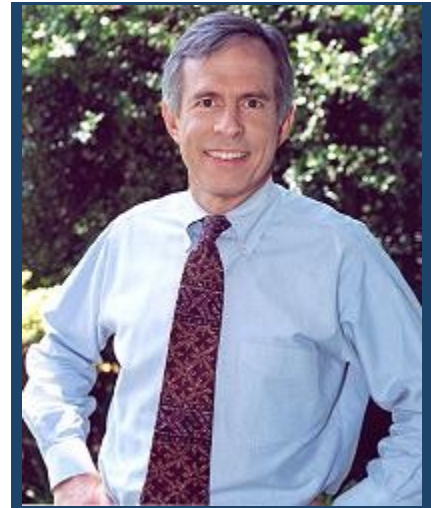


Rep. Bart Gordon (D-TN)
Chairman
111th Congress
U.S. House
Committee on Science and Technology



Bart Gordon, dean of the Tennessee Congressional delegation, assumed the Chairmanship of the U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology at the start of the 110th Congress in January 2007. Bart's commitment to responsible, bipartisan efforts to advance science, technology and education has been the hallmark of his service on the Committee. He wants this to be the Committee of "good ideas and consensus."

One of Bart's priorities for the Committee is improving U.S. economic competitiveness. He was a requestor of the National Academies report, *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, which was released in 2005 and painted a bleak future: the U.S. losing its scientific leadership; a floundering economy; and a generation of students ill-prepared for jobs of the future. The report also included recommendations to take the U.S. off the path it was on. The Committee held its first hearing on the issue shortly after Chairman Gordon assumed leadership, and the corresponding legislation, the *America COMPETES Act*, was signed into law on August 9, 2007.

COMPETES aims to strengthen U.S. competitiveness by:

- Increasing investments in basic science research by putting the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science on track to double their budget;
- Improving science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education;
- Supporting young researchers by expanding early career grant programs, and
- Fostering innovation by establishing the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy (or ARPA-E).

ARPA-E is a new agency within DOE tasked with high-risk, high-reward energy technology development, especially research that is too cross-cutting or multi-disciplinary to fit into the current system. It is modeled after the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which led to breakthroughs such as GPS, stealth technology, body armor, and the Internet.

ARPA-E will bring together the best and the brightest from all sectors—national labs, academia, the private sector, individual inventors—in a way that has never been done in energy research. It will give them the resources and the autonomy they need, and it will get bureaucracy out of their way. Though ARPA-E was signed into law in 2007, the funding to establish the program came through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* in early 2009. Bart strongly believes that innovation—especially new energy technologies—will be key to reinvigorating and growing our economy over the next 50 years.

In addition to new technologies, Bart is working to improve STEM education. Bart wants to ensure not only that the U.S. continues to produce the world-class scientists and engineers, but also that every child

is prepared for the technical, highly-paid jobs of the 21 st century. He believes that a skilled workforce is the foundation for an innovation economy.

Bart has also spearheaded efforts to advance innovation in the emerging field of nanotechnology, while working to protect public and environmental health. The House passed a bill to strengthen and provide transparency in federal research efforts to understand the potential environmental, health, and safety risks of nanotechnology. The range of potential applications is broad and will have enormous impact in electronics, energy transformation and storage, materials, and medicine and health. Bart believes the potential downsides of the new technologies need to be addressed from the beginning in a straightforward and open way, so that both the public and the business communities can benefit from technological advances.

Bart and the Committee are now also working towards a multi-year reauthorization of NASA, after a one-year reauthorization passed Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support in late 2008. The Committee has worked towards supporting a balanced and robust program of science, aeronautics, and human spaceflight and exploration, and ensuring that NASA has the resources to fulfill the many important tasks the nation has asked of it.

In his home state of Tennessee, Bart played a seminal role in making the Spallation Neutron Source (SNS) at Oak Ridge National Laboratory a reality. The SNS is the most advanced scientific facility of its kind and will be home to the next generation of materials research. It will be used to study the atomic properties of a wide range of physical and biological materials for American industry, including lightweight aircraft wings, faster electronic chips, superconducting magnets for trains, protective coatings for fluids, and more durable metals.

Bart believes solutions to the major challenges facing the U.S. right now will come from science, technology, and innovation: understanding and reversing climate change; ensuring adequate water supplies for generations to come; meeting our growing need for energy; and preparing the U.S. for a new economy. The Committee's job is a big one and, under the leadership of Chairman Gordon, it will remain committed to supporting responsible scientific progress.

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- (January 6, 2009) Mr. Gordon named Chairman ([H. Res. 8](#))
- (January 6, 2009) Mr. Hall named Ranking Republican Member ([H. Res. 12](#)).
- (January 9, 2009) Republican Members appointed ([H. Res. 38](#)).
- (January 21, 2009) Democratic Members appointed ([H. Res. 74](#)).
- (January 22, 2009) Mr. Smith (NE) appointed ([H. Res. 78](#)).
- (November 19, 2009) Mr. Garamendi appointed ([H.Res. 921](#)).