

Opening Statement
Rep. Bob Inglis (R-SC), Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Environment
Committee on Science and Technology
MARKUP

- *HR 2693, the Federal Oil Spill Research Program Act*
- *HR 2729, to authorize the designation of National Environmental Research Parks by the Secretary of Energy*
- *HR 1622, to provide for a program of research, development, and demonstration on natural gas vehicles*

June 16, 2009

Good morning and thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman.

Today we will address several pieces of legislation that highlight the diversity of federal research initiatives into pressing environmental and energy related problems. It's an opportunity to reflect on our broad jurisdiction and to ensure that federal research dollars are focused and well spent.

The first bill before us, the *Federal Oil Spill Research Program Act* will revitalize the federal research effort focused on the prevention, detection, and mitigation of oil spills. While this is critical research and I commend Ms. Woolsey's dedication to this important issue, I am not confident that H.R. 2693 is necessary to improve the interagency commitment to oil spill research. The testimony we heard on this topic two weeks ago indicated that the interagency process seems to be working. The witnesses indicated that the most significant problems were related to limited funding and poor communication with the states. Further, this bill makes NOAA the chair of the interagency research committee, though other federal agencies are better geared toward leading this particular research effort.

The second bill is H.R. 2729, a bill to permanently authorize National Environmental Research Parks. I appreciate Mr. Lujan's leadership in this area. These facilities are a unique environmental research asset. The environmental research park at the Savannah River Site has provided South Carolina's research universities and students with the unique opportunity to engage in research on our local ecology. Especially as we develop new energy alternatives, our National Environmental Research Parks will help us understand how our energy choices impact our distinct ecosystems.

I'd also like to speak in support of H.R. 1622 and commend Mr. Sullivan for his leadership in promoting the development of natural gas vehicles. So long as we rely on oil to power our transportation sector, the U.S. will be dependent on hostile foreign nations and we will continue to fund both sides of the war on terror. H.R. 1622 will utilize American ingenuity to increase competition and fuel choice in the transportation sector, spurring our innovation economy and increasing our national security.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to developing legislation that truly improves our diverse federal research efforts.