

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

HEARING

Biological Research for Energy and Medical Applications at the Department of Energy Office of Science

September 10, 2009

Statement of Subcommittee on Energy & Environment Ranking Member Bob Inglis (SC-4)

Good afternoon and thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman.

Today we're going to be reminded of the unique complexity of the Department of Energy's Office of Science. Certainly biology is not the first thing that comes to mind when we think of critical research gaps in developing new energy technologies. The Biological and Environmental Research Program in the Office of Science is currently advancing biofuel development, helping us better understand the impacts of climate change on our environment, and improving medical technologies.

Research in 1949 about the health impacts of radiation exposure has evolved into dramatic advancements in genetics, radiology, and nuclear medicine. One of the most notable achievements of biological research at DOE is certainly the Human Genome Project. In coordination with NIH, the Human Genome Project resolved the complete human DNA sequence in 13 short years. With the diversity of efforts at DOE, I'm looking forward to hearing about other potential breakthroughs from our witnesses, particularly in the area of biofuels.

I also should admit a parochial interest in the Biological and Environmental Research Program. Clemson University in the Upstate has a remarkable research program in the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Life Sciences. Researchers there do a considerable amount of work on the genomics and development of biofuel crops, and have collaborated with DOE on several such projects previously, as you point out in your testimony, Dr. Keasling.

Again, I'm very much looking forward to the testimony of our witnesses. While much of the work in the Biological and Environmental Research Program seems only loosely related to the overall mission of DOE, they are working on exciting progress in a variety of energy and medical initiatives.

Thank you again for bringing us back from the August recess with this hearing, Mr. Chairman.

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