

## OPENING STATEMENT

**The Honorable Mo Brooks (R-AL), Chairman**  
Subcommittee on Research and Science Education  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Hearing on *The Role of Research Universities in Securing America's Future: Challenges and Expectations*

June 27, 2012

Good morning. We are pleased to welcome our witnesses to discuss the challenges faced by the Nation's research universities as well as the findings and recommendations from the June 14 report issued by the National Academies, *Research Universities and the Future of America*.

I think we can all acknowledge the importance of our Nation's research institutions; therefore I look forward to working with my counterparts on the Subcommittee to review measures that Congress, the federal government, state governments, research universities, and industry can take to improve these vital resources.

Innovation has remained a part of the fabric of this Nation since its founding. Particularly in today's tough economic times, research universities play a vital role in America's ability to maintain its competitiveness in an increasingly technologically developed world, and the knowledge and skills produced by our Nation's research graduates provide the fuel for these endeavors.

The Morrill Act of 1862 established a partnership between the federal government and the states to build land-grant institutions that would address the challenges of creating a modern agricultural and industrial economy for the 20th century. This partnership continues with an even broader support of the Nation's educational, research, and economic endeavors. Three of our distinguished witnesses today come from these land grant institutions. It is my understanding that other Vice Presidents for Research from a number of these land grant institutions are in the audience today, as they are all in town to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Morrill Act. To them, I offer a special welcome and thank you for your hard work and dedication.

According to the recently released National Academies report, requested in 2009 by now Full Committee Chairman Ralph Hall and other Members of Congress to identify the top ten actions to be taken in order to maintain the excellence of U.S. research and doctoral education, America's research universities have emerged as a major national asset, which supports the Nation's economic goals among other things. The challenges faced by these institutions, which are discussed in the report, range from unstable revenue streams and antiquated policies and practices to increasing competition from universities abroad.

Today, we will continue to examine the future outlook for these universities, while taking into account the recommendations from the National Academies report. I look forward to a comprehensive discussion with our witnesses, and I thank them for taking the time out of their busy schedules to help this Subcommittee with this important oversight role.