program. The father and son plan to exchange observations, Atkinson said.

In a prepared statement, Inglis said he wanted to use the trip to help deepen his portfolio with the Science Committee and with the National Science Foundation.

"Last time I was on the Ice, I absorbed maybe 5 percent of the huge amount of information that was presented," he said. "I hope that relearning gives me the opportunity to get that percentage up on this second visit."

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