

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3219

To establish an independent committee to oversee the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Space Shuttle return-to-flight plans, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 1, 2003

Mr. HALL (for himself, Mr. ROHRABACHER, and Mr. GORDON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science

NOVEMBER 4, 2003

Additional sponsors: Mr. BARTON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. LAMPSON, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. BELL, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. SANDLIN, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. WU, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. HONDA, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. WEINER, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. COSTELLO

A BILL

To establish an independent committee to oversee the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Space Shuttle return-to-flight plans, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Space Shuttle Inde-
5 pendent Oversight Act of 2003".

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act—

3 (1) the term “Administrator” means the Ad-
4 ministrator of the National Aeronautics and Space
5 Administration; and

6 (2) the term “NASA” means the National Aer-
7 onautics and Space Administration.

8 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT**
9 **COMMITTEE.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall enter
11 into an arrangement with the National Academy of
12 Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering for the
13 establishment of an independent committee to oversee
14 NASA’s implementation of the recommendations of the
15 Columbia Accident Investigation Board, with the excep-
16 tion of those recommendations associated with return-to-
17 flight activities of the Space Shuttle fleet.

18 (b) MEMBERSHIP AND OPERATING PROCEDURES.—
19 The size, composition, and operating procedures of the
20 committee shall be determined solely by the National
21 Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engi-
22 neering, in consultation with the National Academy of
23 Public Administration.

24 (c) TASKS.—The committee shall—

25 (1) review and evaluate the plans NASA devel-
26 ops to implement the recommendations of the Co-

1 Columbia Accident Investigation Board and make rec-
2 ommendations to the Administrator as appropriate
3 with respect to the plans' adequacy and responsive-
4 ness to the findings and recommendations of the Co-
5 lumbia Accident Investigation Board;

6 (2) monitor and assess the implementation of
7 the Columbia Accident Investigation Board rec-
8 ommendations by NASA and report the committee's
9 findings on a semi-annual basis to the Adminis-
10 trator;

11 (3) provide technical oversight of any required
12 design activities and test or certification procedures
13 and plans;

14 (4) review and evaluate the results of any re-
15 quired test or certification programs; and

16 (5) each year for five years after the date of
17 termination of NASA's Return-to-Flight Task
18 Force, determine whether NASA is still complying
19 with all of the Columbia Accident Investigation
20 Board's Return-to-Flight recommendations.

21 (d) SUPPORT.—The Administrator shall provide to
22 the committee in a timely manner—

23 (1) all information and technical data necessary
24 to complete the committee's tasks;

1 (2) briefings and interviews by personnel from
2 NASA, its contractors, and the Columbia Accident
3 Investigation Board; and

4 (3) access to all test and certification activities,
5 as needed.

6 (e) DURATION.—The committee shall be established
7 within 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act
8 and shall remain in existence for six years after the date
9 of termination of NASA’s Return-to-Flight Task Force
10 unless otherwise extended by the Administrator.

11 **SEC. 4. REPORTS.**

12 The committee established under section 3 shall pro-
13 vide to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Trans-
14 portation of the Senate and the Committee on Science of
15 the House of Representatives—

16 (1) copies of any interim reports or correspond-
17 ence it provides to the Administrator at the same
18 time as they are provided to the Administrator; and

19 (2) at the conclusion of the committee’s activi-
20 ties, a final report summarizing the committee’s
21 findings, recommendations, and any other matters
22 that the committee wishes to address.

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