



House Passes S&T Legislation to Support Innovative Technology Development

On [April 23](#), the House passed [H.R. 5819](#), to support the development and commercialization of innovative technologies by small high-tech companies. This legislation supports innovation in technology by reauthorizing the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program. H.R. 5819 contains many provisions from the Committee's original bill, [H.R. 5789](#), the *Science and Technology Innovation Act of 2008*.



Subcommittee Chairman David Wu urging support for the reauthorization of SBIR and STTR at the Technology and Innovation Subcommittee Markup on [April 16](#).

Subcommittee Chairman Wu said. "For more than 20 years, these programs have helped companies with innovative ideas bring their products to market. However, much has changed in recent decades, and these programs need to be restructured to reflect the current global innovation environment."

[Read more about H.R. 5789 >>](#)

[Read more about the Committee's work on SBIR >>](#)

Committee Members Review DOE's Plans for FutureGen

On [April 15](#), the Committee examined the Department of Energy's (DOE) decision to restructure its signature clean coal initiative, FutureGen. Originally, FutureGen was created to serve as a test bed for emissions of cleaner coal technologies, develop and demonstrate carbon capture and sequestration (CCS), and produce hydrogen.

Coal-fired power plants significantly contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, and as concerns about climate change increase, there is a growing interest in CCS technologies. Members questioned the justification and effectiveness of the changes to FutureGen.

[Read more about this hearing >>](#)



Chairman Gordon expresses concern regarding the changes to FutureGen.

APRIL 2008 E-NEWS



The House passed [S&T Committee](#) legislation that supported research and innovation in addressing environmental issues on Earth Day.

Newsletter Spotlight

Welcome to the April 2008 edition of the [House Committee on Science and Technology's](#) E-Newsletter.

As always, 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,
House Committee on
Science & Technology

Additional April Agenda Hearings

[April 2](#) — *International Science and Technology Cooperation*

[April 3](#) — *NASA's Exploration Initiative: Status and Issues*

[April 7](#) — *Remote Sensing Data: Applications and Benefits*

[April 16](#) — *The National Nanotechnology Initiative Amendments Act of 2008*

[April 23](#) — *Opportunities and Challenges for Nuclear Power*

[April 24](#) — *Role of the Social and Behavioral Sciences in National Security*

[April 24](#) — *NASA's International Space Station Program: Status and Issues*

[April 24](#) — *Aviation Security Research and Development at the Department of Homeland Security*

Members Review U.S. Management of E-waste

On [April 30](#), in an effort to improve our country's disposal and recycling of waste electronic equipment (E-waste) such as computers and cell phones, the Committee held a hearing to review the current management and overall challenges of E-waste. Committee Members examined industry practices for recycling, refurbishment, re-sale and disposal of electronics products.

"Fortunately, there is a growing awareness of E-waste recycling," said **Chairman Gordon**. "E-waste is hardly trash; while some materials in electronic waste are potentially hazardous, others are quite valuable. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to put gold in a dump."



Chairman Gordon, Rep. Laura Richardson, and Vice Chairman Daniel Lipinski questioning witnesses regarding industries' green design efforts at the E-waste hearing on April 30.

E-waste disposal and recycling issues continue to grow; according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), roughly 100 million TVs, computers, and monitors become obsolete every year. Committee Members plan to further investigate ways to make recycling easier and more effective while also reducing the amount of toxic materials used to produce new electronics.

[Read more about the hearing >>](#)

Members Question Agency Officials About FEMA's Toxic Trailers

The Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee held a hearing on [April 1](#) to further investigate how and why the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a sister agency of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), failed to properly inform victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita living in FEMA-provided trailers of the potential hazards they faced from exposure to formaldehyde. **Subcommittee Chairman Brad Miller** followed up on the Committee's previous [letters](#) by questioning FEMA's Deputy Administrator, [Vice Admiral Harvey E. Johnson Jr.](#), and ATSDR Director, Dr. Howard Frumkin, about their actions and inactions regarding the use of a flawed health consultation on formaldehyde that ATSDR provided to FEMA in February 2007.

The Committee heard testimony from ATSDR whistleblower, [Dr. Christopher De Rosa](#), former Director of the Division of Toxicology and Environmental Medicine, regarding the agency's lack of action to inform or warn tens of thousands of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita victims living in FEMA trailers. In addition, Members questioned the apparent retaliatory actions Dr. Frumkin and his Deputy Director, [Dr. Tom Sinks](#), took against ATSDR whistleblower Dr. De Rosa when they removed him from his position as Director of the agency's Division of Toxicology after he successfully served in that position for 16 years.



Chairman Miller questioning [Mrs. Lindsay Huckabee](#), resident of FEMA-provided mobile home, about the health problems her five children have endured.

[Read more about this hearing >>](#)

Looking Ahead...

The Committee will hold markups in May to consider legislation to reauthorize the [National Nanotechnology Initiative](#) and NASA. In addition, the Committee will hold hearings to examine water issues, offshoring of high-tech jobs, and the reauthorization of the Sea Grant program.

Visit the Committee's website for the exact dates, times, and locations of these and other upcoming events.

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