



## Hearing Planned to Investigate Reports of Astronauts' Medical and Behavioral Health

On July 27, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) released the findings of reports on the mental and behavioral health of astronauts and procedures taken to ensure good health. The report was commissioned after the scandal involving former astronaut Lisa Nowak.

Among many alarming findings in the report, the review board found that *"astronaut medical and behavioral health care is highly fragmented..."* Also, *"many anecdotes were related that involved risky behaviors by astronauts that were well known to the other astronauts and no apparent action was taken. Peers and staff fear ostracism if they identify their own or others' problems."*

"There's a lot of attention being given to the reports of alcohol abuse by astronauts prior to flight, and I take this very seriously. Drinking and driving is never a good idea – least of all when the vehicle involved is a multi-billion dollar Space Shuttle or a high performance jet aircraft," said **Chairman Bart Gordon (D-TN)**. "But it's not just alcohol abuse; you only have to read the report to know that something clearly seems to be broken in NASA's system of astronaut oversight."

The Committee is planning a hearing on this matter in early September, once the House returns from August recess.

Visit our [website](#) to read more from Chairman Gordon, **Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee Chairman Mark Udall (D-CO)**, and to review the NASA reports.

## Subcommittees Hold Joint Hearing into Controversy at National Hurricane Center

Two S&T Subcommittee's joined forces this month to investigate a series of events at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Tropical Prediction Center (TPC/NHC), also known as the National Hurricane Center.

**Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee Chairman Brad Miller (D-NC)** and **Energy and Environment Subcommittee Chairman Nick Lampson (D-TX)** explored the process through which the center's director William Proenza was placed on leave, by the NOAA Administrator Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher. During the [hearing on July 19](#), the chairmen sought to assess whether the Center is still capable of providing the necessary forecasts during the current hurricane season.

[Read more here...](#)

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[Shuttle Endeavour is scheduled for launch Aug. 7.](#)

### Newsletter Spotlight

Welcome to the July edition of the [House Committee on Science and Technology's E-Newsletter](#). This month, you'll see a new, and hopefully more user-friendly, ENEWS format. Let us know what you think.

The Committee appreciates your interest in our work. Please feel free to share Science & Tech E-News with friends and colleagues. They can also [sign up](#) to receive E-News in their own mailboxes quickly and easily.

Sincerely,

Bart Gordon, Chairman,  
U.S. House Committee  
on Science & Technology



NHC Director William Proenza during the July 19 hearing.

## Committee Maintains Steady Focus on Offshoring, Considers University Perspective

The Committee held its second in a [series of hearings](#) examining the offshoring of U.S. technical jobs to overseas locations. The [June 12 hearing](#), entitled *The Globalization of R&D and Innovation, Pt. II: The University Response*, examined how America's universities are addressing the challenges of globalization.

Members heard of the growing establishment of American university campuses overseas. Witnesses from U.S. universities stressed the need for domestic students to be well-prepared to compete in the global marketplace.

"As an increasing number of American universities establish campuses in foreign countries, many questions and concerns are arising about the impacts this will have on American students, job opportunities, and competitiveness. To address this, we must learn more about how university globalization will impact our country's pre-eminence in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics," said Research and Science Education Subcommittee [Chairman Brian Baird \(D-WA\)](#), who chaired the full committee hearing.

The Committee plans further hearings on the topic of offshoring; the first in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress was [June 12](#). For more information on offshoring and the Committee's ongoing investigation, please [click here](#).

## Subcommittee Examines Future of Tech-Transfer and Universities

On [July 17](#), Members of the Subcommittee on Technology & Innovation examined the future of the Bayh-Dole Act, the law that allows universities to patent inventions that stem from federally funded research and development.

The Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. David Wu (D-OR), sought to examine the effectiveness of the act and what role it will play in continuing to promote American competitiveness.

Members considered the impact of Bayh-Dole on federally-funded university research, tech transfer and commercialization; how its implementation has shaped research collaboration between university and industry; and possible effects of the increased globalization of research.

[Read more...](#)

## Subcommittees Question DOE's Decision to End Funding for Ecology Lab

Subcommittee Chairmen [Nick Lampson \(D-TX\)](#) and [Brad Miller \(D-NC\)](#) heard testimony on [July 17](#) about why the Department of Energy (DOE) officials decided to withdraw funding for the Savannah River Ecology Lab.

Miller and Lampson have been investigating the issue for several months and [requesting information](#) from officials within DOE and the University of Georgia. The mission of the lab is to study the effects of the Savannah River Nuclear Weapons facility on the surrounding environment.

A second hearing on the Subcommittees' investigation is currently scheduled for [Aug. 1](#).

## Coming Up in September for the Committee:

The Space & Aeronautics Subcommittee will continue to look into the medical and behavioral [health of NASA astronauts](#) with a hearing in the first week of September.

In its continued investigation into the [offshoring of high-tech jobs](#), the Committee will also hold a hearing on the impacts that offshoring has on the science and engineering workforce.

Be sure to check the Science & Technology Committee's website for exact dates, times and locations for these and other events - <http://science.house.gov>.

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