



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

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Statement by Rep. Daniel Webster (R-Fla.)

Composite Materials – Strengthening Infrastructure Development

Rep. Webster: The purpose of this morning's hearing is to review a National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) report on overcoming barriers to the adoption of composites in sustainable infrastructure and discuss the value of developing composite standards for infrastructure applications.

While not widely adopted yet, composites have been used in select construction projects across the country. As we will hear from our experts today, fiber reinforced polymer composites produced in the United States offer durable, sustainable and cost-effective solutions in a variety of infrastructure applications as diverse as dams, levees, highways, bridges, tunnels, railroads, harbors, utility poles and buildings.

However, without proper design guides and data tables to harmonize standards and create a uniform guidance, the practical use of composites to build durable and cost-effective infrastructure will continue to lag.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is well-positioned to lead research to provide the evidence and data needed to set industry standards and design guidelines. NIST has a deep and varied expertise in advanced composites, which I look forward to hearing more about in this hearing. It is my understanding that there are over a dozen projects across NIST that work to measure, model and predict the performance of advanced composites for a variety of applications.

I am well aware of the challenges our nation's infrastructure is facing and the anticipated costs of its restoration. I look forward to learning more about the potential value of using composites in infrastructure and the economic case for composites as an alternative or supplement to conventional materials in infrastructure projects.

I appreciate you all for taking the time to join me for this hearing. As the administration and Congress begin to consider how to tackle the nation's infrastructure challenges, it is important we understand what role composites can play.

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