

108TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. RES. 324

Expressing the sense of the Senate relating to the extraordinary contributions resulting from the Hubble Space Telescope to scientific research and education, and to the need to reconsider future service missions to the Hubble Space Telescope.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 25, 2004

Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. BROWNBACK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate relating to the extraordinary contributions resulting from the Hubble Space Telescope to scientific research and education, and to the need to reconsider future service missions to the Hubble Space Telescope.

Whereas discoveries from the Hubble Space Telescope have dominated space science news over the last 10 years;

Whereas the Hubble Space Telescope has provided proof of black holes, insights into the birth and death of stars, spectacular views of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9's collision with Jupiter, the age of the Universe, and evidence that the expansion of the Universe is accelerating;

Whereas the inspiring scientific discoveries from the Hubble Space Telescope reach millions of students each year and have been important in encouraging students to study the sciences;

Whereas the inspiring scientific discoveries from the Hubble Space Telescope reach millions of students each year and have been important in encouraging students to study the sciences;

Whereas the 2000 National Academy of Sciences Decadal Survey endorsed a plan to maintain the Hubble Space Telescope until 2010;

Whereas the Hubble Space Telescope has been the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's most scientifically productive mission, accounting for 35 percent of all National Aeronautics and Space Administration discoveries in the last 20 years;

Whereas the demand for research time on the Hubble Space Telescope in 2003 was approximately 8 times that available;

Whereas approximately \$200,000,000 worth of instruments have largely been built, including scientific instruments that would provide significant improvements in Hubble's scientific power and including replacement gyroscopes and batteries, which could keep the telescope in operation until 2011 or 2012 and make the Hubble Space Telescope's final years its most scientifically capable and productive;

Whereas the distinguished panel that studied scientific priorities for ultraviolet and optical astronomy in 2003 considered the continued operation of the Hubble Space Tele-

scope by means of the SM–4 servicing mission to be its highest priority; and

Whereas the American Astronomical Society, the largest professional scientific association for astronomers and astrophysicists, believes a panel of experts should review the decision to limit prematurely the lifespan of the Hubble Space Telescope: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2               (1) recognizes the extraordinary contributions  
3       resulting from the Hubble Space Telescope to sci-  
4       entific research and education;

5               (2) strongly recommends that the Adminis-  
6       trator of the National Aeronautics and Space Ad-  
7       ministration appoint an independent panel of expert  
8       scientists and engineers inside and outside of the  
9       National Aeronautics and Space Administration to  
10      examine all possible options for safely carrying out  
11      the planned servicing mission to the Hubble Space  
12      Telescope and assess alternative servicing methods;  
13      and

14              (3) expresses its strong sentiment that the Na-  
15      tional Aeronautics and Space Administration should  
16      continue all planning, preparation, and astronaut  
17      training activities for the SM–4 servicing mission  
18      without interruption until the expert panel issues its  
19      report and until the National Aeronautics and Space  
20      Administration provides a timetable of compliance

1 with recommendation R6.4–1 of the Columbia Acci-  
2 dent Investigation Board report, which calls for “a  
3 fully autonomous capability for all missions to ad-  
4 dress the possibility that an International Space Sta-  
5 tion mission fails to achieve the correct orbit, fails  
6 to dock successfully, or is damaged during or after  
7 undocking”, since National Aeronautics and Space  
8 Administration compliance with the recommendation  
9 will allow both a Hubble servicing mission and mis-  
10 sions to the International Space Station to be car-  
11 ried out safely.

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