

March 11, 2009

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.
Chairman
House Committee on the Budget
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Ranking Member
House Committee on the Budget
Room B71, Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt and Ranking Member Ryan:

As the House Committee on the Budget prepares the Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2010, I ask that the Committee designate sufficient funding for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to move forward with manned space flight programs.

Information currently available regarding NASA's budget for 2010 by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is very brief, lacks specifics and makes only cursory references to the Space Shuttle's scheduled retirement in 2010 and the "development of new space flight systems for carrying American crews and supplies to space."

While the President's budget requests an overall increase to NASA for FY 2010, I write the Committee to request that the House Budget Resolution allocate sufficient funding to close the gap as much as possible between the Space Shuttle's retirement and the Space Shuttle's successor, Constellation. This gap should be closed from both ends. I would ask the Committee to provide sufficient funding for NASA to extend Shuttle flights beyond 2010, while ensuring that funding is available also to bring the Constellation program on-line sooner than anticipated. I ask the Committee to make both of these programs a priority. This is important for our nation's leadership in space and for the thousands of workers and their families who will be affected.

The United States boasts the finest space exploration programs in the world, and we jeopardize our leadership in this important area if we fail to recognize and address the uncertainty surrounding the continuity of our manned space flight programs.

Sincerely,

/s/

Bill Posey
Member of Congress