

OPENING STATEMENT
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Committee on Science, Space & Technology

Co-Host of *National Security Implications of Climate Change*,
part of the Science and Policy Perspectives Roundtable Series,
July 12th, 2017

Good afternoon, and welcome to today's Roundtable. Last month we held the first of our Science and Policy Perspectives Roundtables focused on the scientific impacts of climate change and the actions necessary to confront this threat. Today we will explore the *National Security Implications of Climate Change*.

The impacts from a warming planet and changing climate are increasing. Extreme weather events often leave economic devastation in their wake. Increasing droughts and water scarcity issues have exacerbated tensions in regional hot-spots around the globe. Rising sea levels have resulted in eroding coast-lines in the United States, flooding parts of U.S. military bases, and threatening the very existence of small island nations in the Pacific, some that host critical U.S. military installations and advanced technical assets.

Our economy, safety and security are all affected by the scientific reality of climate change. And our military forces must be prepared to confront all realistic threats, even those that do not come in the form of advancing armies or missiles pointed at our shores.

Climate change may require the military to change its operational posture, and force it to make additional investments to protect its vulnerable infrastructure. Rising sea levels may force the military to defend some of its naval bases from increasing floods or abandon them altogether. Rising temperatures, particularly in desert environments, may affect the ability of the military's air assets to operate effectively. Around the world, a warming climate has already endangered human habitats and increased regional tensions. All of these issues, brought on by a warming climate, present serious challenges for U.S. national security interests.

I look forward to learning more about these issues from our expert panelists who have extensive experience addressing the *National Security Implications of Climate Change*. I also hope to hear their suggestions for how they believe the U.S. should respond to these escalating risks and expanding threats.

Mr. Beyer, I want to thank you for co-hosting this Roundtable with me. I know that this issue is particularly important to you since Virginia and its military bases have already begun to confront the effects of climate change that we will be discussing today. With that, I now turn to Mr. Beyer for his opening comments.