

Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to H.R.2687

The Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute is a complete substitute of the text of the Committee Print. It includes a three year authorization for NASA as well as an increase in the overall funding levels.

Mr. Chairman, there is no getting around the fact that the bill we are marking up today still cuts NASA's funding in Fiscal Year 2014 by almost a billion dollars from the President's request.

Over the years, the erosion of NASA's purchasing power has been dramatic. And it's not just to well-publicized programs such as James Webb Space Telescope, International Space Station, Space Launch System, and Orion. It has disrupted the activities at NASA field Centers. The constant picking away at the account that funds field Center operations is close to causing irreparable harm to this agency.

Funding NASA, our nation's crown jewel, at sequestration levels as this bill proposes is a choice, not a legal requirement, and it's not a choice I can support. That is why I am again submitting an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment provides a pragmatic path forward that will give NASA a clear sense of purpose and direction in a way that also recognizes the Nation's need for fiscal restraint. The reality is that NASA should be funded at levels that are actually billions of dollars more than I am proposing but I offer these funding levels in recognition of the current fiscal environment. I think the Agency could really make things work with a budget of \$18.1 billion.

The 1958 Space Act and countless NASA Authorizations since then have stated the policy that NASA is and should remain a multi-mission agency with a balanced and robust set of core missions in science, aeronautics, space technology, and human space flight and exploration. My amendment continues that tradition.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment does a number of important and necessary things.

- It preserves NASA's purchasing power relative to Fiscal Year 2012 enacted levels by authorizing \$18.1 billion for Fiscal Year 2014 with inflationary increases over the three year authorization period of Fiscal Year 2014 through Fiscal Year 2016.

- It provides a clear goal for NASA's human spaceflight program of a crewed mission to the surface of Mars and requires a Roadmap which identifies intermediate destinations and activities that contribute to enabling the effective achievement of that goal.
- The amendment recognizes the Space Launch System (SLS) and Orion crew vehicle as the highest priorities for carrying out the Mars goal and authorizes needed increases to keep those programs on track, bringing SLS to \$1.8 billion by FY2016, with additional funds provided for needed ground systems.
 - H.R. 2687, the bill being marked up today, has an SLS figure of \$1.8 billion that includes ground systems.
 - I understand that the Manager's Amendment clarifies funding for the ground systems but this brings us right back to where we started—insufficient funds to make SLS successful.
 - Simple math shows that in FY 2014, my amendment would fund SLS vehicle development and necessary ground systems at \$1.97 billion. This compares with \$1.8 billion in the Committee's bill.
 - This is not just nit-picking. Both of the expert witnesses who testified on the Majority's bill at a recent hearing stressed the importance of not underfunding the SLS program, and my amendment takes that advice to heart.
- Returning to other parts of my amendment, it emphasizes Congressional commitment to safety in NASA's human spaceflight activities by requiring an independent review of NASA's commercial crew safety processes and procedures and provides for other measures that will enable full government insight and oversight to ensure safety.
- The amendment provides robust funding for commercial crew system development of \$700 million per year.
- It maintains our commitment to International Space Station (ISS) operations through 2020 and initiates a process for determining if and how long ISS should operate beyond 2020.
- The amendment authorizes increases for ISS research to augment discovery-based science and maximize the full and productive utilization of this unique laboratory.
- It restores Planetary Science to \$1.5 billion annual funding, following recent cuts to the program.
- The amendment maintains a sound Earth Sciences program authorized at the President's request that ensures observing systems development, and advances research, knowledge, and applied data uses that benefit society.

- And Mr. Chairman, I know that NASA Goddard which is located just outside of my district does a significant amount of Earth science work but want to highlight that this research benefits and is conducted across our entire nation:
 - Monitoring vegetation and crop condition and mapping the extent of floodwater from active floods to help inform local and regional officials; and
 - Even routine use by operational weather forecasters in the Southern region of the National Weather Service through NASA's Short-Term Prediction Research and Transition Center in Huntsville, AL.
 - And I could go on.
- My amendment would ensure that NASA has sufficient resources to keep its environmental clean-up commitments in communities across the United States
- The amendment sustains a stable aeronautics research program, consistent with FY 2012 enacted levels, that supports research priorities, strategic initiatives, and flight demonstrations.
- It recognizes the importance of investing in space technology to enable future missions, spur innovation, and contribute to economic growth and job-creation.
- The amendment sustains NASA's Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education activities and continues current agency education and outreach activities supported by scientists and engineers.
- In addition Mr. Chairman, my amendment includes a number of "good government" provisions such as establishing measures to strengthen NASA's cost estimation and fiscal management practices to minimize cost overruns in projects, and to assess the capabilities and resources needed to expand NASA's Near-Earth Objects program to include smaller objects.

This amendment is fiscally responsible; it puts NASA back on track to greatness and provides flexibility in how the agency will implement the engineering and scientific details. You can be fiscally conservative and still support my amendment. In a Federal budget that is over 3.5 trillion dollars, we can find the funding necessary to allow NASA to meet the responsibilities we are asking NASA to undertake. We can find the funding that protects NASA's purchasing power.

The fact is that we are presented with a choice--we can choose to drastically reduce our federal investments in the civil space program and take a back seat to the future of space exploration OR we can choose to invest Federal resources to ensure U.S. leadership in global space science and exploration. To ensure that the U.S. reaps those dividends—enhanced competitiveness, innovation, high-skilled jobs and inspiring goals that stimulate the next generation and our workforce.

This amendment makes a strong and clear choice to invest in a 21st century space innovation agenda.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that we can work together with Members on both sides of the aisle to ensure that NASA's mission is clear, that it continues to inspire the public and workforce, and that the level of resources we provide enables the agency to be successful.