

**Opening Statement**  
**The Honorable Paul Broun, M.D. (R-GA), Ranking Member**  
House Committee on Science and Technology  
Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight  
*“Setting New Courses for Polar Weather Satellites and Earth Observations”*

June 29, 2010

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to welcome our witnesses here today and thank them for participating in this important hearing. This is the Committee’s first hearing on the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS), but the seventh time we have looked into the previous program, the National Polar-Orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS).

NPOESS was originally planned to create synergies and cost-savings by combining the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP) within the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Polar-Orbiting Environmental Satellite (POES) System at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Instead, the program doubled in cost, shrunk from six to four satellites, degraded its sensor capabilities, and its schedule slipped six years. Now, 15 years later, we are back where we started.

At last year’s hearing I asked the questions, ‘how did we get here?’ and ‘where do we go from here?’ My question today is ‘where are we going?’ The Administration announced plans to restructure the program last winter, but as Mr. Powner points out in his testimony “[b]ecause neither agency has finalized plans for its acquisition, the full impact of OSTP’s decision on the expected cost, schedule, and capabilities is unknown.” Until we receive this information, we can’t fully review this new program. While it is understandable that it will take time to restructure, I hope the Administration consults with Congress, and this Committee in particular given its history with the program.

I look forward to working with the Administration and the Chairman as we move forward. As I said at last year’s hearing, every American is impacted by this program whether they know it or not. It is our responsibility to ensure that the farmers, fisherman, war-fighters, and everyday commuters continue to receive weather and climate information. But we must not forget to be good stewards of taxpayers’ money and root out waste, inefficiency and duplication where we can.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

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