

Opening Statement
The Honorable Ralph Hall (R-TX), Chairman
Full Committee Hearing
STEM Education in Action: Learning Today...Leading Tomorrow

June 16, 2011

I would like to welcome everyone here today for what is the first in a series of *STEM Education in Action* hearings. The purpose of these hearings will be to highlight various Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education activities across the Nation, their role in inspiring and educating future generations, and their contribution to our economic prosperity.

The Federal government is investing several billions of dollars on STEM Education activities, primarily at the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, but also in every agency under this Committee's jurisdiction. However, there are numerous companies, foundations, non-profit organizations, and other groups who are doing their own part, and on their own dime, to successfully promote STEM education and inspire our next generation of scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs, and leaders.

Today's hearing focuses on one of those successful and impressive initiatives, the Toshiba / National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) ExploraVision Competition. This competition is open to students in grades K-12. Students are asked to research any science technology of their choice and explore what that technology will look like in 20 years. Our witnesses today represent four of the eight winning teams, who as part of their prize, received an expense-paid trip to Washington, DC.

Congratulations to all of the teams for your extraordinary accomplishment of first or second place in this national science competition that attracted over 4,000 entries. All of you are an inspiration to students, teachers, and parents around the country.

From 12:30 to 2:30 today, all teams will have their projects on display downstairs in the Rayburn Foyer. I encourage all of my colleagues to stop by and spend some time talking to these incredible students about their impressive award-winning projects.

This Nation has always been the leader in innovation, and our children and grandchildren, like the ones in front of us today, are the key to our future success. I look forward to getting to know more about each of you, why you were moved to do the project you chose, and what all of you -- students, parents, and teachers --- learned by participating in this competition.