

## **OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

Wednesday, February 24, 2010

### **Opening Statement**

Alan B. Mollohan, Chairman

Good afternoon; the hearing is called to order.

Welcome to this hearing of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science for fiscal year 2011. Today, we will cover the budget, status and future prospects of U.S. research and development. Our witness is the President's Science Adviser and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy Dr. John P. Holdren.

Dr. Holdren, this is your first appearance before this Subcommittee, and we have much to discuss. Based on considerable evidence, real growth in the U.S. economy, in excess of population growth, is primarily the result of the innovations and new technologies that result from public and private investments in research and development. Accordingly, we are in the midst of a ten-year doubling in funding for NSF, NIST, and the Department of Energy Office of Science as contemplated by the America Competes Act. This doubling was accelerated by over \$18 billion added to the fiscal year 2009 appropriation for R&D in many agencies as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Those funds have gone to increase grant funding across all areas of science and to various science infrastructure investments.

Within the subcommittee's purview, the budget request for fiscal year 2011 continues the planned doubling of NSF and NIST with roughly seven per cent increases over 2010 enacted levels. While this doubling was authorized in the America Competes Act, that authorization was only through fiscal year 2010. The budget strengthens climate observing and research through significant increases for NOAA R&D, including equipment and development of polar orbiting satellites, and NASA Earth science missions and research. While funding for planetary research is increased, funding for other areas of NASA science is essentially frozen. While climate related activities are a higher priority, all of NASA science contributes to the Nation's science enterprise just as much as does funding for NSF, NIST, and the DOE Office of Science.

In fiscal year 2010, this Subcommittee supported an increase to NSF education programs focused on hands-on, inquiry-based instruction in grades K through 12 and in K through 12 teacher preparation. Earlier, we heard testimony from those who work in this area and they provided examples of successful efforts at improving science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education – evidence of the benefits that result from federal investments made through NSF, NOAA, and NASA. For decades the science and education communities have stated that inquiry is essential to effective STEM education, and yet it remains rare in K-12 and college teaching. It is high time to change this.

Given the critical role of science and technology in the future prosperity and international leadership of the United States, we look forward to hearing from Dr. Holdren on the state of U.S. science and technology, its position relative to other countries, and its future needs and prospects.

Following the opening statement of Ranking Member Wolf, we will ask you to provide a summary of your written testimony, which will be included in the hearing record, and then we will go to questions from Subcommittee members.