



NASA Celebrates 50th Anniversary

On July 30, the Committee held a hearing to celebrate NASA's achievements over the past 50 years and review the future challenges and opportunities.

In 1958, as a response to the Soviet Union's successful launch of Sputnik 1, the Science and Technology Committee was formed. Shortly after the Committee's creation, the *National Aeronautics and Space Act*



(From L to R): (back) Ranking Member Ralph Hall, Mr. Norman Augustine, (front) Dr. Maria Zuber, Former Chairmen Sherwood Boehlert and Robert Walker, Chairman Bart Gordon, and Hon. John Glenn.

of 1958 (P.L. 85-568) was signed into law by President Eisenhower and NASA was established. NASA's space and Earth science, aeronautics, and human spaceflight and exploration programs have shaped our nation's leadership in science and innovation.

Committee members heard from a distinguished panel of witnesses, including Hon. John Glenn — the first American to orbit the Earth. Also, Stephen Hawking — one of the leading cosmologists and theoretical physicists — provided a prerecorded message for this hearing.

[Read more about NASA's accomplishments >>](#)

Subcommittee Investigates Low-Level Plutonium Spill at NIST-Boulder

In response to a Plutonium spill at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) laboratory in Boulder, CO, the Technology and Innovation Subcommittee held a hearing on July 15 to examine the emergency procedures that were taken.



Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee Chairman Mark Udall questions witnesses at the hearing on July 15.

Previously, Chairman Bart Gordon, and Subcommittee Chairmen David Wu and Mark Udall sent [a letter](#) to the Secretary of Commerce urging him to immediately establish an independent panel to thoroughly investigate the environmental, health, and safety programs at NIST. The letter emphasized an extremely thorough investigation of their procedures dealing with radioactive and hazardous materials, such as plutonium.

[Read more about this hearing >>](#)

JULY 2008 E-NEWS



Committee Members welcome Rep. Donna Edwards (D-MD).

Newsletter Spotlight

Welcome to the July 2008 edition of the [House Committee on Science and Technology's E-Newsletter](#).

As always, the Committee appreciates your interest in our work. Please feel free to share Science & Tech E-News with friends and colleagues. They can also [sign up](#) to receive E-News in their own mailboxes quickly and easily.

Sincerely,

Bart Gordon, Chairman,
House Committee on
Science & Technology

Additional July Agenda Items

July 10 — *Harmful Algal Blooms: The Challenges on the Nation's Coastlines*

July 15 — *The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations and Universities in International Science and Technology Cooperation*

July 16 — *Full Committee Markup on H.R. 2339, H.R. 3957, and H.R. 6323*

July 24 — *The National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program: Strengthening Windstorm Hazard Mitigation*

July 31 — *Oversight of the Federal Networking and Information Technology R&D (NITRD) Program*

House Approves Science and Technology Water Legislation

On [July 30](#), House passes two Committee bills — [H.R. 3957](#), [H.R. 2339](#) — to foster technological innovation, efficiency and conservation in an effort to prevent a looming water crisis.

[H.R. 3957](#), the *Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Research Act*, was authored by Rep. Jim Matheson. This legislation creates a program to promote water-use efficiency and conservation within the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Research and Development.

[H.R. 2339](#), the *Produced Water Utilization Act*, was introduced by Ranking Member Ralph Hall. This legislation establishes a R&D program to promote and demonstrate the beneficial reuse of water production in relation to oil and gas extraction.

H.R. 3957 and H.R. 2339 favorably passed the Energy and Environment Subcommittee on [May 6](#) and the Full Committee on [July 16](#). Currently, both of these bills were sent to



the Senate and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

[Read More about H.R. 3957 >>](#)

[Read more about H.R. 2339>>](#)

Committee Members at the markup on July 16, 2008. (From L to R): Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, Rep. Jerry McNerney, Rep. Steve Rothman, Rep. David Wu (back row), Rep. Donna Edwards, and Rep. Laura Richardson.

Committee Examines Ways to Improve Water Research

On [July 23](#), the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment held a hearing to review [draft legislation](#) regarding a water initiative. Subcommittee Members explored the legislation to create a National Water Initiative aimed at coordinating and improving federal research related to water.

The Committee received recommendations from witnesses on the discussion draft legislation entitled, the *National Water Research and Development Initiative Act*. This draft legislation will be introduced by Science and Technology Committee Chairman Gordon.

The draft legislation will improve the federal government's role in designing and implementing federal water research, development, demonstration, education, and technology transfer activities. Specifically, it will address changes in our nation's water use, supply, and demand, including providing additional support to increase water supply through greater efficiency and conservation.



Rep. Gabrielle Giffords questioned witnesses during the hearing on July 23, 2008.

[Read more about the hearing and the draft legislation >>](#)

Looking Ahead...

The House will be in recess the entire month of August. Please visit the Committee's website at <http://science.house.gov/> for additional information about upcoming Committee activity and events.

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