



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Media Contact: Zachary Kurz, Laura Crist
(202) 225-6371

Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Live from the International Space Station

Chairman Smith: Good morning and welcome to this special event.

In 10 minutes, we will speak with two American astronauts, direct from the International Space Station. Through satellite communications, NASA astronauts Scott Kelly and Kjell Lindgren will join us by video-link and spend the next 20 minutes with us.

For over 15 years, NASA astronauts have lived and worked onboard the International Space Station, perhaps the greatest engineering achievement in human history. The Space Station is in orbit 240 miles above the Earth and is traveling at 17,500 miles per hour, about five times faster than the highest velocity bullet. It is roughly the size of a football field and weighs almost one million pounds.

It has more livable space than a six-bedroom house along with science laboratories that allow astronauts to live and work there.

The six astronauts currently onboard include two Americans, three Russians, and one from Japan.

NASA astronauts Scott Kelly and Kjell Lindgren will speak to us today from the Destiny Lab, where they are conducting scientific experiments using the unique zero-g conditions in space.

Aboard the Space Station laboratory we can develop new materials and medicines that make their way into the commercial products used here on Earth. Some examples of this research are on display this morning around the hearing room.

The technology spinoffs from America's space program have significantly impacted our economy and improved our way of life—from the microchips in our computers, to lightweight metal alloys used in our cars, to touchpad screens on our IPADs.

More importantly, the Space Station is a place to test new technologies that could assist future astronauts, for example, when they venture to Mars.

NASA astronaut Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko are currently on a one-year mission onboard the International Space Station.

A veteran of three space flights before his current mission, Scott Kelly holds the record for the most time any American has spent in space. As of today, he has been in space a total of 430 days.

We also will be speaking with Dr. Kjell Lindgren onboard the International Space Station. He is a medical doctor who joined NASA in June 2009 and is on his first space mission.

Astronauts serve as role models who inspire students to study science, math and engineering. They also appeal to all generations and entice us to seek answers to timeless questions about life, our existence, and the meaning of it all.

To that end, I am told that NanoRacks, one of our exhibitors this morning, is announcing a new educational initiative today in conjunction with this event.

DreamUp will be a new company dedicated solely to educational space research that leverages NanoRacks' expertise in providing hands-on experience for students in getting their experiments into space.

We also thank NASA and the Center for the Advancement of Science in Space from Florida's Space Coast for showcasing their work here today.

I now recognize Ms. Johnson for her opening statement.

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