

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 6, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, The United States
Capitol Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chair, Committee on the Budget
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Chair Sanders,

As you work to craft legislation that will improve our country's physical and human infrastructure, we write to strongly urge you to include a \$15.7 billion investment in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Specifically, we request an investment of at least \$10.032 billion for the Human Landing System (HLS) program and \$5.4 billion to upgrade aging NASA Centers and Facilities.

NASA has demonstrated remarkable resilience in the face of COVID-19 and has remained steadfast to overcome challenges presented by the pandemic while continuing to make groundbreaking achievements in space exploration. This past year, NASA completed the historic first flight on another planet and successfully launched the Perseverance Rover, whose name is a testament to the spirit of the men and women of NASA who worked tirelessly in the face of unprecedented obstacles.

Despite COVID-19 challenges and budgetary constraints, NASA has also made significant innovations to develop capabilities to send the first woman and first person of color to the moon. On April 16, 2021, NASA awarded the first contract to continue the development of the first commercial human lunar lander. The Administration has requested \$24.8 billion for NASA, of which more than \$6.8 billion is for deep space exploration including the Artemis program for Fiscal Year 2022. However, at present, there is insufficient funding to provide resiliency and redundancy in the program, as has been shown to be a best practice over the past decade of commercial space programs.

Additionally, a \$5.4 billion investment in NASA's centers is critical to maintaining, upgrading, and replacing the aging centers and facilities, which are critical to ensuring the development and testing of innovative technologies critical to high-priority missions, including the Artemis program. This infrastructure enables human space exploration, aeronautics innovations, and scientific breakthroughs. It is essential to retaining American leadership and competitiveness in space at a time when other nations are ramping up their investments in space.

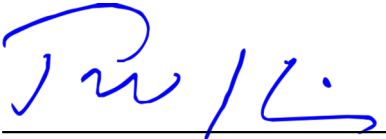
This funding will lead to the development of new spacesuits for the Artemis program and nuclear propulsion technology for future missions to Mars. Moreover, investments such as these will propel advancements in science and space technology creating thousands of American jobs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

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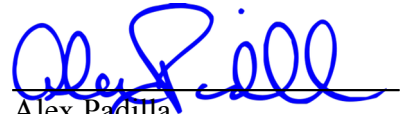
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To that end, we respectfully request that the upcoming reconciliation package include robust funding for NASA that will drive investments in R&D, create high-paying jobs, and ensure the United States remains a global leader in space exploration. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator