

**OPENING STATEMENT
HONORABLE RALPH HALL
RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Hearing on:

*The State of Climate Change Science 2007:
The Findings of the Fourth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel
on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group II: Climate Change Impacts,
Adaptation and Vulnerability
Tuesday April 17, 2007*

Good morning. I am glad the Chairman organized this hearing about the important topic of climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Let me start by thanking all of the witnesses for being here today. Climate change is becoming a key issue in the 110th Congress and we all appreciate your time and the scientific expertise that you can provide to inform our policy discussions.

Climate change is one of our nation's biggest challenges, but so too are the equally important challenges of energy independence and affordability. Our nation needs solutions that address all of these issues, and they need not be mutually exclusive goals. We can, and should, develop affordable energy solutions that reduce our carbon intensity while freeing our nation from the grip of foreign energy.

The scientific findings of this second IPCC working group will prompt much debate about what policies the United States should enact to address the potential impacts of climate change.

The findings in Working Group II's report have even more uncertainty than those in the Working Group I report we heard about in February. Some in Congress are proposing bills that would create a mandatory regulatory scheme to address carbon emissions. In considering these pieces of legislation, we must always weigh the cost and benefits and the unintended consequences that could result.

The scientists at our hearing today can tell us their best analysis of what climate effects to expect at certain temperatures, but they cannot answer the policy issues posed above.

One issue that most of us agree on is that our country will experience impacts from climate change and we need to be ready to adapt to them. I have faith in American innovation in finding solutions to help us adapt to these changes. Last year, I authored the National Integrated Drought Information System Act that authorized a program to improve drought forecasting and allow localities to better manage their water resources. Adaptation will be important and I look forward to hearing from these experts today as they explain their findings in this key area.

In the long run, the key to addressing climate change will be clean, affordable, and reliable energy technologies. We need much more discussion in Congress on how new technologies can help

America become energy independent and create a world with cleaner energy sources.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today and yield back the balance of my time.