

Dear Members of Congress:

We, the undersigned space leaders, are strong supporters of human spaceflight. We are writing to urge you to both (1) fully fund the commercial crew to Space Station program proposed in the President's FY2011 budget request for NASA, and (2) accelerate the pace and funding of NASA's human space exploration projects beyond Earth orbit.

These twin pillars of human spaceflight are each crucial to the long-term health of our Nation's space program. They are also interdependent.

And they will together generate thousands of high tech U.S. jobs for people in multiple states, including Florida, Alabama, Texas, California, Nevada, Virginia, Colorado, New Mexico, and Maryland.

Among us are over 50 space leaders—former NASA executives and advisors, former astronauts, CEOs of firms large and small, a former FAA Associate Administrator, space scientists, space journalists, and others. We are a diverse group, but we are only a handful of the Nation's citizens who support U.S. leadership in human space flight in general, and the development of commercial human spaceflight in particular.

We specifically wish to express our concern that the commercial crew to Space Station program is sometimes seen as optional or too risky to America's future in space, but nothing could be further from the truth.

In fact, the commercial crew to Space Station program is a fundamental enabler of NASA's human space exploration beyond Earth orbit, specifically because it will free up the NASA dollars

needed to develop deep space transportation and exploration systems for astronauts.

Moreover, a commercial crew to Station transportation system, involving multiple separate space lines as the President has proposed, is more robust than a single-legged transportation plan, whether domestic or foreign.

For these reasons and others, we fully and enthusiastically support both full funding for the commercial crew to Space Station program and also the acceleration of exploration beyond Earth orbit, as the top two priorities within NASA's human spaceflight budget.

Together, these two efforts will also:

- ✓ Provide an affordable and fast way to close the current post-Shuttle gap in indigenous U.S. human orbital spaceflight capability, by using launch vehicles that already exist.
- ✓ Provide a safe and robust future transportation network to low Earth orbit and beyond for U.S. astronauts.
- ✓ Ensure that our dependence on foreign human launch capabilities is reduced quickly and economically.
- ✓ Reduce space access costs and enhance our national security industrial base.
- ✓ Allow NASA to better focus on accelerating space exploration and the development of its enabling technologies.
- ✓ Excite young Americans to careers in science, engineering, and technology.

✓ Stimulate the private sector economy and the development of space commerce over in a dramatic way, by catalyzing other U.S. space interests such as space tourism and the operation of private in-space research facilities.

✓ Excite entrepreneurs to envision and then give birth to new commercial services and capabilities in space, further stimulating the Nation's economy.

Others have said that one of the greatest fears of any generation is not leaving things better for the young people of the next generation. We agree with this.

Therefore we reiterate that the near term development of commercial human spaceflight and a clearly defined program of human exploration beyond Earth orbit are *both* essential. Without either, our Nation's leadership in space will significantly suffer.

We urge you to make these two goals your highest priorities within NASA's FY2011 budget for human spaceflight.

Sincerely,
The undersigned, listed alphabetically

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