COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH

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Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Hearing on A Review of President's FY 2014 Budget Request for Science Agencies

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

Each subcommittee will examine the requests for the science agencies under their jurisdiction in the coming weeks. However, at the outset of this series of hearings, I would like to say that these budget hearings are about something far more important than simply numbers on a ledger. The budget choices for federal R&D investments we choose will affect research and technology for many decades to come.

This Committee was first created in 1957 in response to the threat of the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik. At that time, Americans were fearful of what this small spacecraft represented.

The threats we face today are far more diverse and complicated. But in many ways, the same fundamental concern remains today as when this Committee was first created: Is America still a leader in science, space and technology or are we falling behind? How does America stay ahead in the race for global competitiveness? How can we measure the benefits of such research investments when the pay-off might be many years later? And how can American innovators better leverage these federal government investments to benefit the American people?

These questions are the prism through which the President's budget request and Congress's policy and budget decisions must be viewed. It is less a matter of dollars and cents, but more about finding common sense solutions.

Here are some of the decisions this Committee faces with the President's budget before us:
Today, the U.S. pays Russia to take each of our astronauts to the International Space Station we built with the now-retired Space Shuttle. How best can we develop the new systems to once again launch American astronauts on American rockets? How can we better utilize the research capabilities of the International Space Station over the next decade?

Beyond low-Earth orbit of the Station, where are the next destinations for our astronauts to explore? Is an asteroid the next destination, as the President suggested three years ago? Or is the Earth's moon a more compelling place for American astronauts to return, rather than finding an asteroid to pull into the Moon's orbit?

In his inaugural address last January, the President spoke briefly about climate change and the "overwhelming judgment of science." His budget proposes $2.7 billion spread across 13 different

federal agencies for climate science. How does this high level of spending affect other research priorities? Is some consolidation of research effort needed here?

Today, China and other countries are using the very same internet computer connections America invented and built over decades to spy on hi-tech American companies and laboratories to gain our know-how and intellectual property. They might even attempt to cause physical damage using the computer systems that drive our society today. What is the best way to defend against cyber attacks and intrusions?

These are only a handful of the decisions before us as we consider the President's FY 2014 budget request for federal research and development. American ingenuity and perseverance in the face of adversity is what makes our country great. We have many challenges before us—technological, scientific and budgetary—but we will face them with the same determination Americans have in our past.

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