

## Bill Nye's Testimony for the Commerce, Justice, & Science Appropriations Committee

Ladies & Gentlemen, distinguished guests, and colleagues: There is generally great concern about science education in the United States. Any consumer shopping today knows that the products, even the food, that she or he buys is produced elsewhere- overseas or over-borders. General Motors comes to you hat in hand- not Toyota. Is anyone here surprised? For many, science seems like another special interest group, out of the main stream. But notice, everything in the this room, the tables, the chairs, the electronics, even the plants came to be here, because their designers understood math and science.

As a popular science educator, I have met tens of thousands of science teachers. I have not yet met one, who feels good about No Child Left Behind. Despite the best of intentions, our science teachers are burdened with extra tests, assessments, and reports. Right now, they cannot do their most important work: inspiration- inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers with passion and purpose.

Tonight, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration will launch the Kepler telescope mission to observe extrasolar planets- worlds beyond ours, places even ancestors as recent as our grandparents could hardly imagine. As the Vice President of the Planetary Society, the world's largest space interest organization, I promote the idea that we are all citizens of Earth.

But, I am also a citizen of the United States. In World War II, my father defended Wake Island. My mother worked on the enemy's Enigma code. I am a patriot. I would prefer that the next generation of high-speed trains be designed and built here. I would prefer that the next generation of solar panels, of biofuels, of high performance batteries, of flood and volcano monitoring systems, and of smart pasture farms be created, built, and established here- in the U.S. I would prefer that United States helped people everywhere, leading the way with new technologies and discoveries. I imagine all of you would, too.

The alternative is grim. Without the world's best science, for the first time in U.S. history, the next generation, your children and your grandchildren, would have a substantially lower quality of life than you did. That is not our way. Science educators must be given the resources to excel. If a bright future led by the United States is what we all want, we must embrace, promote, and provide money for science education. Fund the future of science. Let's change the world.

Bill Nye  
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