



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

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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)**  
*An Overview of Fusion Energy Science*

**Chairman Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today we will hear about the status of fusion energy research and development and the prospects of future scientific discovery in fusion energy.

The basic idea of fusion energy is to create the equivalent of the power source of a star here on earth. The same nuclear reactions that occur in a star would be recreated and controlled within a fusion reactor. The heat from these reactions would ultimately be converted into renewable and reliable electricity. It has captured the imagination of scientists and engineers for over half a century.

At the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, the National Spherical Torus Experiment enables scientists from across the country to carry out experiments in cutting-edge fusion research. Someday, the results of this research may provide the scientific foundation for producing power through fusion.

Other DOE labs also support fusion research. At Los Alamos National Laboratory, our nuclear weapons researchers apply their expertise to the development of innovative fusion concepts.

The ultimate goal in fusion energy science is to provide a sustainable, renewable, zero-emissions energy source. We cannot say when fusion will be a viable part of our energy portfolio, but we should support this critical science that could benefit future generations.

One major step toward achieving this goal is ITER . The ITER project is a multinational collaborative effort to build the world's largest tokamak-type fusion reactor.

The federal government should invest in long-term challenging science projects such as this, which will ensure America remains a world leader in innovation. Today, we will hear from the Director General of ITER who will provide an update on the project's advances and challenges.

Basic research, such as fusion energy science, provides the underpinnings for groundbreaking technology. This type of energy R&D is still in its early stages and requires commitment and leadership.

Unfortunately, the president has not provided the leadership that is necessary and has repeatedly cut funding for fusion science. Despite the president's promises to support clean energy R&D, his lack of support for fusion energy is more than disappointing. Fusion energy is the type of technology that could someday change the way we think about energy. To maintain our competitive advantage, we must continue to support the basic research that will lead to next generation energy technologies.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

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