



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**

Opening Statement

**Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)**

**Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee Hearing:**

*Step by Step: The Artemis Program and NASA's Path to Human Exploration of the Moon, Mars, and Beyond*

February 26th, 2025

Good morning. Thank you, Chairman Haridopolos and Ranking Member Foushee for holding this hearing to review NASA's Artemis initiative. Welcome back to both of our distinguished witnesses and thank you for being here today.

I'm excited about NASA's Artemis campaign. I support our Moon to Mars program, and I want the United States to succeed in reestablishing a lunar program in preparation for the even more ambitious goal of being the first nation to step foot on Mars.

Congress has, through successive NASA authorization acts, reaffirmed a continuity of purpose for our nation's human exploration activities, providing a steady hand in directing a stepping-stone approach to human exploration of the Moon, Mars, and beyond.

While important, continuity of purpose alone will not get us to the Moon and Mars. NASA needs sufficient resources, the necessary workforce and skills, safe and modern infrastructure and facilities, and a viable Artemis architecture couched in technical confidence.

With each of these requirements, I'm afraid there are more questions than answers.

We don't know NASA's funding levels after the continuing resolution runs out on March 14<sup>th</sup> and whether it will continue at fiscal year 2024 levels, or under a fiscal year 2025 appropriation.

We don't know if NASA will have the workforce and skills to advance Moon to Mars after President Trump's wreaking ball of destructive executive actions has led to deferred resignations, threats of layoffs, and a remaining NASA workforce that one could imagine may be scared, distracted, and demoralized.

We don't know when a Trump Administration fiscal year 2026 budget proposal that lays out the Administration's priorities and proposed funding for NASA will arrive, and whether it will include funding to rebuild aging and unsafe infrastructure or modernize research facilities.

We don't know when the agency will have a Senate confirmed Administrator and Deputy Administrator to articulate the Trump Administration's priorities for NASA.

Finally, we don't know if the Artemis III and future human landing approaches, with their highly complex human landing systems and low technical readiness levels could ever be viable on a timeframe that will ensure NASA astronauts land at the lunar south pole and return safely to Earth in advance of China's taikonauts.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I do hope you will consider holding another hearing once we have a NASA official to testify and the remaining pieces of the puzzle that I listed.

I look forward to our witnesses' testimony and insights.

Thank you, and I yield back.