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

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)

Space & Aeronautics Subcommittee Hearing:
Returning to the Moon: Keeping Artemis on Track

January 17, 2024

Good morning, and thank you, Chairman Babin, for holding today's hearing. I also want to welcome our witnesses. Thank you for being here to discuss the topic of "Returning to the Moon: Keeping Artemis on Track."

The Committee has long maintained its bipartisan support for Artemis and NASA's Moon to Mars efforts, and I don't see that changing in any way. I was thrilled with the success of the Artemis I test flight. In my own state of California, NASA's Moon to Mars campaign supports 11,600 jobs and created an economic impact of 2.8 billion dollars, according to NASA's FY2021 Economic Impact Report.

So let me be clear upfront. I support Artemis. I want it to be successful, especially with China at our heels. We want to be helpful in ensuring Artemis is strong and staying on track as we look to lead the world, hand in hand with our partners, in the human exploration of the Moon and beyond.

Sending people into space, let alone to the Moon, will never be easy. NASA recently announced delays to the Artemis II and III missions. I have full confidence in NASA's workforce and the decision to keep safety as the top priority. To that end, I look forward to understanding the details behind the recent delays and what is involved in addressing the issues.

As Artemis efforts continue, it's incumbent upon us, as the authorizing committee, to have our eyes wide open. Moon to Mars is a multi-decadal effort that will span several Congresses and Administrations.

Full situational awareness requires that:
1) We know how much the key Artemis systems cost, as well as the missions themselves;
2) Have a realistic understanding of how NASA is assessing schedule;
3) Have clarity on the topmost technical challenges and risks and how they are being addressed across NASA and among its diverse set of partners and acquisition mechanisms.

Moreover, we can't ignore that NASA has a lot on its plate. The future of low Earth orbit and the planned end of International Space Station operations in 2030, the need for a critical yet costly

deorbit vehicle, the transition to the use of future commercial space stations and their readiness to come online must be kept in mind. In addition, key considerations on Mars Sample Return are on the horizon. And, as we learned last week from NASA and NOAA's annual assessment of global temperature, we must continue to obtain the measurements and observations needed to understand and mitigate the horrific impacts of the climate crisis. In short, NASA is a multi-mission agency, and we can't lose sight of the benefits and challenges of a balanced portfolio.

Supporting balance won't be made any easier by the dysfunctional appropriations process that threatens to undermine what we know is best for leading the world and growing our economy in a sustainable way—investments in R&D and innovation such as those at NASA.
I'm excited about Artemis and Moon to Mars. I look forward to working with the Chairman, the Administration, and stakeholders on building a smart, strong, and sustainable path forward.

Thank you, and I yield back.