



March 30, 2007

Welcome to the [House Committee on Science and Technology's](#) E-Newsletter. Below you will see how the Committee has continued its efforts to act on global warming, evaluate research and development budget proposals of federal agencies and improve U.S. innovation and competitiveness.

The Committee on Science & Technology 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

[Former Vice President Al Gore Testifies before Subcommittee Members](#)

On March 21, Former Vice President Al Gore testified before the [Energy & Environment Subcommittee](#) in a [joint hearing](#) with the Committee on Energy & Commerce's Subcommittee on Energy & Air Quality. The hearing, entitled "[Perspectives on Climate Change](#)," explored Gore's work on global climate change and his policy recommendations for remedying the problem.

"Addressing climate change will not be easy. This problem arose over a long period of time as an unintended consequence of our use of fossil fuels to power our economy and improve our quality of life," said **Chairman Bart Gordon (D-TN)**.

"However, now that we know the problem is real we must begin to address this issue...Vice President Gore has provided us with a clear picture of the problem and a number of concrete ideas for solving it."

Members also heard from [Dr. Bjorn Lomborg](#) of the Copenhagen Consensus Center.

[U.S. Competitiveness, STEM Education Remain Top Priorities for Committee](#)

Some of the nation's top leaders in business, innovation and academics [testified before the Full Committee](#) on the important role science and technology plays in maintaining the United States' leadership in the global economy.

Distinguished witnesses like Norm Augustine, chair of the committee that wrote the widely regarded National Academies' "[Rising Above the Gathering Storm](#)" report,

testified before the Committee. Chairman Gordon reiterated that his priority is to implement the majority of the report's recommendations, including placing qualified science and math teachers in the nation's K-12 classrooms and substantially increasing basic research funding.

H.R. 362, "10,000 Teachers, 10 Million Minds" Science and Math Scholarship Act, was [reported by the Committee](#) on March 28, [\(as amended\)](#). The measure encourages science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) faculty to collaborate with education faculty at universities on how to improve education for math and science teachers; it also provides scholarships for STEM students who commit to teaching math and science.

The bill heads to the House for consideration, along with another bill in Gordon's innovation package, **H.R. 363**, Sowing the Seeds Through Science & Engineering Research Act, which the Committee [reported in February](#).

Also on the education and competitiveness front - in their first hearing of the 110th Congress, the [Subcommittee on Research and Science Education](#) discussed how to [improve the laboratory experience for America's high school students \(H.R. 524\)](#). According to a 2005 National Research Council Report, high school classrooms suffer from inadequate facilities and equipment, non-cohesive lab exercises and curricula and a shortage of teacher training and preparation. H.R. 362 was later amended to include [H.R. 524](#).

Members Evaluate R&D Budget Proposals for Federal Agencies

Throughout the month, Members heard from agency officials and other witnesses in [hearings on the President's budget proposal for federal research and development programs in Fiscal Year 2008 \(FY08\)](#).

Among the agencies discussed, were the [National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\)](#), the [Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate](#), the [Department of Energy](#), the [Federal Aviation Administration](#), the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) and the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#).

Discussion Continues on the Next Generation Air Transportation Initiative

The [Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics](#) examined the status of the Next Generation Air Transportation System initiative (also known as NGATS or NextGen) and explored key issues related to the initiative and the federal interagency Joint Planning and Development Office (JPDO).

The success of the NextGen programs is "important because it concerns the future of America's air transportation system, and the question is whether we will have a system that will be able to meet the needs of our 21st century economy," said **Subcommittee Chairman Mark Udall (D-CO)**. "I think we can all agree that we need to get this right for the health of our economy, the quality of life of our citizens, the safety of the flying public and our international competitiveness."

[Read more on the hearing.](#)

Legislative Activity

In addition to **H.R. 362**, the Committee also [reported two other bills](#) in March:

H.Con.Res.76, Honoring the 50th Anniversary of the International Geophysical Year (IGY); and

H.Res. 252, Recognizing the 45th anniversary of John Herschel Glenn, Jr.'s historic

achievement in becoming the first United States astronaut to orbit the Earth.

Coming Up in the Committee:

The House will be in recess the first two weeks of April.

After two hearings on the subject in March ([3/20/07](#) and [3/29/07](#)), the Subcommittee on Research and Science Education plans to take up a bill to **reauthorize the National Science Foundation** after the recess.

The Committee also plans to return to the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report](#) with a second hearing in mid-April.

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>.

The [Committee on Science & Technology website](#) is your clearinghouse for science and math education resources, science legislation, Member activities and much more. We hope you will find those resources helpful and continue to check the site for our latest additions and updates. We appreciate your feedback. Let us know how we might grow the site to better meet your science needs by logging your comments [here](#).