Public Law 97-237
97th Congress

# Joint Resolution

Concerning the successful completion of the test flight phase of the Space Shuttle program.

Aug. 20, 1982
[H.J. Res. 541]

Whereas when the Space Shuttle Columbia flew through a blazing re-entry and skimmed to a perfect landing on the 4th of July 1982, at Edwards Air Force Base, California, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration successfully completed the test flight phase of the Space Shuttle program and began a new era of operational Space Shuttle missions;

Whereas in four test missions, the Space Shuttle Columbia, a reusable spaceship designed to provide routine space travel for a wide variety of scientific, commercial, and military payloads at reduced costs and with a high reliability of success, lived up to its promise as the most advanced spacecraft in the world;

Whereas in four test missions, the Columbia was lifted from Earth, orbited in the vacuum of space like a satellite, operated a variety of scientific experiments, tested the capability of the remote manipulator system to deploy satellites in orbit and to retrieve satellites, descended into the Earth's atmosphere, was piloted by astronauts like a conventional winged airplane, and was landed at Edwards Air Force Base, California, and at White Sands missile range, New Mexico;

Whereas the Space Shuttle Columbia, the newly completed Space Shuttle Challenger, and the sister Shuttles Discovery and Atlantis, now under construction, will be able to fly repeatedly back and forth from space as an operational space transportation system;

Whereas the Space Shuttle orbiters will accommodate an unprecedented variety of payloads including a fully equipped scientific laboratory (Spacelab) provided by the European space agency, underscoring the commitment of the United States to international cooperation in space activities;

Whereas using the unique qualities of the space environment (weightlessness and a near perfect vacuum) the Space Shuttle orbiters will be used for experiments to produce special alloys, metals, glasses, crystals, and pharmaceuticals that cannot be performed on Earth;

Whereas the Space Shuttle orbiters will place in orbit satellites to observe the Earth's weather, provide improved communications, discover new mineral resources, monitor crop and timber yields, help United States forces to navigate, and monitor arms control agreements;

Whereas the Space Shuttle orbiters will also place in orbit the most powerful space telescope and will launch scientific probes to explore the planets;

Whereas the Space Shuttle program is a national enterprise, geographically and technologically, requiring tens of thousands of skilled workers to design, develop, test and evaluate the various Space Shuttle components;

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Whereas the Space Shuttle program has been judged by independent research organizations to have a positive effect on the national economy, creating jobs, reducing inflationary pressures, and forwarding the development of advanced technologies; and

Whereas the Space Shuttle program is a source of great national pride and the United States now holds world leadership in its proven ability to operate a reusable Space Shuttle: Now, therefore, be it

Space Shuttle, test flight period. Successful completion.

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Congress of the United States congratulates the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the members of the Astronaut Corps, prime contractor Rockwell International, associate contractors Martin Marietta and Thiokol, the thousands of Shuttle subcontractors throughout the United States, and the tens of thousands of dedicated Space Shuttle workers who contributed to the successful completion of the Space Shuttle test flight period and to the entry of our Nation into a promising new era of spaceflight for the benefit of the people of the United States and all mankind.

Approved August 20, 1982.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 541:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 128 (1982):
July 26, considered and passed House.
Aug. 4, considered and passed Senate, amended.
Aug. 10, House concurred in Senate amendments.