

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Hearing on The President's FY2014 Budget Request for Science Agencies**

Chairman Smith: The topic of today's hearing is the President's budget request for the coming year. This is the first of several hearings to examine over \$40 billion in annual federal research and development (R&D) spending within the Science Committee's jurisdiction.

Unfortunately, this Administration's science budget focuses, in my view, far too much money, time, and effort on alarmist predictions of climate change. For example, the Administration tried to link hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and droughts to climate change. Yet even the Administration's own scientists contradicted the president.

The Administration also has not been as open and honest with the American people as it should. When the Committee asked the EPA for the scientific data being used to justify some of the costliest regulations in history, their response was that they didn't have it even though they were using it.

When we asked the National Science Foundation (NSF) last year for their justification in funding numerous research grants, the NSF refused to provide a response.

All government employees and their agency heads need to remember they are accountable to the American taxpayer who pays their salary and funds their projects. It is not the government's money; it's the people's money.

Further, an estimated \$300 million was spent in building the website Healthcare.gov prior to its public rollout last October. Secretary Sebelius rightly called this "a debacle." In its haste to launch the Healthcare.gov website, it appears the Obama Administration cut corners that left the site open to hackers and other online criminals. According to experts who testified before the Science Committee, millions of Americans are vulnerable to identity theft from this website.

For this reason, the Science Committee has twice asked the White House's Chief Technology Officer, Todd Park, to testify about his role in the development of the Healthcare.gov website. Rather than allow him to testify before Congress, the White House instead chose to make Mr. Park available for interviews with Time magazine. So much for accountability and transparency.

The Administration's willful disregard for public accountability distracts from the important issues of how America can stay ahead of China, Russia, and other countries in the highly-competitive race for technological leadership.

Perhaps the greatest example of the White House's lack of leadership is with America's space program. The White House's approach has been to raid NASA's budget to fund the Administration's

environmental agenda. In the last seven years, NASA's Earth Science Division has grown by over 63 percent. Meanwhile, the White House's budget proposal would cut NASA by almost \$200 million in Fiscal Year 2015 compared to what Congress provided the agency this year.

And The White House's proposed asteroid retrieval mission is a mission without a budget, without a destination, and without a launch date. Rather than diminish NASA's space exploration mission, President Obama should set forth a certain, near-term, realizable goal for NASA's space exploration.

Many experts believe that a Mars Flyby mission launched in 2021 is a potentially worthy near-term goal. A human Mars mission would electrify the American public, excite American scientists, and inspire American students.

Our leadership has slipped in areas such as: space exploration where we currently rely on Russia to launch our astronauts into space; supercomputing where China currently has the lead; and even severe weather forecasting where European weather models routinely predict America's weather better than we can. We need to make up for lost ground.

These budget hearings are about something far more important than simply numbers on a ledger. They're about priorities. And the Administration should reevaluate its priorities if we want to continue to be a world leader in science, space, and technology.

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