

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



For Immediate Release
July 17, 2014

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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Hearing on Policies to Spur Innovative Medical Breakthroughs
from Laboratories to Patients**

Chairman Smith: Basic biomedical research is increasingly inter-disciplinary in nature. Advances in applied mathematics, physics, chemistry, computer science and engineering provide a better understanding of medical conditions and the tools to help find cures.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) can play an important and vital role in understanding the basic science behind many debilitating conditions. For example, developments in basic scientific research have provided deep insight into how the brain and other neurological structures are organized.

NSF research could help us better understand conditions such as cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, autism, stroke, dementia, traumatic brain injury, epilepsy, and many other neurological disorders. Countless lives have unfortunately been lost to these diseases. And the economic impact and physical and emotional toll they can put on families can make them even more devastating.

The NSF should support inter-disciplinary research, in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), to help us better understand medical illnesses.

The results of this research will have a clear and direct benefit to the American public. In my district in Fiscal Year 2013, the NIH funded 215 projects at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio totaling about \$70 million. Over the last 5 years, NSF funded \$44 million to universities and colleges in the San Antonio area.

The Frontiers in Innovation, Research, Science, and Technology Act, or FIRST Act, supports basic research that has the potential to improve the daily lives of Americans. The FIRST Act increases funding for subjects such as mathematics, physical sciences, biological sciences, computer sciences, and engineering for Fiscal Year 2015.

The FIRST Act, which was successfully reported out of Committee this past May, includes a \$270 million increase for Fiscal Year 2015 over current NSF spending for these important subject areas. Federally funded basic research has supported the creation of technologies that have changed and improved our daily lives — including the MRI and laser technology.

Efficient and effective use of NSF funding geared toward basic research will help us better understand medical conditions and lead to medical breakthroughs that benefit both doctors and patients alike. Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing, and I look forward to the witnesses' testimony.

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