

Opening Statement
The Honorable Bob Inglis (R-SC), Subcommittee Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy & Environment
A Rational Discussion of Climate Change: the Science, the Evidence, the Response
U.S. House of Representatives
November 17, 2010

Good morning, and thank you, Dr. Baird for this hearing and for your great leadership as Chairman of this Subcommittee.

I'm not a scientist; I just play one in Committee. That's why I'm so excited about this hearing. After years of intense conversations about climate policy, energy markets, and technology innovation, we're closing with a frank discussion about the science of climate change. This is our chance to ask lingering questions about whether the climate is changing, what the causes are, and what impacts we can expect to see. It's a great opportunity to get answers from some of the people that know best, and to engage people on all sides of the debate in an endeavor to understand the science.

Right now, I think the most important questions about climate change are what impacts we can expect to see, and where. Changing rainfall, temperature patterns, and ocean acidity will have huge impacts on agriculture, energy infrastructure, ecosystems, and the marine-based economy. These changes will be very different in the upstate of South Carolina and in southwest Washington. Those differences mean big things for farmers, insurance agents, energy companies, government planners, and anyone else making long term investments on the ground. I hope to hear from our witnesses how scientists are working to fill the gaps in our knowledge and give us the tools we need to cope with a changing climate.

I also hope that the panelists will touch on the *Climategate* scandal. While the hacked and leaked emails did not shake the foundations of scientific agreement on climate change, they exposed a breach of the public trust. We count on our scientists to live up to the highest standards of scientific integrity, collaborative science, and peer review. I'd like to hear about the status of scientific discourse in the climate community and what improvements need to be made.

Finally, climate science is so important on capitol hill because of how climate policy will impact our energy markets. There is an irrefutable connection between the ways we use energy and the quantity of greenhouse gases that we emit. There is also an irrefutable connection between the ways that we use energy and the amount of risk we expose ourselves to in terms of our public health and our national security. It's difficult to get Congress to come to agreement on climate science, but I hope we'll bridge that gap to build a more prosperous, secure, innovation-driven economy.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished panelists about all these issues.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, it has been a pleasure serving with you on this Subcommittee. I would yield to Mr. Hall for his opening remarks.