

February 9th, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman, Committee on Science,
Space and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Steven M. Palazzo
Chairman, Subcommittee on Space
U.S. House of Representatives
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member, Committee on Science,
Space and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
394 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Donna Edwards
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Space
U.S. House of Representatives
394 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

85 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE
PASADENA, CA 91105 USA
PHONE: (626) 793-5100
FAX: (626) 793-5528

COFOUNDERS
CARL SAGAN
1934-1996

BRUCE MURRAY
1931-2013

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Chairman of the Board
DANIEL T. GERACI
Founder & co-CEO
E.F. Hutton Holdings Canada Inc.

President
JAMES BELL
Professor, School of Earth
and Space Exploration,
Arizona State University

Vice President
HEIDI HAMMEL
Executive Vice President, Association of
Universities for Research in Astronomy

Chief Executive Officer
BILL NYE
Science Educator

LOUIS D. FRIEDMAN
Cofounder

Secretary
C. WALLACE HOOSER
Associate Professor of Radiology,
University of Texas
Southwestern Medical School

G. SCOTT HUBBARD
Professor, Department of
Aeronautics and Astronautics,
Stanford University

Treasurer
LON LEVIN
SkySevenVentures

ALEXIS LIVANOS
Research Professor,
Viterbi School of Engineering,
University of Southern California

JOHN LOGSDON
Professor Emeritus, Space Policy Institute,
The George Washington University

BIJAL "BEE" THAKORE
Regional Coordinator for Asia Pacific,
Space Generation Advisory Council

NEIL deGRASSE TYSON
Astrophysicist and Director,
Hayden Planetarium,
American Museum of Natural History

FILLMORE WOOD
Vice President and Regional Counsel,
BP, retired

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL
ROGER MAURICE BONNET
Executive Director,
International Space Science Institute

YASUNORI MATOGAWA
Associate Executive Director,
Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency

MAMORU MOHRI
Director, National Museum
of Emerging Science and Innovation

RISTO PELLINEN
Director of Science in Space Research,
Finnish Meteorological Institute

ADVISORY COUNCIL
BUZZ ALDRIN
RICHARD BERENDZEN
JACQUES BLAMONT
ROBERT D. BRAUN
DAVID BRIN
JAMES CANTRELL
FRANKLIN CHANG-DIAZ
FRANK DRAKE
OWEN GARRIOTT
GARRY E. HUNT
BRUCE JAKOSKY
THOMAS D. JONES
CHARLES E. KOHLHASE JR.
LAURIE LESHIN
JON LOMBERG
ROSALY LOPES
HANS MARK
JOHN MINOGUE
ROBERT PICARDO
JOHN RHYS-DAVIES
KIM STANLEY ROBINSON
DONNA L. SHIRLEY
KEVIN STUBE

Dear Chairmen Smith and Palazzo and Ranking Members Johnson and Edwards:

On behalf of The Planetary Society, the largest nonprofit space interest group in the world with over 40,000 members, we thank you for your leadership in building a bipartisan consensus in the committee for the NASA Authorization Act of 2015.

NASA is an investment in our nation's future that helps propel our economy and technological edge and stimulates the best and brightest with cutting-edge scientific and technical challenges that will make our nation stronger and more competitive.

NASA's science programs aim to answer fundamental questions about the nature of the universe, the origins of the planets and solar system, and actively pursue answers to profound questions such as whether life has existed elsewhere, perhaps on Mars or maybe Jupiter's moon Europa. These pursuits are important scientifically and inspire the public and the next generation of scientists and engineers that our nation needs to remain competitive.

The Society believes that NASA's planetary science program is a crown jewel of our nation. We are particularly appreciative of the committee's strong support for a healthy and balanced planetary science program. To this end, the society is very supportive of provisions in the bill, especially section 321, which calls on NASA to follow the recommendations from the National Academy of Science's decadal survey for planetary exploration. Section 321 specifies regular opportunities for small, medium and large missions consistent with the report, and establishes a goal to launch a mission to Jupiter's moon Europa by 2021.

Thank you again for your work in crafting the FY2015 NASA Authorization Bill. We look forward to continuing to work with you and other Members of Congress in putting NASA on a solid path toward the future.

Sincerely,



Bill Nye
CEO
The Planetary Society



Casey Dreier
Director of Advocacy
The Planetary Society

