

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



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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)  
Hearing on “STEM Education: The Administration’s Proposed Re-Organization”**

**Chairman Smith:** The topic of today’s hearing is the President’s proposed re-organization of federal STEM education programs. The proposal is part of the President’s FY14 budget request to Congress and includes the consolidation of over 100 federal STEM education programs.

In order to achieve the innovations of tomorrow, we must better educate American students today. The Science, Space and Technology Committee looks for ways not only to encourage students to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics but also to inspire them to pursue careers in STEM fields.

Unfortunately, America lags behind many other nations when it comes to STEM education. American students rank 23rd in math and 31st in science. This is not the record of a great country. And it is not the record of a country that expects to remain a world leader.

The COMPETES Act of 2010 required the National Science and Technology Council to establish a Committee on STEM. Today this is commonly referred to as CoSTEM, which seeks to “coordinate federal programs and activities in support of STEM education.” CoSTEM was directed to develop and implement a five-year Strategic Plan for the coordination of federal STEM programs.

Unfortunately, the Strategic Plan was significantly delayed and was only received by Congress last Friday. The Administration proposed a re-organization of federal STEM programs as part of the budget request in April, prior to the release of the final Strategic Plan. I hope our witnesses can tell us what was wrong with the programs the Administration wants to cut or consolidate.

We also need to carefully consider how best to streamline, coordinate and consolidate programs that specifically engage children and the public in STEM subjects. Our country continues to face a fiscal crisis and part of our challenge is how to achieve the most benefit from our limited resources in the current budget environment. More graduates with STEM degrees means more advanced technologies and a more robust economy. A well-educated and trained STEM workforce undergirds our future economic prosperity.

But we have to capture and hold the desire of our nation’s youth to study science and engineering so they will want to pursue these careers. Our hearing today will help us evaluate if the Administration’s proposal effectively accomplishes those goals.