BRIEFING: INSTITUTE TO HOST BRIEFING ON ROLE OF DIESEL TECHNOLOGY IN CALIFORNIA

The California Institute on Friday, June 7, 2013 is hosting a Congressional staff lunch briefing featuring a presentation on the importance of diesel to the state of California and its role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other criteria pollutants. The briefing will begin at Noon in Room B-354 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. Congressional staff and the public are invited to attend.

Executive Director Allen Schaeffer of the Diesel Technology Forum will discuss the role of diesel fuel, engines, vehicles and equipment in moving the commerce and people of California. Whether it's big trucks and small cars in Southern California, agricultural equipment in the Central Valley, mass transit buses in the Bay Area or emergency backup equipment deployed throughout the state to respond to natural disasters, diesel is involved in almost every application.

Impressive technological advances have been made in the past several years to virtually eliminate emissions from new technology diesel engines. In many instances, the air coming out of a new diesel engine is cleaner than the ambient air. While diesel engines are burning cleaner, the fuel is much cleaner too. Jeff Marley with Volvo will discuss this technology deployed on on- and off-road diesel trucks and equipment and new advances just coming to the market. Even light duty diesel cars and trucks are gaining in popularity in California and across the country. Doug Skorupski with VW Group and Nando Gomez with Honeywell, will brief the attendees on the growing consumer interest in light duty diesel cars and trucks and their contribution to California's greenhouse gas reduction goal. Bio-based diesel fuel is also an important backbone to the state's Low Carbon Fuel Standard and more and more of the fuel is in use. Together, cleaner fuels and new technology engines are helping the state achieve its greenhouse gas emission reduction target outlined in AB 32. Shelby Neal with the National Biodiesel Board will outline advances in biodiesel fuel.
APPROPRIATIONS: HOUSE PASSES FY14 HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

By a vote of 245-182, the House on Thursday, June 6, 2013 passed H.R. 2217, the Fiscal 2014 Homeland Security Appropriations. The legislation includes $38.9 billion in discretionary funding for DHS. This is a decrease of $617.6 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and a decrease of $34.9 million compared to the President’s request. The funding level, however, is approximately $981 million above the current, post-sequestration level for DHS as estimated by the Congressional Budget Office. The bill includes $5.6 billion in disaster assistance funding, as well as $10.6 billion for Customs and Border Protection and $5.4 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

During floor consideration, the House adopted an amendment by Rep. Steve King (IA) that prohibits implementing the "Dream Act," which allows undocumented youths to adjust to temporary legal status if they attend college or join the military. The amendment also prohibits the implementation of several other executive orders regarding immigration enforcement. The amendment was adopted 234-201.

Reps. Julia Brownley (Oak Park) and Janice Hahn (San Pedro) offered an amendment to ensure that FEMA port security grant funding did not fall below the FY13 funding level of $97.5 million for the program. The amendment was adopted on a voice vote.

Rep. Eric Swalwell (Dublin) offered a similar amendment to ensure that FY14 funding for FEMA mass transit security grants was at least $97.5 million, the FY13 funding level. The amendment was adopted on a voice vote.

Other amendments agreed to:
- add $10 million to FEMA state and local grant funding. The amendment was adopted on a vote of 287-136.
- add $10 million to the CBP Border Security Fencing, Infrastructure, and Technology (BSFIT) account from improvements of tactical communications along the southern border. The amendment was adopted on a voice vote.
- add $2.5 million to increase SAFER and firefighter equipment grant funding. The amendment was adopted on a voice vote.
- add $7.7 million, and adds the funds to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue program. The amendment was adopted on a voice vote.
- cut $7.7 million from CBP Automation Modernization, which develops IT systems for CBP missions, and adds the funds to FEMA’s Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program. The amendment was adopted on a voice vote.

For more information on the bill, go to: http://appropriations.house.gov. For a list of all the amendments agreed to, go to: http://appropriations.house.gov/uploadedfiles/06.05.13_fy_2014_homeland_security_bill__floor_adopted_amendments.pdf
APPROPRIATIONS: HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES FY14 FUNDING

The House Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies approved by voice vote on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 the FY 2014 Agriculture Appropriations Bill. The proposed legislation funds agricultural and food programs and services, including food safety, animal and plant health programs, rural development and farm services, marketplace oversight, and nutrition programs. The bill would provide $19.5 billion in discretionary spending for the Agriculture Department, FDA and Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). The spending level is $1.3 billion below the fiscal 2013 enacted level, about even with the current spending after sequestration cut, and $516 million below the president's request. While members of both parties referred to particular programs and cuts during opening statements, proposed changes were left for the full committee. The full Appropriations Committee is expected to mark up the legislation next week.

Bill highlights include:
- Agricultural Research: $2.5 billion for agriculture research programs, including the Agricultural Research Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.
- Animal and Plant Health: $803.5 million for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.
- Conservation Programs: The bill provides $823 million-$2.3 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level for the Natural Resources Conservation Service to help farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners conserve and protect their land.
- Farm Service Agency: $1.5 billion for various farm, conservation, loan, and emergency programs for American farmers and ranchers.
- Rural Development: $2.2 billion for rural development programs, including $52 million-$3.1 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level for the rural business and industry loan program, $1.2 billion for rural water and waste program loans, and $24 billion in loan authority for the Single Family Housing guaranteed loan program.
- Food Safety and Inspection Service: $999 million for food safety and inspection programs, which is $31 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level.
- Food and Drug Administration: Almost $2.5 billion in discretionary funding in the bill, an increase of $24 million above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level.
- Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC): $195 million for the CFTC, the agency's current operating level, which is a cut of $10 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and $120 million below the President's budget request.
- Women, Infants, and Children (AC) Program: $6.7 billion in discretionary funding for AC, which is $214 million below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and $487 million below the President's request.
- Child Nutrition Programs: $20.45 billion in required mandatory funding, which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee. This is $561 million above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): $76.3 billion in required mandatory spending, which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee. This is $958 million below last year's level and $2 billion below the President's budget request.

For more information, go to:
The House Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Defense marked up the FY 2014 Defense Appropriations bill on Wednesday, June 5, 2013. The bill provides $512.5 billion in non-war funding, a decrease of $5.1 billion below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and $3.4 billion below the President's request. This is approximately $28.1 billion above the current level caused by automatic sequestration spending cuts. Moreover, the draft bill would provide an additional $85.8 billion for the war, about $5 billion more than requested, but $1.5 billion less than enacted in fiscal 2013.

Bill highlights include:
- Ongoing Military Operations: $85.8 billion for ongoing military operations in Afghanistan. This is a reduction of $1.5 billion compared to the previous year's level, due to the strategic drawdown of forces overseas.
- Military Personnel and Pay: $129.6 billion to provide for 1,361,400 active-duty troops and 833,700 reserves. This funding level is $2.1 billion above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level. The bill fully funds the authorized 1.8 percent pay raise for the military, instead of 1 percent as requested by the President.
- Defense Health and Military Family Programs: $33.6 billion -- $858 million above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and $519 million above the request-to provide care for troops, military families, and retirees.
- Operation and Maintenance: $175 billion for operation and maintenance-$124 million below the request and $1.5 billion above the fiscal year 2013 enacted level.
- Research and Development: $66.4 billion-$3.5 billion below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and $1.1 billion below the President's request-for research, development, testing, and evaluation of new defense technologies. Included in this funding is continued research and development of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the KC-46A tanker program, the P8-A Poseidon, the new Air Force bomber program, the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance (BAMS) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, the Navy's Future Unmanned Carrier-based Strike System, the Ohio-class submarine replacement, the Army and Marine Corps Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, the Army Ground Combat Vehicle, and the Israeli Cooperative Programs.
- Equipment Procurement: $98.4 billion-$2 billion below the fiscal year 2013 enacted level and $750 million below the President's request-for equipment and upgrades.
- Guantanamo Bay: Prohibits funding for transfers of Guantanamo detainees to the U.S. or its territories, prohibits funding to modify any facility in the U.S. to house detainees, and places conditions on the release of detainees to other countries. These provisions are similar to language contained in the fiscal year 2013 Defense Appropriations legislation.
- Savings and Reductions to President's Request: Reductions include: $1 billion in anticipated excess funding, $437 million for the proposed civilian pay raise, and $2.1 billion in savings from rescissions of unused prior-year funding.

For more information, go to:
Subcommittee Draft of FY 2014 Defense Appropriations Bill, House Appropriations Committee,
DEFENSE: HOUSE ARMED SERVICES REPORTS FY 2014 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

The House Committee on Armed Services, chaired by Rep. Buck McKeon (Santa Clarita) advanced H.R.1960, the FY 2014 National Defense Authorization Act bill (NDAA), 59 to 2 on Thursday, June 6, 2013. Reps. John Garamendi (Walnut Creek) and Jackie Speier (San Mateo) were the only members to vote against the bill. The bill authorizes $552.1 billion in spending for national defense an additional $85.8 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations, $5 billion more than the President requested. This is consistent with the levels authorized in the FY 13 NDAA for the base budget and $2.7 billion less for war spending. However, these figures exceed the defense budget caps set under sequestration by $52 billion. Committee aides say they expect the measure to reach the floor by Wednesday, June 12.

Bill Highlights include:
- Ongoing Military Operations: $85.8 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations, $5 billion more than the President requested.
- Military Personnel and Pay: Supports current law, which mandates an automatic 1.8% annual increase in troop pay, and rejects a Department of Defense proposal to increase or create new Tricare enrollment fees and raise pharmacy co-payments. Additionally, the bill would bar command authorities from dismissing all but minor sexual offenses from a court-martial and reducing a guilty finding in a sexual assault case to a lesser offense. Lawmakers adopted an amendment from Rep. Tammy Duckworth (IL) to assess the impact of removing the chain of command's prosecution authority on the reporting and pursuit of sexual assault cases.

The panel also backed Rep. Susan Davis's (CA) proposals to ensure that all members of the armed forces understand and comply with rights and responsibilities in sexual assault cases and to require a Government Accountability Office review of sexual assaults against male servicemembers.

Finally, lawmakers approved a Rep. Michael Turner (OH) amendment to require that an incident report be submitted within eight days of a victim filing a "restricted" report, which provides for confidential disclosure to a response coordinator, victim's advocate and health care personnel, allowing the victim to receive medical treatment and legal assistance without launching an official investigation. The written report that would be required by Turner's proposal would detail the response made to help the victim as well as any progress on referring the assault to an investigatory agency.

- Readiness: The panel adopted by voice vote an amendment by Rep. K. Michael Conaway (TX) to block the Defense Department from purchasing or producing biofuels. Panel members also added by voice vote another Conaway proposal to exempt the Defense Department from a procurement requirement that blocks using alternative fuels unless their emissions are lower than those produced by a conventional petroleum-based fuel.

Members adopted 37-25 an amendment by Rep. Robert Andrews (NJ) that would extend the limitation on the aggregate annual amount available for contract services for another two years. Finally, lawmakers adopted by a vote of 32-30 a proposal by Rep. Bill Enyart (IL) to require all military services to use a joint combat camouflage uniform, including color and pattern variants designed for specific combat environments.
Intelligence, Tactical, Seapower: The Intelligence, Emerging Threats and Capabilities section was approved after lawmakers adopted two packages of en bloc amendments. Among those amendments was one by Rep. Robert Andrews (NJ) that would direct the Defense Department to offer up suggestions on how to best promote information sharing across the medical research community.

Also added was an amendment from Rep. Rich Nugent (FL) that would urge the Air Force to develop in the near term a cruise-missile-delivered, high-power microwave weapon—one that would realize the ray gun of science fiction.

On Seapower and Projection Forces provisions, lawmakers adopted only minor changes in an en bloc package of amendments.

Guantanamo Bay: Would authorize the replacement of dilapidating, temporary facilities at Guantanamo Bay. Maintains the bi-partisan prohibition against transfer of detainees from Guantanamo Bay to the United States or to countries with confirmed cases of transferred detainees returning to the fight. The Department is also required to report on former terrorist detainees who have been released and subsequently become leaders in a foreign terrorist organization. Additionally, the panel adopted an amendment by Rep. Robert Andrews (NJ) that, as modified, would withhold a $186 million authorization for the detention center until the president submits a report to Congress on the locations where he would transfer individuals if allowed. Originally, the amendment would have withheld all $247 million provided in the bill for new construction at Guantánamo until the Defense secretary submits a report to Congress on the costs of the detention center and a master plan for the continuation of detention operations.

- Strategic Forces: The panel adopted 33-27 a Rep. Michael Turner (OH) amendment that would direct the Missile Defense Agency to construct, and make operational by fiscal 2018, a third U.S. missile defense site. Under the proposal, the Missile Defense Agency director would be required to submit a report to Congress on the estimated cost of the site within 180 days. The agency recently estimated that an East Coast missile site would cost $3 billion over five years.

The panel also gave voice vote approval to an amendment from Rep. Bill Shuster (PA) that would prohibit the use of funds for the Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS).

For more information, go to:
http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.113hr1960

EDUCATION: HOUSE SCIENCE COMMITTEE REVIEWS STEM REORGANIZATION

The House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology met on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 to review the Administration's proposed consolidation and re-organization of federal science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. The Committee examined the issue in the context of the COMPETES Act reauthorization of the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Administration's review of the effectiveness and efficiency of interagency STEM education programs.

The Administration's FY14 budget request includes $3.1 billion across the federal government for STEM education, a 6.7 percent increase over FY12 enacted levels. The request proposes a re-organization of STEM education programs into four key areas: K-12 instruction; undergraduate education; graduate fellowships; and education activities that typically take place outside the classroom, all with a focus on increasing participation and opportunities for individuals from groups historically
underrepresented in STEM fields. The Administration's proposal decreases the number of federal STEM programs from 226 to 112, with 114 programs either eliminated or consolidated into existing programs. The budget request grows the number of agencies with federal STEM programs from 13 to 14, to include the Smithsonian Institution.

Witnesses included: The Honorable John Holdren, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Executive Office of the President; Dr. Joan Ferrini-Mundy, Assistant Director, Directorate for Education and Human Resources, National Science Foundation (NSF); and Mr. Leland D. Melvin, Associate Administrator for Education, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Dr. Holdren testified that the proposed 2014 Budget plan will comprehensively improve STEM education by achieving the following goals: (1) Federal STEM efforts will reach more students and more teachers more effectively by reorienting Federal policy to meet the needs of school districts, States, and colleges and universities; (2) it will reduce fragmentation of the Federal STEM education investment, reorganizing efforts and redirecting resources around clearly defined priorities; (3) it will enable rigorous evaluation and evidence-building strategies for Federal STEM education programs; (4) it will increase the impact of Federal investments in graduate education by expanding resources for a more limited number of programs; and (5) it will provide additional resources to meet specific national goals, such as preparing and recruiting 100,000 high-quality K-12 STEM teachers, recognizing and rewarding excellence in STEM instruction, strengthening the infrastructure for supporting STEM instruction and engagement, increasing the number of undergraduates with a STEM degree by one million, and broadening participation in STEM fields by underrepresented groups.

Dr. Ferrini-Mundy echoed Dr. Holdren's support of the National Science and Technology Council's Committee on STEM Education ("CoSTEM") plan. She praised the plan's focus on undergraduate education as a priority, particularly three NSF-wide programs that provide coherence across NSF undergraduate education programs to maximize the effectiveness of NSF investments. She also praised recent investments in K-12 STEM education and joint, evidence-based practices to better assess teacher and student performance.

For more information, go to:
http://homeland.house.gov/hearing/subcommittee-hearing-emergency-mgmt-20-how-socialmedia-new-tech-are-transforming

**Intellectual Property: White House Announces Efforts To Curb "Patent Trolls"

On June 4, 2013, the White House announced five executive actions and seven legislative recommendations designed to protect U.S. businesses from frivolous patent litigation. The measures are aimed at curbing the activities of patent assertion entities, also known as patent trolls. These companies, often utilizing shell companies to mask their identity, buy up existing patents and then use the threat of litigation to coerce licensing fees or settlements from other legitimate businesses. The Administration also released a new study showing the effect of patent trolls on the U.S. economy and businesses. According to the Administration, "in the last two years, the number of lawsuits brought by patent trolls has nearly tripled, and account for 62% of all patent lawsuits in America. All told, the victims of patent trolls paid $29 billion in 2011, a 400% increase from 2005." The White House estimates that last year "patent trolls sent out over 100,000 demand letters, threatening everyone from Fortune 500 companies to corner coffee shops and even regular consumers to pay a settlement or face a day in court."

Among the executive actions ordered are:
- the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) will begin a rulemaking process to require patent applicants and owners to regularly update ownership information when they are involved in proceedings before the PTO, specifically designating the “ultimate parent entity” in control of the patent or application.

- the PTO will provide new targeted training to its examiners on scrutiny of functional claims and will, over the next six months develop strategies to improve claim clarity, such as by use of glossaries in patent specifications to assist examiners in the software field.

- the PTO will publish new education and outreach materials, including an accessible, plain-English web site offering answers to common questions by those downstream users facing demands from a possible troll.

For information on the President's actions and legislative recommendations, go to: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/04/fact-sheet-white-house-task-force-high-tech-patent-issues

To obtain the recent White House study of the issue, go to: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/patent_report.pdf

**HEALTH: HOUSE ENERGY & COMMERCE SUBCOMMITTEE EXAMINES MEDICARE PHYSICIAN'S PAYMENT**

The Health Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing on June 5, 2013 regarding reforming the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) system that controls Medicare reimbursement to physicians. The focus of the hearing was a legislative discussion draft that the Subcommittee recently released.

The witnesses were: Cheryl L. Damberg, Ph.D., Senior Policy Researcher; Professor, Pardee RAND Graduate School; William Kramer, Executive Director for National Health Policy, Pacific Business Group on Health; Jeffrey B. Rich, M.D., Immediate Past President of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, Director at Large, Virginia Cardiac Surgery Quality Initiative; and Thomas J. Foels, M.D., M.M.M., Executive Vice President, Chief Medical Officer, Independent Health.

According to Committee documents, the discussion draft seeks to create a versatile and durable model which emphasizes value over volume and introduces these concepts in two overlapping phases. Additionally, the policy allows for an “Opt-Out” choice for providers who wish to participate in alternate payment models such as, but not limited to, bundled payments and patient-centered medical homes.

Dr. Damberg stressed that "designing a performance-based incentive program is a complex undertaking and how it is designed will determine the likelihood of its success." She detailed several features that she considered important to consider in designing a new program. First, she testified that the structure of payment incentives, paying for improvement along the gradient, using fixed, rather than relative, thresholds, and making payments meaningful were important issues to consider. She also discussed quality measurement infrastructure and shifting to new payment models, as well as other issues that must be addressed.

Mr. Kramer spoke on behalf of the Pacific Business Group on Health, which represents large employers in both the private and public sectors that provide health insurance to their employees. He stressed that businesses have a big stake in how Medicare works. Large employers, he testified, want to see physician payment directly tied to the value of the services that are provided, and that new and better performance measures are needed to support a new physician payment system. PBGH and its member companies strongly support the replacement of the SGR, he testified, but only if the new
payment system results in significant improvements in health care quality and affordability. Additionally, he called on Congress to invest in the development of new and better performance measures to undergird the new payment system.

For more information, go to:

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: SENATE COMMERCE ASSESSES STATE OF WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation met on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 to examine the state of wireless communications in the United States, particularly the availability of wireless spectrum for devices.

Witnesses included: The Honorable Steve Largent, President and CEO, CTIA - The Wireless Association; Mr. Doug Webster, Vice President, Service Provider Routing, Mobility and Video Marketing, Cisco Systems; Mr. Steven K. Berry, President and CEO, Competitive Carriers Association; Ms. Delara Derakhshani, Policy Counsel, Consumers Union; Mr. Thomas Nagel, Senior Vice President, Business Development and Strategy, Communication and Data Services Comcast Corporation; and Mr. George Ford, Chief Economist, Phoenix Center.

Mr. Largent discussed how increased capital investment in wireless communications has increased adoption, usage, and innovation. He highlighted access to spectrum as the most important policy issues in wireless communications and encouraged Congress to repurpose bands held by Federal users for commercial use. Mr. Largent also stressed that Congress refrain from imposing stringent regulatory mandates that will raise costs and inhibit competitive differentiation among providers. Finally, he advocated replacing the current telecommunications taxation system with one that reflects 21st century communications connectivity, including keeping Internet access free from taxation.

Mr. Webster described the drastic growth in wireless communications in recent years, particularly with respect to mobile data traffic. He noted that the four factors driving increased mobile traffic include: (1) a dramatic increase in the number of users and connections to mobile networks; (2) increasingly advanced devices, such as smartphones and tablets, are consuming more data; (3) mobile data networks themselves are getting faster due to investment and new technology; and (4) a projected increase for Internet video of two-thirds of mobile traffic by 2017. To address this rapid growth, Mr. Webster recommended continued expansion of spectrum access by ensuring that the FCC follows through on its grant of auction authority as soon as possible.

Ms. Derakshani echoed the other panelists calls for increased access to wireless spectrum; however, she cautioned that AT&T and Verizon are positioned to dominate the auctions unless the government puts in place appropriate rules to also give small carriers the opportunity to bid on this important limited resource. She also stated that consumers also will benefit if the government agrees to set aside spectrum for unlicensed uses.

For more information, go to:
http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Hearings&ContentRecord_id=1c02913b-8fa6-4e0f-a66c-5eb477f95d7b&ContentType_id=14f995b9-dfa5-407a-9d35-56cc7152a7ed&Group_id=b06c39af-e033-4cba-9221-de668ca1978a
**NATIONAL DISASTERS: HOUSE HOMELAND SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE EXAMINES ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA/TECHNOLOGY IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

The House Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications met on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 to examine the evolving role of social media and technology in responding to and recovering from disasters.

Witnesses included: Mr. Matthew Stepka, Vice President, Google.org; Mr. Jason Payne, Philanthropy Engineering Team Lead, Palantir Technologies; Mr. Michael Beckerman, President and CEO, The Internet Association; and Mr. Jorge L. Cardenas, Vice President, Asset Management and Centralized Services, Public Service Enterprise Group, Inc.

Mr. Stepka discussed several observations and best practices associated with social media use in disaster situations, including: (1) the fact that people want to find critical information through familiar technology; (2) crowdsourcing can enhance both quality and timeliness of critical information; and (3) emergency information should be available online in open formats and with open licenses before a disaster. Additionally, he recommended several ways in which governments can support technology efforts and information dissemination in crisis response situations, including open and interoperable formats for emergency data, timely release of such data, and location awareness.

Mr. Payne discussed several important lessons that his company learned with respect to social media use for disaster preparedness and response: (1) open data portals are more important than formal information-exchange models for efficiency, quick emergency response; and (2) internet and cloud technology, such as social media, are extremely valuable. Mr. Payne further encouraged governmental organizations to adopt a Silicon Valley approach to data interoperability, i.e., governments should put the data out publicly in a robust, standardized, well documented interface and let other organizations come up with innovative ways to leverage the data. He also recommended deploying 3/4G mobile networks, as well as mobile device charging stations, to the public during large-scale emergencies. Finally, he highlighted the need for a more robust conversation about data access, sharing, and retention to ensure that the privacy and civil liberties of those affected by emergencies and disasters are respected at all times.

Mr. Beckerman discussed efforts by various technology and social media-related companies to utilize their resources in helping people during disasters. Indeed, companies like Facebook and Google have initiated disaster relief and relocation efforts while other tech companies have utilized their userbase and customers to solicit donations. Nonetheless, Mr. Beckerman stressed that emergency response professionals are not yet fully ready to collect, respond or react to the incoming stream of social data in a timely manner.

For more information, go to: http://homeland.house.gov/hearing/subcommittee-hearing-emergency-mgmt-20-how-socialmedia-new-tech-are-transforming

**RESOURCES: SENATE ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORES WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT**

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources met on Tuesday, June 4, 2013 to examine the status of the U.S. Forest Service's wildland fire management program.

Jungwirth, Senior Fellow, The Watershed Research and Training Center, Hayfork, CA; Mr. Doug Decker, Oregon State Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry, Salem, OR; and Ms. Diane Vosick, Director, Policy and Partnerships of the Northern Arizona University's Ecological Restoration Institute, Flagstaff, AZ.

Mr. Tidwell outlined the three components of the long-term National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy: (1) restoring fire-adapted ecosystems; (2) building fire-adapted human communities; and (3) responding appropriately to wildfires. He also discussed several issues with respect to increased wildfires, including the loss of thousands of structures due to the spread of homes into fire-prone areas and a fire suppression budget that now consumes nearly half of the entire Forest Service Budget. He concluded by advocating for adapting fire management to anticipate climate change impacts and begin to mitigate their potential effects.

Ms. Jungwirth critiqued the focus areas of the first Ten-Year National Fire Plan (2000-2010), which include firefighting-suppression and preparedness, rehabilitation and restoration of fire-adapted ecosystems, hazardous fuels reduction, and community assistance. Specifically, she criticized the increase in suppression resources at the expense of restoration and fuels reduction during the early 2000s. Ms. Jungwirth praised recent efforts by the Forest Service to expand community preparedness efforts, but she called the $2.6 million appropriation in a proposed budget of $2.2 billion "strikingly absurd." Finally, she called for proper coordination and integration of the "silos" -- suppression, restoration, hazardous fuels reduction, and community assistance -- between communities, states, and the federal government rather than merely investing heavily in suppression efforts.

Ms. Thorsen described the impacts of increased wildfires in 2012 and the above-average projections for 2013. She also discussed the effects of sequestration on the Department of the Interior (DOI), which has included a $37.5 million cut to Interior's fire program and resulted in a reduction of approximately 7 percent of FTE the Department's firefighter seasonal workforce, with reduced lengths of employment for those hired. She also highlighted the efforts of federal government wildland fire agencies in working with tribal, state, and local government partners to prevent and reduce the effects of large, unwanted fires through preparedness activities like risk assessment, prevention and mitigation efforts, mutual aid agreements, firefighter training, acquisition of equipment and aircraft, and dispatching, and community assistance and hazardous fuels reduction. Finally, she noted several long-term programmatic challenges, such as the need to re-align the overall program to better integrate with land and resource management activities.

For more information, go to: http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2013/6/full-committee-hearing-exploring-wildland-fire-management

**ENERGY: HOUSE RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ADDRESSES OFFSHORE ENERGY AND JOBS ACT**

The House Committee on Natural Resources' Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources met on Thursday, June 6, 2013 to examine H.R. 2231, the Offshore Energy and Jobs Act, which provides for amending the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to increase energy exploration and production on the Outer Continental Shelf, provide for equitable revenue sharing for all coastal States, and implement the reorganization of the functions of the former Minerals Management Service into distinct and separate agencies.

Witnesses included: Mr. John Felmy, Chief Economist, American Petroleum Institute; Mr. Richie Miller, President, Spectrum Geo Inc.; Mr. Christopher Guith, Vice President for Policy, Institute
for 21st Century Energy, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; and Mr. Michael Conathan, Director of Ocean Policy, Center for American Progress Action Fund.

Mr. Felmy discussed the job potential in extending energy production offshore and highlighted the untapped opportunities of drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf.

Mr. Conathan highlighted the current realities regarding oil and gas production on the outer continental shelf, including the fact that offshore oil and gas production is already a growth industry and that Congress has failed to pass laws in response to the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill. He further cautioned that this legislation would speed up the opening of new ocean areas, and that the increased risk of oil spills should encourage investment in renewable ocean technologies, such as offshore wind, as opposed to drilling.

For more information, go to: