



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement from Lamar Smith (R-Texas)

Full Committee Markup

Chairman Smith: Today we will consider seven bills, starting with three energy bills. Together, these first three bills direct and authorize upgrades to Department of Energy (DOE) facilities across the country. DOE national labs host over 30,000 researchers each year. These bills provide infrastructure investments that are crucial to ensuring America remains a leader in basic research and innovation.

The first bill is H.R. 4376, the Department of Energy Research Infrastructure Act. This legislation, sponsored by Energy Subcommittee Vice Chairman Steve Knight and Rep. Dan Lipinski, authorizes funding from the DOE Office of Science budget to complete construction of three science infrastructure projects.

The bill provides upgrades to the ultraviolet and soft x-ray light source at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab and the x-ray laser at SLAC National Accelerator Lab at Stanford University, ensuring that these facilities remain the best in the world.

These advanced light sources facilitate research in chemistry, physics, biology, medicine and manufacturing.

The Knight bill also authorizes and directs the construction of the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams at Michigan State University through the DOE Nuclear Physics program. This first-of-a kind facility will allow researchers to study a variety of rare isotopes, advancing science discoveries in fields ranging from medicine to astrophysics.

The next energy bill is H.R. 4377, the Accelerating American Leadership in Science Act. This legislation authorizes upgrades to the Advanced Photon Source at Argonne National Lab and the Spallation Neutron Source at Oak Ridge National Lab. It also funds the construction of the Long Baseline Neutrino Facility, which once completed will be the premiere international facility in high-energy physics.

I want to thank this bill's sponsors, Rep. Randy Hultgren and Rep. Bill Foster, for their long-standing support of basic research and investments in these best in the world science facilities.

H.R. 4378, the Nuclear Energy Research Infrastructure Act is our third energy bill today. H.R. 4378, sponsored by Energy Subcommittee Chairman Randy Weber and full Committee Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson, authorizes funds to construct the Versatile Neutron Source, a DOE fast neutron user facility that will facilitate the development of the next generation of nuclear reactors by the private sector.

Advanced nuclear reactor technology provides the best opportunity to make reliable, emission-free electricity available throughout the industrial and developing world.

This user facility will ensure U.S. companies develop this critical advanced reactor technology in the United States.

Next, we will consider four bipartisan STEM bills.

The first is H.R. 4375, the STEM Research and Education Efficiency and Transparency Act, which requires a report to Congress on the effectiveness of NSF STEM education programs to help determine what investments work and which are not effective.

The bill also improves the collection and reporting of data on individual federal research grant applications to ensure transparency.

I thank the Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman, Mrs. Comstock, and Ranking Member Johnson for their work on STEM issues and in particular promoting opportunities for women in STEM.

The next STEM bill is H.R. 4323, the Supporting Veterans in STEM Careers Act, which promotes veteran involvement in STEM education and research programs at NSF, including computer science and cybersecurity.

The bill also establishes a subcommittee at the National Science and Technology Council on veterans and military families.

I thank the lead sponsors of this bill, Congressman Dunn - an 11-year Army veteran and M.D. - and Mr. Takano, both members of this committee and the Veterans Affairs Committee as well.

I'd also like to acknowledge the six Science Committee members who are original co-sponsors of the bill and military veterans: Roger Marshall, Barry Loudermilk, Ralph Abraham, Brian Babin, Steve Knight and Jim Banks.

The third STEM bill is HR. 4254, the Women in Aerospace Education Act, which strengthens aerospace workforce opportunities for women. It provides for internships at national labs and NASA Centers through the NSF Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program and NASA fellowship opportunities.

I thank the sponsors, Mr. Knight and Ms. Esty, for their work on promoting STEM opportunities for women.

The fourth STEM bill we will consider is H.R. 3397, the Building Blocks of STEM Act, which directs NSF to support STEM education research focused on early childhood. Ms. Rosen and Mr. Knight are the sponsors of this bill, and we appreciate their work.

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