

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

**The Honorable Mo Brooks (R-AL), Chairman**

Subcommittee on Research and Science Education

*Oversight of the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program and  
Priorities for the Future*

September 21, 2011

Good morning, and welcome to each of our witnesses. Today, we are presented with the opportunity to review the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program (NITRD) and to discuss priorities for the future.

The NITRD program is the main Federal R&D investment portfolio in unclassified networking, computing, software, cybersecurity, and related information technologies. It also serves as the mechanism for interagency coordination of this R&D. Fourteen member agencies, including the National Science Foundation, NASA, the Department of Energy, NOAA, and the Department of Homeland Security provide budgets for NIT research and development. Numerous other federal agencies are also actively engaged in the coordination.

Networking and information technology includes an array of technologies from smart phones to cloud computing. Multidisciplinary innovations include computational decoding of the human genome, modeling and simulation of complex physical systems for aircraft, automobiles, power grids and pharmaceuticals; near-real-time weather forecasts and climate models; and unmanned aerial vehicles and search-and-rescue robots. Among its many goals, NIT research and development in this field works to minimize and prevent disruptions to critical infrastructures like power grids and emergency communication systems. These investments are necessary not only to help maintain world leadership in science and engineering and strengthen U.S. competitiveness, but they also grow the economy through the creation of NIT jobs and enhance national security.

For instance, cybersecurity is one of the biggest security challenges facing our nation today. It permeates through all of our federal agencies and even into our private computer systems. This is just one area that the NITRD program helps to coordinate our federal R&D, but it indicates how imperative it is that we continue to support critical and collaborative research efforts such as this.

Today, our witnesses will share with us their insights on the current state of the program and future priorities. It has been several years since the NITRD program was last reviewed by this Subcommittee. The program was reauthorized by the House in the last Congress on two occasions, only to languish in the Senate. Hopefully, input from our experts today will help inform this Subcommittee's current work and bring to light new advances and challenges for NIT R&D since the last bill's introduction.

Part of this Subcommittee's role is to ensure that federal dollars are being spent on the best research and development. At a time when American competitiveness and national security are at risk, it is important that we maintain our lead in the development of these crucial technologies.

I look forward to hearing from each of our witnesses on this important topic.  
Thank you for joining us.