

Opening Statement

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Chairman, U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology

Full Committee Markup

April 25, 2007

Good Morning. Pursuant to notice, the Committee on Science and Technology meets to consider the following measures:

- **H.R. 1867**, *the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2007*;
- **H.R. 1868**, *Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act of 2007*;
- **H. Con. Res. 95**, *Honoring the career and research accomplishments of Frances E. Allen, the 2006 recipient of the A.M. Turing Award*; and
- **H. Res. 316**, *Recognizing the accomplishments of Roger D. Kornberg, Andrew Fire, Craig Mello, John C. Mather, and George F. Smoot for being awarded Nobel Prizes in the fields of chemistry, physiology or medicine, and physics.*

Today the Committee is meeting to markup four good bipartisan bills. The first bill we will consider today is **H.R. 1867**, *the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2007*. H.R. 1867 was introduced by Chairman Baird, Ranking Member Ehlers and other Members of the Research and Science Education Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee met last Wednesday to consider H.R. 1867, and favorably reported the bill by voice vote after adopting three amendments. I want to thank and congratulate Members of the Subcommittee for their hard work and bipartisan cooperation on this excellent bill. The core of this bill is the 3-year authorization that keeps the Foundation on a 10-year doubling path.

NSF is a major source of federal backing for basic research at universities, across all disciplines.

Members of the Science and Technology Committee often have a difficult time explaining to our constituents and other Members of Congress why it is so important to fund basic research. The benefits to you and me can seem so intangible in comparison to many of the other things the federal government funds.

But with the publicity around recent reports like "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," more of our colleagues and constituents understand that federally-funded research pays enormous dividends to society. Economic growth, public health, national defense, and social advancement have all been tied to technological developments resulting from basic research.

In addition to providing strong research budgets, H.R. 1867 provides important funding for some critical STEM education programs, including three K-12 programs that this Committee expanded and refined in H.R. 362, which I am happy to say just passed the House yesterday.

The education programs at NSF are perhaps more tangible to the typical American, as everybody wants their children to be taught by highly qualified teachers and to graduate high school and community college prepared for the workforce of the 21st Century, or to have the opportunity to pursue even higher degrees if they so desire.

I am pleased that H.R. 1867 once again reaffirms the critical role that NSF plays in STEM education. This is a good bill. I urge my colleagues to support it, and to continue to work with me to ensure that the rest of our colleagues in Congress understand the value of basic research as we do.

Today, we'll also take up **H.R. 1868**, *the Technology Innovation and Manufacturing Stimulation Act of 2007*. This is an authorization bill for the programs of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

This bill is the bipartisan product of the Technology & Innovation Subcommittee. I want to commend Chairman Wu and Ranking Member Gingrey for moving this bill through the Subcommittee expeditiously. The Science and Technology Committee needs to send a strong signal to the appropriations committee about the importance we place on full funding for NIST.

H.R. 1868 places the NIST budget on the path to doubling over the next 10 years. The Science and Technology Committee has always been in the “amen corner” for fully funding all of NIST.

The pace of technology keeps accelerating – particularly in areas such as biofuels, pharmaceutical biologics and healthcare IT. NIST has an important role to play in the adoption of these technologies through the creation of standards and new measurement technologies.

This Committee is also aware of the important role that the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program plays in keeping good manufacturing jobs here in the US. And NIST has a proven track record in implementing its technology development program. H.R. 1868 does an excellent job of balancing and funding these priorities and everyone on this committee should support this legislation.

Finally, the last two measures we are considering today, **H.Con.Res. 95** and **H.Res. 316**, recognize the outstanding achievements of a group of American scientists.

It is important that Congress recognizes Americans who achieve great things in the sciences, not just for the satisfaction of the individual scientists, but to show the public that the Congress truly values the work that scientists do.

I recognize Mr. Hall to present his opening remarks.