



Committee on Science and Technology
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



BART GORDON, CHAIRMAN

SEPTEMBER E-NEWS
SEPTEMBER 28, 2007

Committee Looks Into Improving and Integrating Healthcare Information Technology Systems

On [Sept. 26](#), Members of the **Committee on Science & Technology** looked into the progress the healthcare industry has made toward broadly implementing healthcare information technology (IT) systems. Members also considered the investments in technology and standards development needed to create a secure, national healthcare IT system.

"The broad use of IT in the healthcare sector could have far reaching benefits, including cost savings, improved quality of care, and a reduction in the number of medical errors. Today's lack of an integrated system of health IT is costing us billions of dollars, countless hours in lost time for both providers and patients, and—most tragically of all—patients' lives," said **Chairman Bart Gordon (D-TN)**.

Chairman Gordon has introduced legislation, [H.R. 2406](#), aimed at increasing efforts at the National Institute of Standards and Technology to support integrating health IT systems.

To read more about the hearing and Gordon's legislation, [follow this link](#).



Chairman Gordon makes an opening statement [during the Sept. 26 hearing](#).

Newsletter Spotlight

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

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

Subcommittee Investigates Reports On NASA Astronauts' Health

During a [Sept. 6 hearing](#), Members of the [Space & Aeronautics Subcommittee](#) heard testimony aimed at investigating the findings of two NASA reports concerning the astronaut medical and behavioral healthcare system.

On [July 27, 2007](#), NASA released the results of an independent external review commissioned in the wake of the controversy surrounding astronaut Lisa Nowak. The review's findings identified a number of significant issues related to NASA culture, communication and behavioral concerns including the mention of pre-flight alcohol abuse by astronauts.

Among the specific concerns noted in the July review: "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."



S&A Subcommittee Chair Mark Udall chats with NASA Administrator Michael Griffin before the hearing.

[Read more»](#)

Other Hearings

[Sept. 5, 2007](#) -- *The Benefits and Challenges of Producing Liquid Fuel from Coal: The Role of Federal Research*

[Sept. 25, 2007](#) – *Revisiting the Industrial Technologies Program (ITP): Achieving Industrial Efficiency*

[Sept. 25, 2007](#) – *The Contribution of the Social Sciences to the Energy Challenge*

[Sept. 27, 2007](#) – *The National Security Implications of Climate Change*

Gordon Discusses NASA Budget at Marshall Space Flight Center

On Sept. 13, Chairman Gordon and Rep. Bud Cramer (D-AL) explained concerns about NASA's tight budget to a group of workers at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala. in Cramer's district.

Gordon told the group that he's concerned that the lack of sufficient federal funding and America's standing in education could hamper NASA research plans and delay rocket programs.

Cramer and Gordon also said that space agency spending has been effectively frozen at fiscal 2006 levels for almost two years. But this year, the House has proposed a \$17.6 million 2008 budget for NASA, approximately \$290 above what the President requested.

The NASA budget shortfall will remain a matter of concern for the Committee during the 110th Congress.



Gordon speaks to employees at Marshall SFC.

For more, [follow this link](#).

Efforts Begin to Address Bridge Infrastructure R&D in Light of Minneapolis Bridge Collapse

The Committee explored the current state of bridge-related research and technology development and considered future priorities during a [Sept. 19 hearing](#).

Witnesses discussed the current state of bridge-related research and development, including government and academic research into materials, design elements, and testing and inspection technologies. Witnesses discussed future research priorities for building improved bridge infrastructure and maintaining current bridges to avoid catastrophic failure.

Chairman Gordon said the collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis in August served as a tragic wakeup call that more needs to be done to strengthen and secure our nation's bridges.

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House Passes FAA Reauthorization, Investing in Critical Aviation Research & Development

On [Sept. 20](#), Members of the House passed **H.R. 2881**, the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007*. The measure includes a series of provisions authored by the **Science & Technology Committee** to enable the nation's air transportation system to be able to handle the expected significant growth in future air travel demand over the next twenty years safely, efficiently and in an environmentally friendly manner.

H.R. 2881 incorporates the provisions of [H.R. 2698](#), the *Federal Aviation Research and Development Reauthorization Act of 2007*, introduced by **Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee Chairman Mark Udall (D-CO)**. The Committee reported H.R. 2698 with strong bipartisan support on [June 22](#).

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Looking Ahead

The Technology & Innovation Subcommittee holds the third in a series of hearings examining the offshoring of high-tech jobs on [Oct. 4](#). Continue to check the [Committee website](#) for information on other hearings and events.

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