

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3182

To advance United States leadership in planetary science and space  
exploration through education and outreach.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 23, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself and Mr. SMITH of Texas)  
introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on  
Science, Space, and Technology

---

## A BILL

To advance United States leadership in planetary science  
and space exploration through education and outreach.

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 “Planetary Leadership  
5 Utilizing Teaching and Observations Act” or the  
6 “PLUTO Act”.

7       **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

8       In this Act:

9               (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-  
10       trator” means the Administrator of NASA.

1           (2) NASA.—The term “NASA” means the Na-  
2           tional Aeronautics and Space Administration.

3 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

4           Congress finds the following:

5           (1) The New Frontiers Program represents a  
6           pivotal step in the advancement of solar system ex-  
7           ploration.

8           (2) The missions in the program tackle specific  
9           solar system exploration goals identified as top pri-  
10          orities by consensus of the planetary community.

11          (3) The New Frontiers strategy is to explore  
12          the solar system with frequent, medium-class space-  
13          craft missions that conduct high-quality, focused sci-  
14          entific investigations designed to enhance our under-  
15          standing of the solar system.

16          (4) The program objective is to launch high-  
17          science-return planetary investigations on an average  
18          of one every 36 months.

19          (5) Added to the NASA budget for the first  
20          time in 2003, New Frontiers builds on the innova-  
21          tive approaches used in NASA’s Discovery and Ex-  
22          plorer Programs, but provides a mechanism for iden-  
23          tifying and selecting missions that cannot be accom-  
24          plished within the cost and time constraints of Dis-  
25          covery.

1           (6) The New Horizons mission was the first  
2 mission launched under the New Frontiers program.

3           (7) The fastest spacecraft ever launched, the  
4 New Horizons mission successfully completed the  
5 first reconnaissance of the Pluto system.

6           (8) The exploration of outer space and the de-  
7 velopment of space sciences are in the national inter-  
8 ests of the United States.

9           (9) In order to maintain preeminence in space  
10 science and exploration, it is imperative that the  
11 next generation of explorers is inspired to study  
12 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics  
13 (STEM).

14           (10) NASA's science missions make unique con-  
15 tributions to education by sharing the story, the  
16 science, and the adventure of NASA's scientific ex-  
17 plorations through public outreach.

18           (11) One to two percent of the cost for each  
19 New Frontiers mission is allocated to education and  
20 public outreach activities that feature the science of  
21 the mission and its discoveries to enhance learning  
22 at all levels.

23           (12) Planetary sciences, including the New Ho-  
24 rizons mission, inspire students to study science, en-  
25 gineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM).

1 **SEC. 4. DIRECTION.**

2       The Administrator shall use observations, measure-  
3 ments, data, and discoveries derived from the New Hori-  
4 zons mission to—

5           (1) enhance public awareness and appreciation  
6       for space exploration and engage the public in the  
7       process of scientific discovery;

8           (2) communicate the importance of planetary  
9       science to students and teachers;

10          (3) advance domestic science, technology, engi-  
11       neering, and mathematics (STEM) education;

12          (4) promote mutually beneficial international  
13       scientific partnerships; and

14          (5) facilitate future progress in planetary  
15       science.

○