



April 22, 2024

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
 Chair  
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
 Agencies  
 S-128, The Capitol  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
 Ranking Member  
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
 Agencies  
 S-146, The Capitol  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
 Chairman  
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
 Agencies  
 H-310, The Capitol  
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Matt Cartwright  
 Ranking Member  
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
 Agencies  
 1036 Longworth House Office Building  
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Shaheen, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Moran, and Ranking Member Cartwright:

The Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), representing over 320 aerospace manufacturers and suppliers and more than 2 million U.S. workers, urges Congress to stabilize NASA and NOAA funding after cuts in the FY24 appropriations cycle. With inflationary pressures, the President's FY25 budget request represents a \$2 billion loss in buying power for NASA since 2020. Accordingly, AIA urges Congress to consider the President's request a floor for setting FY25 funding levels, and fund NASA and NOAA's space accounts at no less than the President's request of \$25.384 billion, and \$2.14 billion, respectively.

As Administrator Nelson has emphasized, "As history has proven, as the present has shown, and as the future will continue to demonstrate, an investment in NASA is an investment in America for the benefit of humanity".

Congress's 10-year, bipartisan support for growing NASA budgets enabled the groundbreaking science, exploration, and technology accomplishments we have achieved over the last decade. The decrease in FY24 funding should remain an aberration, with FY25 serving as the beginning of another decade of growing bipartisan, bicameral support of our Nation's space programs across a balanced portfolio as outlined further below.

## **NASA**

*Aeronautics* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President's budget request of \$965.8 million, including:

- Support the Sustainable Flight National Partnership that incorporates research and demonstration efforts to advance sustainable aviation, including subsonic aircraft, engine design and technology, high-rate composites and ceramic matrix composites for wings, fuselages, cabin structures and engine cores and nacelles, sustainable aviation fuels, future energy sources including Sustainable Aviation Fuels and hydrogen, and electric and hybrid-electric propulsion that will lead to emissions and noise reductions.
- Support a range of technology demonstrators to advance aircraft, systems and structures, and engine designs to prepare for the next generation of aircraft, including the recently announced Sustainable Flight Demonstrator.
- NASA research and flight demonstration technologies needed to support U.S. global leadership in hypersonics, including the development of endothermic fuels for High-Mach Turbine Engine aircraft.
- The Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) National Campaign, autonomy, and airspace integration research and partnerships.

*Deep Space Exploration Systems* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President’s \$7.618 billion request to invest in:

- NASA’s Artemis Moon to Mars program with the goal to send humans to the surface of Mars enabled by human exploration of the cis-lunar vicinity and lunar surface by 2026, including program elements Gateway, Orion Crew Vehicle, Space Launch System, and Exploration Upper Stage, Exploration Ground Systems, including VAB high bays for SLS and Mobile Launcher-2, Human Lander Systems, Exploration Space Suits, deep space environmental control and life support systems, and required ground and communications systems.
- Expanded Gateway Logistics Services to enable dissimilar redundancy for the provision of cargo to Gateway.

*Space Operations* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President’s \$4.390 billion request to invest in:

- The International Space Station and accompanying transportation and research activities to 2030.
- NASA’s Commercial Low Earth Orbit Destinations (CLD) program and NASA efforts to enable commercial activity in low Earth orbit.
- NASA’s Space Communications and Navigation’s goal to migrate the Near Space Network away from government-owned assets by using commercial space communications services and capabilities to provide new technology and capacity for NASA missions.
- Use of the Venture-Class Acquisition of Dedicated and Rideshare (VADR) program for all eligible smallsat launch procurements, providing new opportunities for science and technology payloads and fostering the U.S. commercial launch market.

*Science* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President’s \$7.566 billion request to invest in:

- A balanced set of activities across space science disciplines, including research and analysis programs, technology development, small-, medium-, and large-sized space science missions, and suborbital research activities.
- Decadal survey priorities, including the Roman Space Telescope, Europa Clipper, Earth Systems Observatory, Geospace Dynamics Constellation (GDC), and recommendations for increased small satellite use in programs such as Astrophysics Pioneers.
- Support NASA’s rescoping of the Mars Sample Return mission to align with Decadal Survey budget estimates.
- NASA science and human spaceflight collaboration with the Lunar Discovery and Exploration Program and Commercial Lunar Payload Services programs.
- A new Great Observatories Mission and Technology Maturation Program to formulate several major overlapping space missions to maintain U.S. leadership in space science, the first being the Habitable Worlds Observatory capable of searching for life on planets orbiting stars in our galactic neighborhood.
- Microgravity research aboard suborbital and orbital research platforms, including the use of human participants to support NASA-funded research.
- Expand Earth science data use and applications, including leveraging commercial capabilities and partnerships to enhance data sets and data analysis.
- Support continued progress on Earth Science missions including the Geosynchronous Littoral Imaging and Monitoring Radiometer (GLIMR), and funding to advance development of Landsat Next.
- A dedicated survey mission to accomplish the objectives of the George E. Brown Near-Earth Object Survey Act.
- The Planetary Defense office and development of a near-earth object and planetary defense roadmap.
- Support the Biological and Physical Sciences (BPS) funding increase to access research in space which cannot be done on Earth, and to enact the CERISS (Commercially Enabled Rapid Space Science) initiative, taking advantage of the growth of the commercial space industry and further expansion of BPS research opportunities.
- A Space Weather Research and Applications Program to support research to operations and improve modeling, forecasting, and prediction of space weather phenomena.
- Data science and management initiatives to expand data analytic capabilities.

*Space Technology* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President’s budget request, with \$1.4 billion required to successfully fund the breadth of activities in the portfolio, with an investment in:

- Nuclear propulsion and surface power systems; solar electric propulsion demonstrations; small satellite technologies; large scale additive manufacturing; in-space servicing, assembly, and manufacturing; in-situ resource utilization; competitively selected technology demonstrations, and the Flight Opportunities Program.
- Support the Flight Opportunities program to fund payloads for research, technology development, and educational opportunities that support NASA’s missions. A funding increase will allow NASA to leverage commercial suborbital capabilities to provide a pipeline for frequent and cost-effective microgravity research to be conducted in support of NASA’s missions.
- Sufficient funding should remain dedicated to supporting the staff at GSFC in the orderly wind-down of OSAM-1 while leveraging the valuable work accomplished to advance industry’s capabilities in In-space Servicing Assembly, and Manufacturing (ISAM). Preserving these resources ensures the fostering of ongoing collaboration between industry and government stakeholders, ensuring continued progress in space exploration and innovation. In the event that funding for OSAM remains terminated, STMD should redirect efforts towards advancing essential technologies across the space technology portfolio.
- Competitive Tipping Points solicitations that leverage industry investment in early- and mid-stage technologies in cislunar/lunar surface infrastructure and capabilities, in-space infrastructure and capabilities, and Martian infrastructure and capabilities.
- Fully fund NASA’s Nuclear Thermal Propulsion program at the requested \$92.5 million within the Space Technology account and continue support for the joint flight demonstration with DARPA’s DRACO program.
- Provide no less than \$50 million for the development of high-power nuclear electric propulsion demonstration.
- Provide no less than the allocated amount in the FY24 Consolidated Appropriations Act for the development of a lightweight fission surface power system to be demonstrated by 2032.
- Research & development for debris remediation technologies, including for active debris removal (ADR) over all TRL levels in partnership with industry.
- Expanded capacity and capability of the U.S. space solar cell, panel, and array industrial base, reducing the nation’s dependence on foreign suppliers.
- Research and development, orbital debris measurement, tracking, modeling, mitigation, remediation, conjunction analysis, and collision avoidance to advance the sustainability of the space environment for the future of civil and commercial activities in space.

*STEM Engagement* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President’s \$144 million request to invest an independent STEM engagement program.

*Safety, Security, and Mission Services* – Support an appropriation of no less than the President’s \$3.044 billion request to invest in long overdue maintenance and upgrades identified by NASA under the NASA 2040 activity, including projects that will increase energy efficiency, modernize communal aging and outdated infrastructure, and protect against growing climate threats like hurricanes at NASA centers and facilities where key ISS, Artemis, aeronautics, and science systems are built, tested, processed, and launched.

### **NOAA Space Programs**

- Support the President’s budget request for NOAA satellite systems of \$2.14 billion to enable NOAA’s next generation weather satellite programs.
- Fully fund the GeoXO program at the President’s \$798 million request to enable implementation of the planned GeoXO architecture.
- Support the President’s budget request of \$75.6 million for the Office of Space Commerce to procure commercial services to fulfill civil space traffic coordination requirements and serve as an interagency U.S. space industry advocate.

AIA and our member companies thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our funding priorities for NASA and NOAA. For further information, please reach out to [Jeffrey.Wilson@aia-aerospace.org](mailto:Jeffrey.Wilson@aia-aerospace.org).

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeffrey Wilson".

Jeffrey Wilson  
Senior Director of Legislative Affairs  
Aerospace Industries Association