**OPENING STATEMENT**

**The Honorable Ralph M. Hall (R-TX), Chairman**

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

*Climate Change: Examining the Processes Used to Create Science and Policy*

March 31, 2011

I want to welcome everyone here today for this hearing on climate change processes.

When I became Chairman of this Committee, I stated that I wanted to bring up folks to testify on climate change science and policy because I believe there have been a lot more questions than answers. The current Administration has been moving full s peed ahead with regulations and policy initiatives that it justifies based on the available science. Since these actions have the potential to severely damage our economy, there should be extra care in making sure they are truly necessary and appropriate.

Science is not perfect. It is a process of trial and error. And scientists are not infallible; they are just as human as any of us. As policy makers, we are tasked with making difficult decisions, sometimes when not all the answers are known. In cases such as these, we must rely upon the processes by which the information we do have is generated. And we must rely upon the fact that the people generating that information have adhered to those processes.

The leaked emails from the University of East Anglia's Climate Research Unit in November of 2009 revealed that the scientists most vocal about the effects humans were having on the climate were not following accepted scientific practices. When these emails came to light, the Administration proclaimed that the science generated by a corrupt process was still robust, and still justified the policy measures it was taking.

For many of us here, these emails were evidence that the trust in the underlying process was misplaced. I may not be a scientist, but as a politician, I can tell when someone is trying to pull the wool over my eyes.

There is an old saying - Caesar's wife must be beyond reproach. That is to say that even if there has been no evidence of wrong doing, the supposition of wrong doing is enough to undermine the trust in an entire enterprise.

The legitimate questions that have been raised about the processes used to generate climate change science and policy have thus far been cast aside. The reluctance to engage in conversations with people who have doubts or question the veracity of climate science is at the heart of the wrong doing that undermines trust in climate change science.

In a hearing last November, I stated that reasonable people have serious questions about our knowledge of the state of the science, the evidence, and what constitutes a proportional response.

The hearing today will explore how basic and widely accepted scientific processes have been applied in building the foundation of climate science that we rely upon to make decisions. I look forward to returning the debate back to the methodical, deliberative, balanced and transparent discussion it ought to be.

I thank the witnesses for being here, and I now recognize Ranking Member Johnson for five minutes for an opening statement.