



COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**  
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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## **Statement by Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)**

*Mentoring, Training, and Apprenticeships for STEM Education and Careers*

**Chairman Smith:** This hearing continues the Science Committee's work on STEM. The STEM Education Act of 2015 updated the definition of STEM to include computer science. The 2017 American Innovation and Competitiveness Act strengthened external stakeholders' roles in setting STEM priorities.

Most recently, the committee and the full House approved several bipartisan bills aimed at boosting STEM interest and opportunities for our military veterans and for women and underrepresented minorities, starting in kindergarten.

Apprenticeships, mentoring and on-the-job training are proven ways to meet workforce needs. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about the potential for using these workforce development methods to boost STEM education and careers.

According to the National Science Board's most recent Science and Engineering Indicators report, the number of U.S. jobs that require science, technology, engineering, math and computer skills has grown nearly 34 percent over the past decade.

STEM workforce demand is forecast to increase steadily for years to come. Filling our STEM workforce needs, from certificate-level technical occupations to PhDs, is essential for our economic competitiveness.

STEM jobs are growing in every sector of our economy, from the shop floors in advanced manufacturing, to computer programming for our huge service industry sector, to cybersecurity for every public and private computer network. According to a recent report from Brookings, half of all STEM jobs are available to workers without a four-year college degree, and these jobs pay a wage 10 percent higher than jobs with similar educational requirements.

Filling the workforce pipeline with qualified STEM workers at every level is crucial for our future economic prosperity.

The innovative workforce training programs in which our witnesses are involved can provide new opportunities for STEM education and training and encourage young people to pursue STEM-based careers.

Successful workforce development programs extend beyond the four walls of classrooms and laboratories. Partnerships between industry and academia can create new ways for young people to pursue STEM careers and boost formal education and training with on-the-job work experiences.

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