



S&T Committee Passes Legislation to Support and Improve Nanotechnology

Throughout the 110th Congress the Committee has held a series of hearing to review the various activities and aspects of the National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI) - [nanotechnology education](#), [commercialization of nanotechnology](#), [safety impacts of nanotechnology](#), and to review the [proposed NNI reauthorization legislation](#).

On [May 7](#), Committee passed [H.R. 5940](#), the *National Nanotechnology Initiative Amendments Act of 2008*. This bill amends the [21st Century Nanotechnology Research and Development Act](#) (P.L. 108-153) to make several changes to the NNI's implementation process and priorities, including assigning responsibility to a senior White House official to ensure that an Environmental, Health, and Safety research plan, with specific goals and funding levels, is developed and executed. The changes made were made based on recommendations from formal reviews of the NNI by the National Academy of Sciences and the NNI Advisory Panel and previous hearings.



“H.R. 5940 is an excellent, bipartisan bill that will improve and strengthen NNI, and thereby, help keep the United States at the forefront of nanotechnology,” said **Chairman Bart Gordon**.

(From L to R): Chairman Gordon, staff, Rep. Johnson, and Subcommittee Chairmen Wu and Baird passing Baird's amendment.

[Read more about H.R. 5940 >>](#)

Committee Addresses the Nation's Water Supply Challenges

Many factors such as population growth, degradation of water quality, climatic variation, and changes in water use patterns affect water availability and use. In order to address these issues, the Committee held a hearing on [May 14](#) to discuss the challenges of managing water supplies to meet America's economic, social, and environmental needs.



Chairman Gordon discussing the importance of investing in R&D to address the Nation's water issues.

“Nationally, 36 states are anticipating local, regional or statewide water shortages by 2013. Americans now use an average of 100 gallons of water per person everyday. If we don't soon come up with innovative technology to use water more efficiently the well — so to speak — is going to run dry.” said **Rep. Jim Matheson**.

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

MAY 2008 E-NEWS

Newsletter Spotlight

Welcome to the May 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 May Agenda Hearings/ Markups

[May 1, 2008](#) — *NASA's Aeronautics R&D Program: Status and Issues*
[May 6, 2008](#) — *Energy and Environment Subcommittee Markup of H.R. 3957 and H.R. 2339*

[May 8, 2008](#) — *Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering Act of 2008*

[May 12, 2008](#) — *STEM Education Before High School: Shaping our Future Science,*

Technology, Engineering and Math Leaders of Tomorrow by Inspiring our Children Today

[May 21, 2008](#) — *National Sea Grant College Program Act: H.R. 5618*

[May 22, 2008](#) — *American Decline or Renewal? - Globalizing Jobs and Technology*

Subcommittee Approved Bill to Reauthorize NASA

In 2008, the Committee held a series of hearings to review the status and issues of National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) programs and activities — [aeronautics R&D](#), [remote sensing data](#), [exploration initiatives](#). The findings and recommendations from these hearings were taken into consideration when developing the NASA reauthorization legislation.

On [May 20](#), the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee favorably passed [H.R. 6063](#), the *NASA Authorization Act of 2008* without any amendments. This legislation reauthorizes NASA's Program for Fiscal Year 2009. The bill emphasizes a number of important areas



Subcommittee Vice Chairman Charlie Melancon introduced H.R. 6063 at the markup on May 20.

by demonstrating the role NASA can play in improving American's quality of life, enhancing our economic vitality, assisting in the advancement of knowledge, and demonstrating American leadership in the international arena.

H.R. 6063 was introduced by Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee Chairman Mark Udall and received bipartisan support from Chairman Gordon, Ranking Minority Member Hall, S&A Subcommittee Ranking Minority Member Feeney as original cosponsors.

"America's space and aeronautics programs deliver significant benefits to the American people," said **Subcommittee Chairman Udall**. "It's important that NASA has the resources it needs to be successful in addressing our country's important national needs. I will continue to work with NASA on these goals, while ensuring that we are accountable and good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. This bill not only ensures that we invest adequately in NASA's programs but, equally importantly, directs those investments in ways that are effective, efficient and fiscally responsible."

[Read more about H.R. 6063 >>](#)

Subcommittee Investigates Scientific Integrity of EPA's IRIS Database

On May 21, the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee held [a hearing](#) to review the EPA's restructured Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS). In the 1980s IRIS was created to provide a single source of information on the risks associated with exposure to chemicals. This database provides hazard identification and dose-response analysis. Regulatory agencies use the IRIS database to produce risk assessments based of the scientific information combined with exposure estimates.

"Americans need an efficient system to evaluate the risk to public health and the environment of chemicals on a regular basis and have access to that information," said **Subcommittee Chairman Brad Miller**.



Subcommittee Chairman Miller questions witnesses from the EPA regarding the agency's decision to restructure the IRIS system.

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

[Read the GAO Report on Chemical Assessments >>](#)

Looking Ahead...

The first week of June the Full Committee will markup the [National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008](#) (H.R. 6063). In addition the Energy and Environment Subcommittee will also hold hearings to review the [Federal Ocean and Acidification Research Monitoring Act](#) (H.R. 4174).

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

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