

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 7, 2011

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Chairman
Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Chairman Wolf,

We write today to assert the importance of maintaining our nation's human spaceflight program. Our constituents spoke loudly and clearly in the last election and sent a wave of new and re-elected Members with a mandate to reduce federal spending. Moreover, each of us understands that our nation is on an untenable economic path and spending must be reduced. In getting our fiscal house in order, however, we must focus carefully on ensuring that we preserve critical capabilities and guarantee that agencies are focused on their primary mission. For NASA, that mission is human space exploration, and we ask that NASA funding be allocated in a way that refocuses NASA on this core mission.

Our nation is the preeminent space power in the world. Our human spaceflight program is a testament to the American spirit of courage and discovery. Our program attracts and inspires the world's greatest minds and gives our young people inspiration to excel in math and science. Human spaceflight, however, is not simply a matter of national prestige. Our nation's ability to access space is a critical national security asset and plays an important role in our future economic competitiveness. Space is the ultimate high ground and nations such as China, Russia, and India are anxious to seize the mantle of space supremacy should we decide to cede it. We must not put ourselves in the position of watching Chinese astronauts planting their flag on the moon while we sit—earthbound by our own shortsightedness. Future generations of Americans deserve better.

Moving forward under a constrained budget, it will be critical for the Appropriations Committee to produce legislation that is precise in its budget cuts. For years, Presidents and Congress have charged NASA with completing tasks that fall outside the scope of NASA's primary mission. Specifically, NASA spent over 7.5%—over a billion dollars— of its budget on studying global warming/climate change in Fiscal Year 2010. In addition, the lion share of the stimulus funds NASA received went toward climate change studies. Excessive growth of climate change research has not been limited to NASA. Overall, the government spent over \$8.7 billion across 16 Agencies and Departments throughout the federal government on these efforts in FY 2010 alone. Global warming funding presents an opportunity to reduce spending without unduly impacting NASA's core human spaceflight mission.

With your help, we can reorient NASA's mission back toward human spaceflight by reducing funding for climate change research and reallocating those funds to NASA's human spaceflight accounts, all while moving overall discretionary spending toward FY2008 levels.

Thank you for your leadership in this task. We look forward to working together to pass legislation that makes sufficient strides to reduce government spending while maintaining critical programs.

Sincerely,

Bill Rouse

Steve Chertoff

Pete Olson

Sandy Adams

Bob Byrd

Mo Brooks