

The Department of Education has informed us that both schools are in good fiscal standing and that a statutory fix by Congress is necessary to ensure that the students at these two nursing schools can receive federal student aid again.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE).

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding. I will be brief.

I realize that this is simply an extension of the Second Higher Education Act, but I would like to make a couple of points here. This act authorizes Pell grants and student loan programs, which are so important to so many students to continue their education. As part of the reauthorization package that moved through the Education and Workforce Committee this year, I was pleased to offer an amendment that would allow the Secretary of Education to award Pell grants on a year-round basis.

We think this is very important because this would allow students to be eligible for Pell grants during summer enrollment. The reason this is important is that we are going to see a rather dramatic increase in college enrollment in coming years.

In over 36 years on the college campus, I saw some rather significant changes in the time that it took for people to graduate from college. When I started on the college campus in the 1960s, most people graduated in 4 years, 4½ years; and now a 5½- to 6-year graduation timetable is very, very common. As a result, with increasing enrollment and also this extended time period, we are putting greater and greater stress on the facilities in colleges and universities.

Therefore, we feel that allowing students Pell grants during the summer which will allow them to go to school year-round and maybe approximate a 4-year to 4½-year graduation time would be very important. I look forward to seeing a reauthorization of the Higher Education Act signed into law in 2006. However, for now we must extend the existing authorization, and therefore I support H.R. 4525.

I thank Chairman BOEHNER for bringing this legislation forward. I urge my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 4525 today.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, while I support this temporary extension of the Higher Education Act, I am very disappointed that we have not passed the full Higher Education Act reauthorization and once again we are passing an extension.

Higher Education is more important than ever to ensure America's economic prosperity, security, and health. Just as college has become essential to both individuals and society's success, college tuition has risen dramatically, causing students to take on high loan debt, \$17,000, on average; to work long hours that interfere with academic success

sometimes; or to forgo college altogether. Yet, Congress has failed to pass the Higher Education Act.

Now, one party controls the White House, the Senate, and the House; the same party. Yet, they have failed to pass a Higher Education Act. Where are the priorities? Congress seems to have no trouble passing tax cuts for the wealthy, but to provide opportunities for students to attend college does not seem to be a priority.

Mr. Speaker, the failure of the House to pass a higher education reauthorization is emblematic of this ineffective Congress. In past years, the Higher Education Act was one of the easiest to pass, one of the most bipartisan, a bill we could count on.

And with this temporary extension, we have missed many opportunities today. We could have increased the Pell grant and provided it year-round. We could have significantly increased aid to minority-serving institutions. We could have increased assistance to low-income and first-generation college students. We could have increased loan forgiveness. We could have eliminated origination fees on student loans. We could have provided child care for parents who are attempting to go back to college. We could have changed the student aid formulas for working students.

But, today, we pass a temporary extension. We have failed to do any of those things, and American college students and their parents are paying for Congress' failure.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4525, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1281, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the conference report on the Senate bill (S. 1281) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for science, aeronautics, exploration, exploration capabilities, and the Inspector General, and for other purposes, for fiscal years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of December 16, 2005, at page H12015.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the conference report on S. 1281.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for this important conference report, the first NASA authorization in 5 years. We take up this conference report at a critical time for the Nation's space policy as NASA is laying out the policies and seeking the funding to set its course for the next decade and a half.

This bill will give the agency clear guidance while giving Congress important new tools for oversight at this pivotal time.

□ 1745

Most important, I believe this bill in its very first section makes clear that NASA is to remain a multi-mission agency with robust programs in science and aeronautics, even as it moves ahead with the President's vision for space exploration, and the bill also makes clear unequivocal endorsement of that vision.

The bill also ensures that Congress will have the information it needs to guide and monitor NASA. It requires a multiyear plan for aeronautics and science so that all NASA programs have a clear and well-articulated path, and it requires plans for facilities and workforce so we can see what assets NASA will need to achieve its goals.

The bill prevents any layoffs from occurring before March 16, 2007. The bill requires updated information on the cost of the crew exploration vehicle before NASA awards a development contract, and it requires that NASA provide a range of cost estimates for the CEV, along with the potential impact of each of those estimates on other programs.

The bill applies a version of the Nunn-McCurdy rules to NASA. These rules will not only require NASA to notify Congress early on of any significant cost overruns but will require congressional action if a program breaches a specific gap. This may turn out to be one of the most important provisions of the bill.

The bill also gives NASA the authority it has been seeking to offer larger prizes to encourage a broad range of private sector scientists and engineers to help NASA meet specific technological goals, and the bill establishes a new account structure that will make it easier for Congress to track NASA spending and to ensure that money is spent for the programs intended.

Finally, the authorization levels in the bill make clear that NASA cannot possibly accomplish everything that is now on its plate with the funding it is currently projected to receive. I should add that, for me, the authorization levels do not mean that NASA necessarily

should receive the authorized amount for fiscal 2007. The appropriated level needs to take account of tradeoffs and what is available to other agencies, particularly to other science programs, but the authorization levels do clearly mean that NASA will need to either get more money or to forego or delay activities.

I need to say, right now, even though no one will want to hear it during this debate, that I do not think we should accelerate the crew exploration vehicle development unless key Federal science programs are adequately funded. Launching the CEV in 2014 rather than 2012 will not damage the country, but allowing the erosion of our scientific enterprise will cause real and significant damage, but that is a battle for next year.

Right now, we should all come together to endorse this conference report, which will give NASA needed authority and guidance and will give Congress tools and a context for future debates.

This bill represents a true compromise. For example, I am not fond of several of the provisions relating to the international space station, but they were reasonable elements of a negotiated package that represents the broad range of views of NASA in this Congress. We were able to pull together such a package because everyone was willing to be reasonable. That is a commodity, reasonableness, that oftentimes is lacking in this body.

I want to especially thank the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT) who sponsored this bill and who heads our Space Subcommittee, for his unlikely combination of persistence and cooperation. I also want to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) who were true partners in their efforts, and I want to thank all the conferees in both bodies for their openness and hard work. It was not easy but here we are.

This is a thoughtful, reasonable, bipartisan compromise, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I have a variety of speakers here who would like to speak on this bill, and so I am going to be very brief.

I first want to concur with Chairman BOEHLERT, who I think did a very good job in laying out the content of the bill and the spirit in which it was put together. I want to rise in strong support of the conference report for the NASA Authorization Act of 2005. This bill is a result of constructive bipartisan and bicameral negotiations regarding the future direction of NASA. The issues have been complex, but the conferees have approached them with an open mind and a willingness to compromise.

I think it is important for the authorizing committee with jurisdiction

over NASA programs to provide appropriate oversight and guidance to the agency, and I think this bill does that.

Of course, I am sure that each of us have additional provisions that we would have liked to have included as well as some that we would have preferred to drop, but nevertheless, I think this bill is a constructive compromise that will serve NASA and the Nation well.

NASA is facing significant challenges in the years ahead, not the least of which is budgetary outlays for the agency's programs. I think this bill is a constructive step to assist the agency in meeting those challenges, but success is going to require Congress's active involvement in the months and the years ahead.

Finally, before I close, I would like to express my thanks to my colleagues on the House side and, in particular Chairman BOEHLERT, Chairman CALVERT and Subcommittee Ranking Member UDALL for all the efforts they have made on behalf of this bill. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to our friends in the Senate for their bipartisan and bicameral spirit of cooperation they have brought to our negotiations, and certainly without the good staff work on our Science Committee, we would not be here today. It has been a pleasure to work with them to craft this conference report. I would also like to say, again, thanks to the House and Senate staff, as well as to the NASA personnel for their assistance in bringing the conference to a successful conclusion.

In closing, I believe this is a good conference report, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT), the distinguished chairman of the Space Subcommittee, a person who has worked very hard on this bill to bring it all together.

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman BOEHLERT for his leadership and guidance, for the great job in making sure that we are here today, and I certainly want to thank Ranking Member GORDON and Ranking Member UDALL for their leadership and support, also. I want to commend the Members of the Science Committee on both sides of the aisle for a job well done. I also want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) for his guidance and assistance and all his staff working together diligently for long hours to assure that this NASA authorization bill could be accomplished this year. This is the first time since the year 2000 that NASA has had an authorization bill and we have been able to complete it. This bill provides the agency with the rules and tools they will need to succeed.

This is a crucial time for the agency as it is going through a major transi-

tion. Our bill represents the first time that the President's Vision for Space Exploration has been fully endorsed by both Houses of Congress. When the President sends to Congress his budget for fiscal year 2007, today's backing by the Congress can only help us to increase the support for our Nation's civil space program and for the Vision for Space Exploration. We also seek equivalent strategic plans for aeronautics and science parts of the budget.

NASA represents only seven-tenths of 1 percent of the Federal budget and is an investment in our Nation's future. Even in this time of budget deficits, the United States cannot abandon NASA's research and technology and its exploration programs. It is not in the American spirit to shy away from this investment in our global leadership.

This bill also authorizes for the first time a competitive prize program at NASA based on the very successful X-Prize. This program will allow NASA to award prizes for those technologies that are useful for NASA's mission. This prize program will encourage our best and brightest scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs to pursue technologies that NASA will need to pursue our Nation's dreams of exploration.

I am pleased that we are doing a 2-year bill through 2008, and we in the Science Committee look forward to providing oversight and authorization appropriate when needed. I want to urge my colleagues to vote yes on this truly bipartisan conference report. We owe it to the administration, to our national space enterprise and to the American people to pass this NASA authorization bill this year.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), my partner and ranking member on the Space Subcommittee.

(Mr. UDALL of Colorado asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

I, too, join my colleagues in acknowledging the bipartisan nature of this very important conference report. I want to thank Chairman BOEHLERT and Chairman CALVERT on that side of that aisle for their leadership and for their good work and, as well, my ranking member on this side of the aisle, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON).

There are four key areas that I would just like to highlight in my remarks that are a part of this very important piece of legislation.

Number one, we beef up the aeronautics effort of NASA, and we make sure that crucial research and development work continue, and the effect it has on our domestic economy, which is very, very crucial.

Second, the Hubble telescope, we will do all we can under this legislation to service the Hubble telescope, and it has

truly become the people's telescope. It is known not only in the scientific community but to lay people on the street. It is a tremendous asset for us today, and it will be in the future.

Third, the legislation includes a piece of legislation I authored 4 years ago that deals with remote sensing data. That is the data that we are generating from the fleet of satellites that look down on the earth, and this data can be of great use to our cities, our towns, our counties and the private sector. The bill puts in place a grant program as well as increased access to that data so that it can be used by the American public.

Finally, there is a provision that further strengthens the space grant program that brings into the career paths of science and technology mathematics and engineering, those young people who will not only teach the students of the future but who will also come up with the great inventions and the new technologies and new understanding from our great efforts in space and in aeronautics.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is an excellent bill. I would like to commend it to our colleagues, and I rise in support of this important piece of legislation and would ask every Member to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for this conference report.

This report reflects the results of productive, bipartisan negotiations that began between House Republicans and Democrats and continued on with the Senate.

This is a good conference report, and I would like to thank all the Conferees and their staff who worked on this report. In particular, I would like to thank our Conference Committee Chairwoman KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, Chairman BOEHLERT, Ranking Member GORDON, and Subcommittee Chairman CALVERT.

I have been pleased to see how this group has come together to put together an authorization bill that enables NASA to take positive steps in each of its mission directorates. I believe that it provides an essential balance between NASA's core missions as well as a timely long-term policy direction for NASA as it embarks on the Moon/Mars initiative.

One of the strengths of this bill is that it highlights NASA's non-exploration related research and ensures that innovative work continues to be done in the Science and Aeronautics programs.

To ensure the continued health of each of NASA's core missions, it sets up a budgetary structure that separates NASA's human space flight and exploration accounts from its science, aeronautics, and education accounts—in effect, it erects a flexible “firewall” between the accounts.

Turning to some of the program-specific features of the conference report, I am pleased that it encourages NASA to take up three groundbreaking initiatives in subsonic, supersonic and rotor craft R&D under its Aeronautics program.

Progress in aeronautics is crucial to the health of the Nation's air transportation industry, which in turn is crucial both to the continued strength of our domestic economy and our international competitiveness.

That R&D also benefits our quality of life and enhances our national security. We need to encourage it, and this bill does just that.

In addition, while the new Exploration initiative at NASA has gotten the most public attention recently, NASA's science programs have continued to be some of NASA's “crown jewels”—generating discoveries that have been captivating the American public for decades.

For example, images from Hubble have helped us better understand our universe, but they also allow amateur astronomers of all ages to study the wonders of space.

In short, Hubble has truly become the peoples' telescope, and I am gratified that this bill calls for a mission to service Hubble to be scheduled and authorizes funding accordingly.

This bill also seeks to make sure that the scientific research on the International Space Station achieves its full potential by ensuring that both exploration and non-exploration related research is performed. Microgravity and life science research can help us better understand the affects of space on the human body, moving forward our efforts in human exploration beyond low Earth orbit.

It also has many applications here on Earth, and this bill ensures that the ISS will support diverse research goals by requiring that at least 15 percent of all research funds for the International Space Station are to be used for nonexploration related research such as ground-based, free-flyer, and ISS life and microgravity science research.

I believe it is important that we continue to encourage commercial involvement in our space missions, including through research initiatives. There are several partnerships existing between the science community and industry that perform research on the International Space Station.

This bill speaks to the need to preserve fundamental, applied, and commercial life sciences and other micro gravity research that allows commercial participation in the research performed on Station.

I would also like to highlight another title of this bill that will allow cities and municipalities better access to remote sensing data. Many cities in our country—including in my home state of Colorado—are faced with a real problem of excess growth and sprawl.

We now have technology—using geospatial data from satellites—that can produce very accurate maps that show information about vegetation, wildlife habitat, flood plains, transportation corridors, soil types, and many other things.

This bill includes provisions—based on legislation I had authored several years ago—that would establish in NASA a program of grants for competitively awarded pilot projects. The purpose of the pilot projects would be to explore the integrated use of governmental and commercial remote sensing data and other geospatial information to address state, local, regional, and tribal agency planning and decision-making needs.

State and local governments and communities can use geospatial information in a variety of applications—in such areas as urban land-use planning, coastal zone management and erosion control, transportation corridors, environmental planning, and agricultural and forest management. As I indicated, the provisions in this conference report will allow cities and municipalities access to such data from many available commercial sources, as well as from governmental sources.

Lastly, I would like to point out the NASA education programs authorized in this bill that

engage young students in space and earth science and encourage them to pursue science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and careers. It is no secret that the United States is falling behind in producing graduates in STEM disciplines. Through programs such as Space Grant, NASA is reaching out to students to provide a hands-on experience studying space-related fields.

As a nation we must do more to ensure our students are getting the science education they need to compete globally, and I believe these NASA programs are taking steps in the right direction to do this.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other provisions I could highlight, but in closing, I simply would like to say that I strongly believe that this is a good conference report. It is the product of open dialog and negotiations between Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate alike, and I am pleased that we were able to bring it to the floor today.

I would again like to thank my colleagues on the Conference Committee for their hard work to make this report a reality. This is the right policy for NASA and I urge members to support its passage.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY), another very distinguished member of the committee.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Chairman BOEHLERT and Chairman CALVERT and the respective ranking and minority Members.

We will recall in the aftermath of the *Columbia* accident, many of us on Capitol Hill and the space community observed the drift. America's human space program seemed to be adrift in terms of our space flight initiative and vision. The President responded with his vision which has now become America's vision.

The conference bill and the report provides unambiguous and bipartisan endorsement of America's Vision for Space Exploration. The direction of human space flight has now been set for future administrations and congresses. I look forward to progressing on this ambitious journey of exploration and science.

As we do move forward, Mr. Speaker, I hope we take to heart the *Columbia* accident investigation board's reminder and admonition that NASA “is an organization straining to do too much with too little.” As we work to provide NASA with a focused mission, including but not limited to human space flight, we need to avoid overloading and micromanaging this agency and its fine leader, Mr. Griffin.

With that, I thank the chairman for the time.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON).

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 1281, the NASA reauthorization bill of 2005. This important legislation will authorize appropriations for NASA for the fiscal years 2006 to 2010.

□ 1800

It provides guidance for the agency and encourages research, exploration, and education.

NASA is important to my State and to the Nation. It has been known for its leadership in space exploration, but I want to point out just a few of the numerous other benefits NASA research has brought to us.

Satellites allow instant access to information around the globe. Cell phones, cordless appliances, VELCRO, and Teflon all were developed through our space program.

NASA research has been an integral part of our Nation's military efforts as well. Satellite imagery and global positioning systems have been critical to helping our Armed Forces pinpoint the enemy in battle. Unmanned aerial vehicles allow us to see our enemies without putting our troops in harm's way.

Perhaps our greatest achievement has been in the field of medical science. In the late 1960s, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory developed digital imaging processing to better view the Moon. Similar technology is now used by doctors to view organs inside the body. CAT scans and MRIs are revolutionizing our ability to detect tumors early and save lives.

None of these technologies would be possible without NASA research. The NASA authorization bill is overdue, and I urge my colleagues to support it. I want to thank the leadership both in the House and the Senate for bringing us to this point.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), a long-time champion of NASA.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman BOEHLERT, Subcommittee Chairman CALVERT, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. GORDON. I just want to thank everyone in both Houses who worked on this conference report, especially the staff who has done such a fabulous job. And it is good that this is a strong bipartisan effort. Space is not Republican or Democrat, and I am very proud of the work that you did.

This conference report meets NASA's immediate and long-term needs and puts into place the policies needed for NASA to take its next giant step for mankind over the next 3 years, and that of course will not only make good on President Bush's Vision for Space Exploration; it will make good on the brave and brilliant capabilities of the men and women of our space program.

Specifically, the conference has wisely chosen to fully fund the space shuttle program and its 19 remaining missions; to fully fund the buildout and assembly of the international space station; and to fully fund the crew exploration vehicle.

To meet those vision-related challenges, the conference has also combined the space shuttle and its exploration activities accounts to provide NASA greater flexibility in deploying those resources; it calls for the elimi-

nation in any gap between the retirement of the shuttle and the deployment of the CEV, so that America is never voluntarily shut out of space.

It encourages NASA to tap the valuable knowledge of its highly experienced shuttle workforce in the development of the CEV, and it includes new authority for NASA to increase its visibility with a national public awareness campaign to articulate its exciting missions and publicize its tremendous accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, in this conference report, the first reauthorization in 5 years and the first since the President announced his vision, we have set NASA's course, relying on the courage and ingenuity of the NASA family to accomplish their mission by returning mankind to the Moon and sending us on to Mars.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee for yielding me this time, and I want to applaud the chairman of the full committee and the ranking member for their leadership and the work that they have done in working with all the Members for what I think will be a very large scientific statement for America.

I want to also thank the subcommittee ranking member and the subcommittee chair, as well, for their collegiality and their interest in moving NASA forward and the members who work on the committee and the subcommittee.

I am very pleased to congratulate all who have had a part, also the staff, in this great coming together of not only reinforcing our commitment to space exploration but a recognition of the need for balance in the Nation's budget.

I am very pleased to note the \$10 billion for exploration systems and space operations and the continuing support of the international space station. And might I also thank my colleagues for being very sympathetic to the language that we included that deals specifically with the question of safety and the language that was added that provides for a review of NASA's safety management as well as a report on the use and dissemination of best practices, and expanded whistle-blower protection that allows those employees of NASA to be able to report without concern of recrimination on the issue of safety and the issue of health.

Let me also thank my colleagues for accepting my language on creating the framework for a commission to investigate future U.S. space vehicle accidents as well as a task force to evaluate and report on international space safety.

Again, I am very pleased that the international space station has been declared a national laboratory, because it was this kind of research that found us new advances in HIV/AIDS, stroke, and other diseases.

And I guess my greatest appreciation is for the announcement of the Dr. Mae C. Jemison Grant Program to work with minority-serving institutions to bring more women of color into the field of space and aeronautics. Might I share with you that in a 2001 graph we saw that of the science and engineering doctorate holders 2.8 percent were black and 2.7 percent were Hispanic. And in engineering it was 1.8 percent black and 2.0 percent Hispanic. We want America's youth to find their way to engineering and the sciences. This program in the NASA organization will be a great step towards that.

Many of us remember Dr. Mae Jemison. She blasted into orbit aboard the space shuttle *Endeavour* on September 12, 1992, making her the world's first woman of color to go into space and the city of Chicago's first astronaut in U.S. history. As a young girl and teenager, she was always interested in science, especially astronomy, and was encouraged by her parents and teachers to pursue not only her science studies but also dance and art.

She went on to receive her bachelor of science in chemical engineering and a B.A. in Afro-American Studies from Stanford and her medical doctorate from Cornell University. She joined NASA in 1987.

Dr. Jemison was quoted in Newsweek as saying, "One of the things that I'm very concerned about is that as African Americans, as women, many times we do not feel we have the power to change the world and society as a whole." She certainly changed the world and society as a whole, along with Eileen Collins, who was one of the outstanding commanders that we had in the recent space flight.

I believe this legislation will move us forward; and I would like to thank James Williams, my staff, and all the staff for the great work they have done. I ask my colleagues to enthusiastically support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in complete support of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2005 which authorizes funding for NASA for fiscal years 2008 and 2009, and among other things gives Congressional endorsement to the Vision for Space Exploration and authorizes. Before continuing I would like to first thank Members on both sides of the aisle and their staffs for all the hard work that went into making this bill a success. I am also pleased to see that in light of the limited time we have remaining in the year; we were able to move quickly on this bill.

Let me take a moment to state that NASA is at a very pivotal moment in its history and therefore it is the responsibility of this Congress to ensure that the future of NASA is one of continued progress. After the tragic *Columbia* Space Shuttle accident the Science Committee and this Congress were forced to re-evaluate NASA's purpose. I have stated that safety must be the number one priority of NASA; however this should not deter NASA from pushing the boundaries of technology and discovery. I feel confident that this Reauthorization bill addresses both safety and discovery in a comprehensive manner.

I am also pleased to see that we were able to address a few issues of importance to me. Two of which are Whistleblower Protection for NASA employees and the creation of the Dr. Mae C. Jemison Grant Program to work with Minority Serving Institutions to bring more women of color into the field of space and aeronautics. In terms of Whistleblower Protections for NASA employees, it is important that we move forward in providing protection to NASA employees who present concerns about health and safety. During a hearing held in the Science Committee, Admiral Gehman and the Columbia Accident Investigation Board explained how fear of retaliation by management, had lead some engineers to stifle their concerns about the safety and well-being of NASA missions and crew. My Whistleblower language creates needed protections for NASA workers and sets forth certain specific reporting requirements for NASA. These two combined will help to bring about a safer and more productive NASA.

In terms of Dr. Mae C. Jemison, the language in this bill would create a grant program named in honor of Dr. Mae Jemison blasted into orbit aboard the space shuttle *Endeavour* on September 12, 1992 making her the world's first woman of color to go into space, and the city of Chicago's first astronaut in U.S. history. As a young girl and teenager she was always interested in science, especially astronomy, and was encouraged by her parents and teachers to pursue not only her science studies, but also dance and art. She went on to receive her Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering and a BA in Afro-American Studies from Stanford and her medical doctorate from Cornell University she joined NASA in 1987. Jemison continues to serve as a role model to women and African Americans. She told Newsweek, "One of the things that I'm very concerned about is that as African-Americans, as women, many times we do not feel that we have the power to change the world and society as a whole." With her life and accomplishments she has proven that idea truly wrong. While the bill only establishes the program, I look forward to working with appropriators when we return next year to fully fund this program.

Before closing, I am also pleased to see that the bill requires NASA's Administrator to establish an independent task force to review the International Space Station program with the objective of discovering and assessing any vulnerabilities of the International Space Station that could lead to its destruction, compromise the health of its crew, or necessitate its premature abandonment. The independent task force shall, to the extent possible, undertake the following tasks:

- Catalogue threats to and vulnerabilities of the ISS, including design flaws, natural phenomena, computer software or hardware flaws, sabotage or terrorist attack, number of crewmembers, inability to adequately deliver replacement parts and supplies, and management or procedural deficiencies.

- Make recommendations for corrective actions.

- Provide any additional findings or recommendations related to ISS safety.

- Prepare a report to the Administrator, Congress, and the public.

As I close and as a Member of the House Science Committee, I am honored to have been a part of this process and the successes achieved here today.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BOEHLERT for yielding me this time, and I commend him and Ranking Member GORDON for the hard work they did. It was a long process moving this piece of legislation through. I also want to commend Subcommittee Chairman CALVERT. I know he worked very hard on this.

It is now almost 2 years since President Bush first enunciated a vision to go back to the Moon and on to Mars; to develop a new space vehicle to replace the space shuttle. We in the House quickly recognized when the President put forward this ambitious plan, and it was a wonderful thing the President did in doing this, because many people felt it was the first time since Jack Kennedy's original call to go to the Moon by the end of the decade of the 1960s, that it was the first time since then that a President had boldly stood up and proclaimed a vision for NASA.

We knew then, Members of the House, that we would need new authorizing legislation, particularly for the process of retiring the space shuttle and bringing a new man-rated launch vehicle on line that would have the capability of carrying men and women into space.

This legislation is very important. It is very needed. Though I tend to focus mainly on the issues that pertain to the manned space flight program, as the representative of the area that includes Cape Canaveral and Kennedy Space Center, this legislation has important sections that deal with our Nation's critical investment in aeronautics research and science; and, therefore, it is critically important that we pass this legislation as we move forward next year.

The bill calls for additional funding for NASA in the 2006 appropriation, as well as 2007 and 2008, that will meet the critical needs for our Nation's aerospace industries and our manned space flight program in the years ahead. I commend the work of all those involved.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the NASA reauthorization act. I would like to begin by thanking those colleagues who worked so hard to create a bill that is beneficial to the Nation. Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member UDALL deserve thanks for their leadership in ensuring NASA remains well balanced and healthy. I want to thank Chairman FRANK WOLF for his support in this endeavor, and also Congresswoman DAVIS.

I also want to thank Mr. DELAY for his support in our efforts to maintain NASA in Cleveland. I would like to thank members of the Ohio delegation who worked with me to ensure the bill's success.

I want to stress that there is a lot that happens here where we have partisan conflict, but on this bill we had tremendous bipartisan support in the Ohio delegation, which included STEVE LATOURETTE, SHERROD BROWN, STEPHANIE TUBBS-JONES, MICHAEL TURNER, JEAN SCHMIDT, PAUL GILLMOR, TED STRICKLAND, DAVID HOBSON, MICHAEL OXLEY, STEVE CHABOT, MARCY KAPTUR, JOHN BOEHNER, PAT TIBERI, BOB NEY, TIM RYAN, DEBORAH PRYCE, RALPH REGULA, Senator DEWINE and Senator VOINOVICH, and in addition, ROB PORTMAN. We all worked together on this. Every one of us made an effort.

This is a landmark bill because it affirms that so much depends on a healthy NASA. A healthy NASA, in turn, depends on an emphasis in aeronautics in addition to an emphasis on space. This is critical to the economy.

Aeronautics contributes more to the U.S. balance of trade than any other U.S. manufacturing industry. NASA's aeronautics research is also critical to national security. It has spawned technologies from surveillance systems that monitor aircraft flight paths, to the development of secure communications systems. NASA's aeronautics research has contributed to aircraft safety, reducing wind shear and icing as major risks in airline travel.

In order to maintain their unparalleled track record, NASA first needs a road map for aeronautics, just as it had one for the Vision for Space Exploration. This bill provides that road map.

While the map is being drawn, NASA's aeronautics infrastructure must be preserved, starting with the world-class, award-winning workforce at NASA's field centers like NASA Glenn in Cleveland. This bill prevents involuntary reductions in force until at least March of 2007 and calls for a workforce shaping plan. It also provides necessary funding.

This bill further prevents reckless and semipermanent elimination of testing facilities, like wind tunnels and propulsion testing facilities, and encourages long-term basic research in areas like low-emissions and zero-emissions aircraft, microgravity, engine efficiency, and noise reduction. These are all tremendously beneficial to Ohio and the Nation.

This bill makes NASA more sustainable. It strikes a balance between space and aeronautics and ensures that NASA will continue to contribute to our economy, national security, airline safety, and the environment. It is a significant step forward for Ohio, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their support and their leadership on this matter.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, for the reasons just cited by my distinguished colleague from Ohio, I remain an enthusiastic supporter of a robust aeronautics program at NASA. It provides so much benefit to the U.S. economy.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL).

(Mr. HALL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I join in lauding the leaders, the chairman, the minority leaders, the subcommittee chairman, and everyone who has worked on this to hammer out this bill.

Investing in NASA not only keeps this country at the forefront of exploration and innovation but it is also vital to our economy and our national security. By investing less than 1 percent of the budget, we get exponential growth in scientific and technological spinoffs. From the development of MRI technology to microchips, the scientific partnerships between NASA and American universities and companies ensure our Nation's viability.

We need to keep America at the forefront of innovations and discovery for generations to come.

When President Bush announced the new Vision for Space Exploration in January 2004, I was excited to see that NASA had a new direction and focus for the future. Our ventures into space not only keep America at the forefront of exploration and innovation, but they also are vital to our economy and our national security. This new Vision sets America on a course toward the Moon and Mars, and we should embrace this dream and work to make it a reality.

Today's authorization act for NASA outlines the broad goals of this Vision. While it embraces the exploration agenda of the space agency, it also bolsters other vital NASA programs in science and aeronautics that keep America competitive globally.

This is a well-balanced bill, and I commend my colleagues and their staff for crafting such a fine piece of legislation. I am particularly pleased that the bill includes my provision that directs Administrator Griffin to develop a Crew Exploration Vehicle with a robust crew escape system. As we implement the new space vision, I will work to ensure that NASA fulfills this priority and minimizes the risks for our brave men and women who fly our space missions. Our hopes and dreams ride with them, and we must do all we can, at whatever cost is necessary, to ensure their safety.

I urge Members to pass this bill. With the Space Shuttle and International Space Station, America has proven its preeminence in Space. We need to keep America at the forefront of innovation and discovery for generations to come.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the House's poet laureate.

□ 1815

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, if someone had said some of the most fiscally, self-proclaimed, conservative members of the House were going to come to the floor and ask us to spend \$100 billion or \$200 billion on a nonessential project, people would have said, when pigs fly. Well, that is this bill. Did you see who got up to speak? Everybody who has got a NASA

facility. The pork is very much in this bill, but it is flying pork. So this is literally the occasion when pigs fly, at least in the nature of pork, when all of the representatives of the NASA places come up here.

Now, I agree with the gentleman from New York and my friend from Cleveland.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I yield briefly to my friend from Ohio.

Mr. KUCINICH. I just want to, for the record, state that I am a vegan. I do not consume pork.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. The gentleman may not consume pork, but he sure produces it.

The fact is that we are about to take up a continuing resolution that will make severe cuts in many, many important programs here on earth, and we will be told that the problem is the fiscal constraints. Members will lament the fact that we cannot adequately fund health care and environment and transportation and other things, and then we vote for a bill that says, as a binding policy, we are going to send a man to Mars. My friend from Missouri asks me, well, what happens when he gets there? Well, he comes back. That is why it is so expensive.

I agree about what was said about aeronautics; it is so important. I agree with space experimentation, primarily unmanned. But sending human beings to Mars, which this bill unfortunately endorses, is an extravagance; it is a psychological stunt. The amount of scientific gain you get comes from the aeronautics, from the unmanned space, even from some of the manned space in a more limited way. But when I first got here, we were told we had to do the space shuttle because we had to compete with the Soviet Union, and I did not think it was a good idea, the space station, not the space shuttle. Then the Cold War ended, and now we are told we have to keep doing the space station to cooperate with the Soviet Union. If we go a few more years, we will have to do it in memory of the Soviet Union.

There is a determination to spend far beyond any rational principle. I agree with much of what is here, but going to Mars? A country that faces the fiscal problems we face? We are quibbling, we are arguing over how well to protect New Orleans: Do we go to category 3 or category 4? But then in this parallel universe, we are going to spend \$200 billion to send men to Mars. Of course, you can tell it is a parallel universe; it is the one no one lives in; it is the one where they are willing to spend money.

So as you are told to accept the tough cuts that the gentleman from Wisconsin is going to outline when you vote for that CR and when you try to tell people back home, "I am sorry, I could not give you money for health care and for education and for the environment and for transportation," remember that you are mortgaging that

with this useless piece of flying pork of sending men to Mars.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my distinguished colleague from Massachusetts for his observations, and I wish to add to his comfort level. Because on page 5 of our report, it points out in section D: Enabling humans to land on and return from Mars and other destinations on a timetable that is technically feasible and fiscally possible.

As the gentleman well knows, my interest is in advancing the science agenda for the Nation. The good science that is part of the space vision does not guarantee a vehicle to go to Mars, it guarantees that good science goes forward.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BOEHLERT. I yield to my colleague from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentleman. And I have never been happier that it is the Hall of Fame and not NASA that is in Coopers-town.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me first inform my friend from Massachusetts that I have no NASA facility in or near my district, so I try to be an honest broker in this authorization. I will also point out, in this 2-year authorization, more than 99 plus percent of the authorization goes to non-Mars related issues. So I think we have tried to put a balance in here. As the chairman has pointed out and I have pointed out, we very much think that NASA needs to be a multi-mission agency with aviation, education and so many other things that are so important to this agency. For that reason, we put firewalls into this bill so that they cannot be poached for things that we think might be a lesser priority. So, hopefully, we will be able to reach that balance.

Let me also just finally say that I am sure that Spain had a very tough budget when Isabella decided that it was worthwhile to make an investment in Columbus. I think that when we look at these issues, certainly education, nutrition programs, all these things are important, and one can say even more important. But there needs to be a balance. We have tried to reach a balance that we think has been a responsible balance, and that is why it has been a bipartisan, bicameral approach.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee for yielding.

This is a bill that also focuses on science, and science has, over the years, been the economic engine of our Nation. The more we are at the cutting edge of science and the inventions that provide new opportunities for work, new opportunities for industry, we are

advancing the economic opportunities of Americans. That is what is within this bill in many, many instances, beyond where the NASA centers are located.

I want to thank, again, the chairman and the ranking member for working together and having the focus of this bill really be on science and all that we can produce through scientific research.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I will just close by saying that a purpose for having an authorization is a portion of oversight. And I think Mr. FRANK really has been beneficial for us in making us justify ourselves, making us have part of this oversight. It is a better bill, a healthier bill for that. I think it can live up to the scrutiny.

With that, I would like to yield to my friend from Missouri for some remarks.

Mr. SKELTON. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mark Twain once said: The more you explain it to me, the more I don't understand it.

I want to know where the Defense bill is; 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, we ended our conference. By 5 o'clock, we filed the necessary signatures, both the Senate and the House, and yet the Defense bill is not even on any calendar whatsoever. This is outrageous.

I understand the Republican leadership wishes to put some extraneous matter onto the bill. But the proper procedure was followed. It was a torturous, difficult, but a fair ending, and we signed the report. Yet, the Defense bill is not there, being held up for some extraneous misunderstanding, reason. I just don't understand it.

I want that Defense bill on the floor. The United States of America wants it on the floor. We have young men and young women in uniform all over this world, Afghanistan, Iraq, and yet we can't get the bill here that authorizes a pay raise, TRICARE for reservists, all the ammunition that they need, the medical care that we need, the policies set forth in the detainee language, all of this that has been worked out. Yet we don't have the bill. I don't understand it.

Please explain it to us and to the American people: Where in the world is the Defense bill, the authorization bill?

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON).

Mr. CULBERSON. Mr. Speaker, as a House Republican who, I believe my fiscal conservative ratings are typically among the top ten most conservative in the House; I have no NASA facilities in my district; and I am a passionate advocate for NASA, a strong supporter of this legislation, because I recognize the importance of investing in our Nation's future through investments and the scientific and technological innovations that only NASA and the space program have been able to produce for us. From the Blackberry on our belts, the microcomputers, the

computer chips on our office desks, to satellite technology and cell phone technology to medical technology, NASA has touched every one of our lives. I applaud the chairman and the leadership for bringing this bill to the floor, and it is very important that we get behind President Bush's vision, because only by investing in NASA and strengthening our investment in scientific and medical research will we maintain America's leadership role in the world.

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I again urge passage of this bill and yield the remainder of my time to my friend from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, just quickly, to follow up what Mr. SKELTON has talked about, the Defense authorization bill was signed, and here is what I read in CQ: "House Armed Services Chairman Duncan Hunter confirmed through a spokesman that he inserted the provision," this is totally extraneous, apparently, if that happened after the signatures, "at the behest of House leadership."

And this is a quote: "'Hunter reserves the right to support the leadership team,' said Harald Stavenas, his spokesman."

Get the authorization bill on the floor.

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the staff who have worked so diligently on this bill all year and who have been really on constant alert since the loss of the space shuttle *Columbia*. That staff includes David Goldston, John Mimikakis, Bill Adkins, Roselee Roberts, Tom Hammond, Ken Monroe, Johannes Loschnigg, Shep Bryan, Ed Feddeman, Christy Carles, as well as the minority staff, Chuck Atkins and Dick Obermann. They have been a team working together in common cause.

I would also be remiss if I did not thank Administrator Griffin and his staff, particularly Brian Chase, who are always available and who were willing to work to reach a compromise. And might I say how refreshing it has been to be so candid as Administrator Griffin has been. Administrator Griffin continues to do a superb job, and we hope this bill will help him do that job, even though, like all of us, he would not have written each provision the way we did. But in the final analysis, we have got a good bill that is worthy of the support of this House. We have got a good bill that is good for America because of the vitality it brings to the economy, and we have got a good bill because Democrats and Republicans worked it out together.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the conference report on the Senate bill, S. 1281.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof)

the rules were suspended and the conference report was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 863. An act to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centenary of the bestowal of the Nobel Peace Prize on President Theodore Roosevelt, and for other purposes.

S. 959. An act to establish the Star-Spanned Banner and War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission, and for other purposes.

S. 1310. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to allow the Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation to increase the diameter of a natural gas pipeline located in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, to allow certain commercial vehicles to continue to use Route 209 within Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and to extend the termination date of the National Park System Advisory Board to January 1, 2007.

S. 1312. An act to amend a provision relating to employees of the United States assigned to, or employed by, an Indian tribe, and for other purposes.

S. 1892. An act to amend Public Law 107-153 to modify a certain date.

CORRECTING ENROLLMENT OF S. 1281, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I offer a concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 324) directing the Secretary of the Senate to make a technical correction in the enrollment of S. 1281, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 324

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That in the enrollment of the bill (S. 1281) to authorize appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for science, aeronautics, exploration, exploration capabilities, and the Inspector General, and for other purposes, for fiscal years 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, the Secretary of the Senate shall correct the title so as to read: "An Act to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration."

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE REVISION ACT OF 2005

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the