



**CONGRESSMAN ALAN B. MOLLOHAN, CHAIRMAN**

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE & RELATED AGENCIES**

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## **Opening Statement of Chairman Alan B. Mollohan**

### ***Science Overview***

Good morning, Dr. Cicerone, and welcome before the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Subcommittee. We appreciate you coming today to provide your perspective on the state of science in the United States and where you see it heading. As those responsible for appropriations for four significant research agencies – NSF, NASA, NOAA, and NIST – we want to ensure that we provide appropriate support for science and technology so that our country can continue to enjoy economic growth beyond our growth in population.

We recognize that there is more to encouraging and sustaining a healthy science and engineering enterprise than government financial support. The freedom of inquiry offered by our democracy is significant, as are patent protection and the rule of law. Our responsibility is to balance the investment of federal tax dollars across many competing government programs and across the research and science education activities included in our jurisdiction. Finding the right balance is critical along with providing levels of support that are sustainable politically and practically. Research is usually a long-term investment and is poorly served by boom–bust cycles in funding and employment.

The National Academy of Sciences, of which you are currently President, provided a major, influential report entitled *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* that highlighted the critical need for increased funding of NSF, NIST, and the DOE Office of Science. Recommended increases have been provided, especially in the just enacted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. So, as the US science enterprise is receiving increased funding, are we striking the right balance among different areas and agencies and between science and technology, engineering, and mathematics education?

This morning's hearing is the first in a series that are intended to give this subcommittee a clearer view of the state of science and science education in the US and a basis on which to make the tough choices in balancing federal investments in the research agencies within our jurisdiction. Dr. Cicerone we look forward to you starting us off with an overview of the state and direction of the US science enterprise.