

4/16/2018

Dear Chairman Smith:

Thank you for your strong support for NASA's Lunar Science and Exploration programs in the NASA Authorization Act for FY 2018 and FY 2019, which is scheduled to be marked up this week. I was honored to testify before the Space Subcommittee last fall in support of NASA's lunar lander programs, and your authorization of these new programs within the Science Mission Directorate (SMD) and Advanced Exploration Systems (AES) will accelerate our nation's return to the surface of the Moon for the first time in nearly 50 years.

As you may know, a number of Republicans and Democrats in the House have advocated for these robotic lunar lander programs in both the FY 2018 and FY 2019 appropriations processes, which led to funding in the House FY 2018 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Act. Your authorization provisions, along with the funding requested in the FY 2019 Presidents Budget Request, will continue to solidify this bipartisan support this year as the Appropriations Committee prepares its FY 2019 bill. Specifically, the strong funding authorized for the AES Advanced Cislunar and Surface Capabilities as well as the increased Planetary Science funding level that will support the Lunar science payloads and landers services in FY 2019 is a clear indication of your committee's support for these initiatives.

It is only fitting that this Authorization bill reasserts the need for NASA to support U.S. lunar lander capabilities as we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 11 in FY 2019. Thank you for your leadership and support in this bill for NASA, industry and the science communities' efforts to restore American access to the lunar surface as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,



John Thornton

CEO, Astrobotic

