

**OPENING STATEMENT OF  
THE HONORABLE VERNON J. EHLERS  
RANKING MEMBER  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND SCIENCE EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

*A Systems Approach to Improving K-12 STEM Education*

**Thursday, July 30, 2009  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
2318 Rayburn House Office Building**

Today's hearing will examine how the various public and private stakeholders in an urban K-12 system can work in concert to improve science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. In particular, I am pleased that we will hear testimony from key players in the Chicago Public Schools, our nation's third largest school district, on the successes and challenges of implementing STEM education programs.

As we take a closer look at the Chicago Public Schools, I expect we will gain a greater appreciation for the difficulties involved in encouraging our urban youth to pursue STEM-related fields. At the same time, I look forward to hearing about the role of outside groups in facilitating this type of learning. During the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, this Committee held a field hearing in Texarkana, Texas, to witness firsthand a suburban community's efforts to engage students in math and science. I expect today's case study of the Chicago Public Schools system will offer the Committee fresh insights, while building upon the observations collected at last year's hearing.

I would like to acknowledge the work of Chairman Gordon and Subcommittee Chairman Lipinski and their staff on this series of STEM-related hearings in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. These hearings have educated Members and the public about the problems and the necessity of improving STEM education, a topic which I am always willing to discuss. I would also like to thank our panel of experts for joining us today, and I look forward to hearing their testimonies.