

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The National Space Society Commends the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee's Unanimous Approval of the NASA Authorization Act of 2010.**

The National Space Society (NSS) commends the members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation for their unanimous agreement on the provisions of the NASA Authorization Act of 2010. The authorization bill, which was approved by the Committee on July 15th, calls for a balanced and sustainable space program. The bill establishes a bi-partisan framework that provides a basis for compromise between both the Senate and the House of Representatives as well as with the Executive Branch.

Establishing the long-term goal of the human space flight and exploration efforts of NASA as the expansion of the permanent human presence beyond Low Earth Orbit is in keeping with and a necessary precursor to achieving the Society's goals of people living and working in thriving communities beyond the Earth, and the use of the vast resources of space for the dramatic betterment of humanity.

The expansion of human space flight beyond the International Space Station and Low Earth Orbit requires a combination of launch systems, crew vehicles, infrastructure, and technology development all of which are integral to the bill as approved.

NSS supports the requirement for the immediate development of a Space Launch System as a follow-on launch vehicle to the Space Shuttle, and commends the Committee's emphatic emphasis on the importance of the heavy lift launch capability being mission-enabling, sustainable, and affordable to use. NSS supports the requirement for developing a multi-purpose crew vehicle designed to support beyond earth orbit exploration capable of being launched by the Space Launch System.

NSS supports the requirements for the development of and the investment in the necessary infrastructure and technology to allow for an increasing ability to operate in, and extend human presence into, space.

NSS supports the requirements for the Commercial Cargo Development Program and expansion of the Commercial Crew Development Program in 2011 and going forward at the fastest supportable rate. NSS implores those involved to fund these activities to the fullest extent possible, without compromising the ability of commercial firms to deliver on the promise of a broadly competitive space transportation market.

"The NSS has long championed a balanced, multi-faceted approach to the future direction of our nation's space program: Support for commercial efforts to develop rockets that will service the International Space Station and to otherwise provide flight operations to and from Low Earth Orbit, while at the same time having NASA focus instead on development efforts for exploring beyond Low Earth Orbit with both human and robotic missions," said Gary Barnhard, Executive Director of the NSS.

A summary of the NASA Authorization Act of 2010, as approved by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, along with additional related material, can be found on the NSS website at [www.nss.org](http://www.nss.org).

"The NSS is gratified that the branches of our government are working together to find a solution to the great challenges, both fiscal and otherwise, which face our nation's space program," said Rick Zucker, NSS Vice President for Public Affairs. Added Zucker, "Through its many activities, including its annual conferences, its educational outreach, and its grassroots space advocacy efforts, the NSS serves as a leader in the space advocacy community. NSS will continue to be a staunch advocate for a comprehensive and sustainable space program and budget, and will continue to work with the executive and legislative branches, industry, the space advocacy community, and the general public to attain that goal."

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**About the National Space Society**

The National Space Society (NSS) is an independent, grassroots, non-profit organization dedicated to the creation of a spacefaring civilization. Founded in 1974, NSS is widely acknowledged as the preeminent citizen's voice on space. NSS counts thousands of members and more than 50 chapters in the United States and around the world. The society also publishes Ad Astra magazine, an award-winning periodical chronicling the most important developments in space. For more information about NSS, visit [www.nss.org](http://www.nss.org).