



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

## Fact Sheet

### **Space Safety and Situational Awareness Transition Act of 2022** *Introduced by Don Beyer (D-VA)*

#### What is Space Situational Awareness

- Space situational awareness (SSA) provides a foundation for understanding where space objects are now, predicting their future trajectories, and evaluating the risk of potential collisions to operating satellites and human spaceflight safety.
- With growth from about 1,400 satellites in orbit in 2015 to 7,000 today, and over 60,000 projected by 2030, space is becoming more congested, particularly in some orbital regimes. SSA is increasingly important to supporting the safety of orbital operations.
- The Department of Defense (DOD) has been issuing SSA services and information, including conjunction data messages, to commercial and non-U.S. space operators, which is beyond the scope of DOD's primary mission.
- A civil SSA capability is needed to enable increased transparency, data sharing, use of commercial SSA information, improved precision and accuracy in civil SSA information, and to relieve the DOD of certain SSA services and information not related to its primary mission.
- Space Policy Directive-3 on Space Traffic Management states that the Secretaries of Defense and Commerce, with other agencies, should cooperatively develop a plan for providing basic SSA data and space traffic management services.

#### The Space SSA Transition Act

- Sets U.S. policy to make publicly available, and free of direct user-fees, validated civil SSA services and information, and to continually improve such services and information.
- Establishes and authorizes an Interagency Transition Team (ITT) led by the Department of Commerce (DOC) and DOD to develop and support a Transition Plan and ensure a civil SSA initial operating capability at DOC by September 2024 and a full operational capability at DOC by December 2025.
- Supports the use of commercial SSA technologies, data, systems, and services.
- Supports the development and encourages the adoption of private sector-led voluntary consensus standards and best practices for SSA, and makes such voluntary consensus standards publicly available.
- Directs DOC to submit to Congress an organizational management structure for SSA at DOC.
- Sunsets the Interagency Transition Team after establishment of an organizational management structure for SSA at DOC.
- Directs NASA to carry out U.S. Government civil research and development on SSA.
- Directs plans and studies on cybersecurity, international cooperation, data sharing agreements and research strategy related to SSA.
- Authorizes appropriations for FY 2024 **of \$95 million for DOC and \$50 million for NASA** to carry out their respective responsibilities in the bill.

- Directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review SSA transition progress.

Overarching Benefits to U.S.

- Establishes a civil SSA capability at DOC to support spaceflight safety and space sustainability
- Maintains and promotes U.S. leadership in SSA and international collaboration on SSA
- Leverages commercial innovation in SSA
- Support improvements in SSA through research and development