

**OPENING STATEMENT  
HONORABLE RALPH HALL  
RANKING MEMBER  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Hearing on:**

*The State of Climate Change Science 2007: The Findings of the Fourth Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Working Group III: Mitigation of Climate Change*  
**Wednesday May 16, 2007**

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am glad that you are holding this hearing today because it provides all of us with an opportunity to discuss what I believe this Committee should focus on when it comes to the issue of global climate change—how much is it going to cost and what do we get in return.

The key question facing all of us here in Congress is not “what does the latest science say about climate change?” The key question is “given all the science, what is the appropriate policy for the United States to move our nation towards affordable, reliable and clean energy sources?” It is not an easy question to answer. We must consider if the U.S. regulates greenhouse gases, what impact could we have if other major carbon emitting countries do not follow suit? Would this reality put America in the position of shouldering the burden of cleaning up the world and having our citizens bear the high costs? What would regulations mean for the price of natural gas? For electricity rates? Are these costs we are willing to accept given the uncertainty about whether regulations could help?

When I return to my congressional district, constituents have high on their list of concerns the high price of gasoline. We need to be looking at ways to lower this cost, not raise it. And yet, the scenarios being discussed today propose raising the price of gasoline substantially. Estimates of price increases range from 20 cents per gallon to as much as \$1.00 per gallon.

Rather than focusing on ways to raise energy prices for Americans, we must discuss what the U.S. could accomplish with the right investments in energy research and development. We must consider the enormous benefits and lower costs of adaptation. And, we must not lose sight of other pressing national priorities and understand the overall burden of all national needs on the average citizen.

Working Group III was asked to look at ways to mitigate greenhouse gases, and that's what they did. I think their charge was too narrow and should have included a more comprehensive assessment to help us answer the questions I mentioned earlier. Policy makers should not make decisions in a vacuum, and so it would be more useful if the technical information presented to us was placed in a broader context. Nevertheless, they did what they did under the charge given to them.

The Working Group III report points out that even a middle of the road greenhouse gas mitigation approach would mean a reduction of up to 4 percent of global GDP. Let me place that in context for you. At the end of the first quarter of 2007, the U.S. GDP was \$13.6 trillion. Four percent of that is \$544 billion. By comparison:

- Total U.S. spending on defense in FY2007 (\$567 billion) will be close to 4 percent of U.S. GDP.
- The American Competitiveness Initiative, when complete in FY 2016, will total \$19.5 billion, just a fraction of 1 percent of U.S. GDP.
- \$143 billion is the total Federal R&D investment in FY 2007.
- Nationwide education spending (federal, state and local combined) as a percent of GDP is 5.7 percent.

- Finally, the entire budget for the Social Security Administration is on the order of \$600 billion.

Mr. Chairman, now that all three groups of the IPCC have reported, I look forward to the real discussion this Committee should promote. We should be the leader in the House of Representatives for promoting wise investments in energy research and development, investments that tap into American's innovative spirit and will lead us to a future where our energy supply is affordable, reliable and clean.

I yield back the balance of my time.