

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairman Larry Bucshon (R-Ind.)
Markup of H.R. 4186: The FIRST Act**

Chairman Bucshon: The Subcommittee on Research and Technology meets today to mark-up H.R. 4186, the Frontiers in Innovation, Research, Science, and Technology (FIRST) Act of 2014.

The FIRST Act reauthorizes the National Science Foundation (NSF), federal science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education programs, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). This reauthorization is necessary as the America COMPETES Act expired at the end of last year.

As a heart surgeon with a scientific background, I know the importance of basic research. Unfortunately, until entitlement programs are reformed and mandatory spending is addressed, no federal program that is dependent on discretionary appropriations is safe from funding cuts and we must ensure our dollars are stretched in the most efficient and effective way possible.

The FIRST Act provides stronger accountability measures and transparency mechanisms, while still allowing flexibility for these agencies to fund and conduct basic research. Along with accountability measures, this legislation requires stakeholder input in decisions regarding the federal STEM education portfolio and adds computer science to the definition of STEM education. It also provides more flexibility for NIST's Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program and includes the TRANSFER Act of 2013, which passed by voice vote last December and supports innovative approaches of technology transfer.

The FIRST Act also pushes the administration to move to rationalize the overlapping, unnecessary, and expensive regulatory and compliance burdens that federal agencies put on our research community. GAO reports upwards of 30% of federal research funds is spent on these burdens.

I look forward to today's subcommittee markup and moving this legislation forward to reauthorize these important programs.

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