

**Chairman Carson Opening Remarks
C3 Subcommittee Hearing
Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Open Hearing
May 17, 2022**

The Subcommittee will come to order. Without objection, the Chair may declare a recess at any time.

Before we get started today, I want to recognize with a moment of silence, the victims of the racially motivated hate crime in Buffalo, New York. This subcommittee has focused intently on that threat, in both open and closed hearings. It is utterly devastating to see more victims of this violence.

Buffalo, our heart breaks for you.

With that, I'd ask my colleagues to join me in a moment of silence.

We will turn now to the business of this hearing.

More than fifty years ago, the U.S. government ended Project Blue Book – an effort to catalogue and understand sightings of objects in the air that could not otherwise be explained. For more than 20 years, that project had treated unidentified anomalies in our airspace as a national security threat to be monitored and investigated.

In 2017, we learned, for the first time, that the Department of Defense had quietly restarted a similar organization tracking what we now call Unidentified Aerial Phenomena – or UAPs. Last year, Congress rewrote the charter for that organization, now called the Airborne Object Identification and Management Synchronization Group, AOIMSG (AIM-sawg) for short.

Today, we will bring that organization out of the shadows.

This hearing and our oversight work has a simple idea at its core:

Unidentified Aerial Phenomena are a potential national security threat. And they need to be treated that way.

For too long, the stigma associated with UAPs has gotten in the way of good intelligence analysis. Pilots avoided reporting, or were laughed at when they did. DOD officials relegated the issue to the back room, or swept it under the rug entirely, fearful of a skeptical national security community.

Today, we know better. UAPs are unexplained, it's true. But they are real. They need to be investigated. And any threats they pose need to be mitigated.

Under Secretary Moultrie, Mr. Bray, thank you for coming to testify today. Your task, as I see it, has three parts.

First, we need you to update us on the status of AIMSOG. The legislation creating it was passed back in December. The deadline for implementation is fast approaching, but the group does not even have a named director. We need to know the status of the organization and any obstacles to getting up and running.

Second, you have to convince the audience today – and most especially our military and civilian aviators – the culture has changed. That those who report UAPs will be treated as witnesses, not as kooks.

Third, you need to show Congress and the American public, whose imagination you have captured, you are willing to follow the facts where they lead. I fear sometimes that DOD is focused more on emphasizing what it can explain, not investigating what it can't.

I am looking for you to assure us today, that all conclusions are on the table.

One final note. We are mindful today that AIMSOG is not starting from scratch. This is the third version of this task force in DOD. And civil society groups like the Mutual UFO Network and others have been collecting data on this issue for years. I hope you'll explain how you can leverage the knowledge and experience of prior work on this issue to move the AIMSOG along.

The last time Congress had a hearing on UAPs was a half century ago. I hope that it does not take fifty years for Congress to hold another. Because transparency is desperately needed. I'll now turn to Chairman Schiff for any comments he wishes to make.