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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2009

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Administrator Charles F. Bolden, Jr.  
Office of the Administrator  
NASA Headquarters, SW  
Washington, DC 20546

Dear Administrator Bolden,

I appreciated our discussions earlier this week both at the House Action Team (HAT) meeting and the Florida delegation meeting regarding NASA's future and actions we can take to close the human space flight gap. I look forward to working with you to secure our nation's continued leadership in space.

As I pointed out in those meetings, I appreciated the commitment that the President made to people of Florida's Space Coast and our nation's space workforce to closing the human space flight gap and keeping America first in space. That Commitment was made last October during then-Senator Obama's visit to Florida. Since that time, while I understand he has had a number of issues to address, I have been disappointed with the lack of attention, detail, and specificity to fulfilling his commitment. Now that you are on board, I look forward to working with you to see that this promise is fulfilled.

Earlier this year I joined with my Florida colleague, Rep Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, in introducing H.R. 1962, American Space Access Act. (I have attached a copy of this legislation for your review.) Our bill provides a pathway to closing this gap primarily by extending the operations of the space Shuttle and providing additional resources to NASA for America's next generation human space flight vehicle.

At last week's space hearings in the House and Senate, Norm Augustine, Chairman of "Review of U.S. Human Space Flight Plans Committee" made clear to the Congress that the only way to close the gap is to extend the operations of the Shuttle beyond 2010. He added further that additional resources would be needed to close the gap on the back end. Clearly, we have the greatest promise of closing the U.S. human space flight gap on the front end by extending Shuttle operations.

It is my understanding that, from the time Constellation was conceived through the Administration's proposed 2014 budget, NASA will fall nearly \$20 billion short of what was promised at the outset of Constellation. It is long past due to match the budget to the mission.

The federal government as a whole will spend \$1.3 trillion over and above the current budget between now and 2014. Unfortunately, the proposed budget for NASA is flat-lined and our space program will not see one penny of this increased funding. The Augustine Committee made clear that if we are going to have a robust space program, this must change. I couldn't agree more.

I stand ready to work with you and others across the aisle for the benefit of our nation's space program and the American people to accomplish both of these goals. This program is much too important, not only for the current space program workforce, but for our nation's future. Building a robust program, as you well know and have so eloquently stated is important for young Americans as they look to the future. They must have a vision and the inspiration of our nation's space program provides the seeds for that imagination and vision.

I look forward to continuing our discussion. It is indeed a pleasure to work with you. The work we do now and the decisions we make will profoundly impact the next several generations of Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "B" and a cursive "ill".

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress