

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY**  
U.S. Congressman Jerry Costello

*NASA's Commercial Crew Development Program: Accomplishments and Challenges*

**Wednesday, October 26, 2011**  
**10:00 AM to 12:00 PM**  
**2318 Rayburn House Office Building**

- Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding today's hearing to receive testimony on the accomplishments and challenges of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA's) Commercial Crew Development Program.
  
- Since 2009, NASA has committed to developing a commercial crew system that utilizes innovation and entrepreneurship to build safe and affordable vehicles for transporting astronauts to and from low-earth orbit.
  
- With the retirement of the Space Shuttle earlier this year, and NASA's contract for Russian crew services set to end in five years,

commercial crew systems are an important part of human spaceflight's future and will ensure we fully utilize the International Space Station (ISS) through at least 2020.

- While NASA's commercial crew development activities offer exciting opportunities for the future, these public-private partnerships represent a new approach to acquisition and human spaceflight that pose unique questions and challenges for the agency, its commercial partners, and Congress. I look forward to hearing how NASA and the six companies participating in the program are working together to ensure that the program remains efficient, cost-effective, and, most importantly, safe for our astronauts.
  
- I look forward to hearing from our witnesses more about the progress made and the challenges that remain in achieving NASA's goal of a viable commercial system by 2016.

- First, I would like to understand how confident NASA is in the cost and schedule estimates for achieving U.S. commercial crew services by about 2016 as well as the basis for those estimates.
  
- Second, I would like to understand what steps NASA and its commercial partners are taking to ensure that future U.S. commercial crew transportation systems are safe.
  
- Third, I would like to understand if there are trade-offs on risks given NASA's plans for a fixed government investment in the development of those systems.
  
- I welcome our panel of witnesses and look forward to their testimony.  
  
I yield back the balance of my time.