



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

For Immediate Release  
September 6, 2017

Media Contact: Thea McDonald  
(202) 225-6371

**Statement of Oversight Subcommittee Chairman Darin LaHood (R-Ill.)**  
*Examining the Scientific and Operational Integrity of EPA's IRIS Program*

**Chairman LaHood:** Good morning and welcome to today's Joint Subcommittee hearing "Examining EPA's Integrated Risk Information System Program." Today, we will hear from expert witnesses highlighting various examples of why oversight of the IRIS program is critical to restoring scientific integrity to the agency. I would like to thank the witnesses in advance for their testimony today.

EPA created IRIS in 1985 under no statutory authority, defining no safeguards, timelines, or binding requirements with which the program must adhere. EPA intended for the program to "foster consistency in the evaluation of chemical toxicity across the Agency." However, since 2011 multiple reports have been issued raising glaring deficiencies in the program that to this day have gone un-addressed.

As we will hear from witnesses today, IRIS assessments are not based on sound science. There are multiple instances of the IRIS program relying on outdated or flawed studies to complete assessments, neglecting to obtain or use the scientifically critical raw supporting data related to risk assessments. Moreover, IRIS has failed to adapt "mode of action" science utilized by other offices within EPA, which we will hear more about from Dr. Bus.

More troubling, it appears that quasi-regulatory decisions have been based off the assessments completed by the IRIS program. The fact that many of these assessments may be faulty illustrates why oversight is so important to the function of our government.

An accredited scientific body, The National Academy of Sciences has raised serious questions and concerns about IRIS; the GAO has included IRIS on its biennial High Risk List since 2009; and this Committee sent EPA a letter last year raising similar concerns. These combined efforts have resulted in little, if any, improvement. By holding this hearing today and diving deeper into the issue at hand I hope to continue our oversight of the IRIS program to bring attention to the scientific integrity issues that need to be addressed.

###