

Opening Statement
Rep. Ralph Hall (R-TX)
Ranking Member, Science and Technology Committee
111th Congress Organizational Meeting

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

I thank the Chairman for holding this meeting to organize the Committee on Science and Technology and ratify the Rules for the 111th Congress. We had a productive 110th Congress and passed a number of good pieces of legislation that were improved by working through the process of hearings and markups. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the 111th Congress to advance good science policies.

The Science Committee will play a key role in getting our economy back on track and keeping America competitive in the global marketplace. Energy independence is key to accomplishing these goals. Technology has the potential to deliver energy efficiencies and provide alternative energy sources. Research and development at the Federal level will provide a bridge from current to next-generation energy resources and will help fuel America's future growth.

This Committee will also work to strengthen research and development and aggressively promote STEM education at all levels. Investing in math and science education will foster the next generation of innovators to keep America at the forefront of cutting-edge technology and research. Innovation is critical to U.S. economic success. We also must ensure that our systems are state-of-the-art and provide adequate security.

NASA is also keeping America competitive. Manned spaceflight drives innovation and pushes research and development to new levels. America gets huge returns on investments in NASA, and it is imperative that we work towards closing the gap between retirement of the Space Shuttle and the introduction of Project Constellation.

Mr. Chairman, we need to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars and ensure that they are getting the best return on their investment. I look forward to working with you to help strengthen America and meet the challenges before us.