

to fit a narrow, exclusionary narrative. This was more than an insult to the African-American community. It was an insult to America itself. It was an affront to every soldier, airman, sailor, and Marine who fought not just for our country but for the ideals upon which it stands.

The removal of these Department of Defense programs was a deliberate attempt to diminish the contributions of African Americans in the military and to erase the struggles they overcame in their fight for justice and equality.

Let this be a lesson. The power of the America people is stronger than any one administration. When this erasure was exposed, when the outrage of everyday citizens—not just Black, not just Brown, but White—demanded justice, the American people forced a reckoning with the United States Department of Defense and the President of the United States. Public outcry led to the reinstatement of the course honoring the Tuskegee Airmen.

Truth cannot be silenced, and history cannot be rewritten to serve the will of the few. We, the people, hold the power to safeguard our history. The legacy of Harold Brown and his daring, patriotic fellow airmen has been restored, not because those in power willingly chose to do so but because Americans of conscience refused to allow their contributions to ever be forgotten.

This is a testament to the enduring power of truth and justice and a reminder that each American must remain vigilant in protecting both truth and justice. As we honor Harold Brown today—and he never wanted honor. The entire community, most of whom were Caucasian like myself, came out. There was music and joy, and there was happiness in his memory.

We remember his service, but also we remember his fight. Let us carry forward his mission, not just in the skies but in every arena where justice is challenged, where history is threatened, and where the sacrifices of our ancestors and predecessors risk being erased.

We owe it to Harold Brown and his family. We owe it to the Tuskegee Airmen and their families. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations of the American family. Harold Brown and the Tuskegee Airmen of northern Ohio changed the world for the better, and so can we.

Mr. FIGURES. Mr. Speaker, as we bring this Special Order to a close, I again highlight the fact that the celebration of Black history is not a celebration of just a few individuals who did some notable things. Black history is about celebrating the faith that an entire people, an entire culture had and the potential of what this Nation could be: A faith that was unshakable. A faith in their God. A faith in this Nation. A faith that America could be America for them, too.

They held on to this. We still hold to it. Through the darkest days of this country, when Black people could lit-

erally only hold onto the security and four walls of a church, where they could sing hymns like "I Will Trust in the Lord" or "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior" or "Take My Hand, Precious Lord."

Precious Lord, take my hand
Lead me on, let me stand
I am tired, I'm weak, I am worn
Through the storm, through the night
Lead me on to the light.
That is where we come from.

I stand here before you just three generational lines removed from slavery, and I know that sounds crazy. That is how close we are from where we came from. The faith that my great-grandparents had at that same generational line, where we had people born in my family into slavery, to come just three generations, it is that same faith that leads me here. It is that same faith that led my father to break down those color barriers at an institution where just a few years before a Governor stood and declared that segregation today, segregation tomorrow, and segregation forever. It is that same faith that led him to apply to that law school where just a few years before his older brother applied and was told send us a picture. He refused to do so.

We celebrate that faith. We celebrate that resilience, that resolve, that perseverance. That is what Black History Month is about, and that is why we continue to hold on to that faith, because we, too, believe that America is still America for us, too. It is America for all of us.

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

SPACE DOMINANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HARIDOPOLOS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues, in fact, the freshmen Members of Congress, to reach far beyond party lines, beyond State borders, and even beyond our planet. It affects every American, shaping our economy, our security, and our future. I am talking about space.

As President Trump said, you can't be number one on Earth if you are number two in space. I am going to yield to our senior Member of the freshman class this year, VINCE FONG.

Congressman FONG represents the 20th District of California. He is on the Transportation and Infrastructure

Committee, as well as the Science Committee, specifically serving on the Space and Aeronautics Committee. He proudly represents the Central Valley of California.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. FONG).

Mr. FONG. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague from Florida (Mr. HARIDOPOLOS) for leading this Special Order today about the importance of America leading in aerospace and aviation.

My district in California encompasses a number of military, space, and aerospace facilities, including Naval Air Station Lemoore, Edwards Air Force Base, Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center, and the Mojave Air and Space Port.

We are known for our innovation and research and continuing to push the boundaries of space exploration and our rich legacy in this industry.

□ 2030

Dating back to almost a century ago, Chuck Yeager became the first person to break the sound barrier in 1947 as a test pilot for what is now Edwards Air Force Base.

During World War II, the Mojave Air & Space Port was used as a training facility for the United States Marine Corps, and the Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake was established for research, testing, and evaluation of military weapons.

In the 1950s, NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center was the location where many of the technologies for Project Apollo were tested, including where the lunar landing research vehicle was flown in the 1960s in preparation for the historic American Moon landing.

With a deep, embedded history in the aerospace industry, my region continues to defy odds, make historic discoveries, and innovate for the future.

As we see our foreign adversaries like Russia, China, and Iran increasing their space technology efforts, it is critical that we stay ahead of the curve to ensure we stay at the cutting edge of technologies.

This is one of the reasons why I introduced the Making Advancement in Commercial Hypersonics Act, also known as the MACH Act. This legislation authorizes the establishment of the MACH program at NASA and allows NASA to support scientific experiments through high-speed flights.

In order to stay competitive in hypersonics technology, we must fully utilize public-private partnerships, like I have in my district, to advance this necessary technology. East Kern County is making great strides not only for our community but also for our Nation.

The MACH program builds on successes we have already seen in commercial spaceflight and lays the groundwork for urgent, necessary advancements to keep our competitive edge as a nation.

The MACH legislation was included in the NASA Reauthorization Act of 2024 and passed the House last Congress. I look forward to this reintroduced legislation passing and getting signed into law this Congress so we can continue to innovate and grow in America.

In addition to national defense efforts, the aerospace industry continues to assist with our emergency responses in our Nation.

Earlier this year, we saw wildfires devastate my home State of California. Unfortunately, this is something that we know all too well in my community. Wildfires continue to ravage every part of California. Unfortunately, fire season is now all year long, and we must take advantage of the technologies available to try to fight these terrible tragedies.

The Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations Act, also known as the ACERO Act, which I introduced earlier this year, authorizes NASA to leverage the use of drones to fight wildfires. This project is especially helpful when there is low visibility, heavy smoke, or unsafe conditions for our firefighters to fly. This piece of legislation is lifesaving not only to help stop these wildfires, which have devastated communities, but also to assist our brave firefighters.

There are not enough thanks to give to our selfless firefighters and first responders in times of natural disaster. We should help them fight these fires by passing legislation to give them additional tools.

The aerospace industry does so much for our country, from assisting in national defense to helping in natural disasters to improving the way we travel. As we continue to innovate and grow, it is crucial to acknowledge the many advancements we continue to make.

Our work is just getting started in space as a Nation, and here in Congress we are committed to seeing strides of advancement to make our Nation dominant in new and advancing technology.

As we look to the future, I see my district continuing to make history in the aerospace industry with its innovation and exploration efforts.

Recently in my district, Boom Supersonic completed the first successful civil supersonic flight at Mojave Air and Space Port, making supersonic flight technology usable for all Americans.

In addition, in December, Stratolaunch made history with its first fully reusable hypersonic flight test of the Talon-A 2 vehicle off the coast of Vandenburg, which took off from the Mojave Air and Space Port, signifying a new era of hypersonic flight technology, where traveling at faster speeds may soon become a reality.

These important advancements for America show that my community will continue to be a national leader in the aerospace industry.

I again commemorate all of the great work being done in my community. The Nation thanks you. We have more advancements ahead being developed in California's aerospace valley. I look forward to a future of growth and innovation with California's 20th Congressional District in the forefront.

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, next we have, from the great State of Alaska, the at-large Member from Alaska, Congressman Nick Begich, who is on the Natural Resources Committee, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, as well as the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH).

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an issue of national importance: Our commitment to space exploration and Alaska's vital role in securing America's presence in space.

Space exploration drives innovation, strengthens our economy, and enhances national security. The investments we make today will shape our future strength and prosperity as a Nation.

Alaska, the Last Frontier, is well positioned to play a key role in our Nation's space operations. Alaska's unique geographic position gives it a crucial edge in space surveillance, missile defense, satellite communications, and launch capabilities.

With a high-latitude polar launch capability and vast, remote terrain, my State offers unparalleled advantages for both government and commercial space initiatives. The Pacific Spaceport Complex-Alaska, or PSCA, on Kodiak Island is at the forefront of these efforts as a premier launch site that plays a critical role in America's space strategy.

Alaska's geostrategic location in the Arctic makes it an indispensable asset in America's national defense and global power projection. As the closest U.S. State to both Russia and China, Alaska provides unparalleled access to the Arctic, a region rapidly growing in economic and military significance.

With shifting ice patterns opening new maritime routes, control over Arctic air and sea lanes is critical to maintaining U.S. strategic interests. Alaska's military installations, missile defense systems, and space infrastructure collectively form a cornerstone of national security, ensuring America's readiness in this increasingly contested region.

The Pacific Spaceport Complex-Alaska is one of four of the country's few fully operational, federally licensed spaceports capable of delivering payloads to orbit. Managed by the Alaska Aerospace Corporation, its remote location provides a strategic advantage, reducing risks to populated areas and offering access to vital polar and Sun-synchronous orbits. This capability is essential for Earth observation, climate monitoring, missile defense, and reconnaissance missions.

Unlike other launch sites in the lower 48, Alaska's spaceport benefits from minimal air traffic congestion and robust launch windows, enabling greater efficiency and mission success.

This spaceport is designed to be highly adaptable and can accommodate a wide range of launch vehicles, from small satellites to larger payloads. Its infrastructure includes multiple launch pads, a state-of-the-art range control center, and cutting-edge telemetry capabilities. Furthermore, the PSCA is a key contributor to economic development in Alaska, creating jobs, fostering technological advancements, and attracting investment from domestic and international space companies.

The Alaska Aerospace Corporation was established in 1991 by the Alaska Legislature and has been instrumental in advancing the State's role in space operations. As the operator of the PSCA, Alaska Aerospace provides critical infrastructure and space launch capabilities that support both government and commercial launches, reinforcing our Nation's ability to remain at the forefront of space innovation.

Additionally, Clear Space Force Station near Fairbanks is pivotal in space situational awareness and missile defense. This facility is crucial for tracking objects in orbit, ensuring that America maintains a vigilant eye on potential threats and space debris that could endanger critical infrastructure. These efforts are vital to protecting our Nation's interests and maintaining a leading presence in space.

The potential benefits of Alaska's growing space sector align with our Nation's security and technological advancement initiatives. The Pacific Spaceport Complex-Alaska holds an incredible opportunity for dominance in space. The industry in my State has created many high-paying jobs in engineering, aerospace technology, and infrastructure.

These positions offer competitive salaries and career stability, attracting top talent and fostering a skilled workforce in Alaska. Moreover, the increased investment in space operations has generated economic ripple effects, benefiting local businesses, housing markets, and service industries.

Alaska's role in space operations is poised for even more significant expansion. The State's infrastructure is uniquely positioned to support the next wave of advancements in space travel, including reusable launch vehicles, hypersonic testing, and deep-space exploration.

As commercial companies like SpaceX continue to push the boundaries of what is possible, Alaska stands ready to provide essential launch services that will further our Nation's ambitions beyond Earth's orbit.

Reducing dependence on foreign space infrastructure is a matter of national security and economic sovereignty. For too long, the United States has relied on foreign launch

services and satellite capabilities, leaving critical assets vulnerable to geopolitical uncertainty. Increasing the use of Alaska's space infrastructure will ensure that our national security interests, commercial enterprises, and scientific missions remain independent and protected from foreign influence.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot discuss the future of space without acknowledging the transformative impact of private industry. Companies like SpaceX and other commercial aerospace pioneers have revolutionized space travel by making launches more affordable and frequent. With its strategic location and state-of-the-art infrastructure, Alaska offers an ideal partner for these enterprises. The Pacific Spaceport Complex-Alaska provides the logistical support, safety advantages, and launch capabilities to advance commercial expansion and national security objectives.

As global competition in space intensifies, our ability to support our Nation's space-based assets has never been more crucial. We must continue to invest in these capabilities, expand our launch infrastructure, and ensure that our space assets in Alaska remain at the cutting edge of technology. Whether it is weather forecasting, global communications, or national defense, our reliance on space assets grows every day. The work done in Alaska ensures that America remains a leader in this critical domain.

Mr. Speaker, space is the next great frontier, and America cannot afford to fall behind. We must continue to invest in our space infrastructure, foster private-sector innovation, and recognize Alaska's strategic significance in maintaining international leadership.

Let us, in this 119th Congress, reaffirm our commitment to space exploration, national security, and economic prosperity, ensuring that Alaska and the United States remain the undisputed leaders in this critical domain.

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BEGICH for his thoughtful words.

I next will introduce the Congressman from the Third Congressional District in Utah. Congressman KENNEDY is one of the few legislators in Washington who has both a medical degree and a law degree. He is a former Utah State Senator, he is the proud father of eight, and he will speak tonight on the issue of space and its importance in his district.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Florida, our new chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, for inviting me to join him tonight. I am excited to join him as a new member on the subcommittee and highlight Utah's exciting role in the future of space exploration.

When we think of iconic American places associated with NASA, Houston and Cape Canaveral come to mind, but

I am here to tell you tonight, Mr. Speaker, that Utah should be added to that list. While Utah has played a pivotal role in the history of NASA since the dawn of the space age in the mid-20th century, we are fast moving into a starring role.

We stand at the crossroads of an exciting new era in space exploration. Utah, known for our pioneering spirit, is poised to play a critical role in shaping the future of space. From producing cutting-edge technology to visionary companies, Utah is helping propel humanity into the next frontier.

Utah is also the proud home of the Dugway Proving Ground in the west desert, which has become a prime landing location for returning space missions.

I want to highlight one of the most pivotal players in Utah's contribution to space exploration, Northrop Grumman, which has more than an 80-year history in the State. The global aerospace and defense leader has become a cornerstone of America's space ambitions.

Northrop Grumman's state-of-the-art facilities in Utah are central to the development of solid rocket boosters for some of the most ambitious missions we have ever embarked upon. These boosters are key to propelling spacecraft, like NASA's Space Launch System, which is set to carry astronauts deeper into space than ever before, including the planned missions to the Moon under the Artemis program and eventually to Mars.

The combined economic footprint of Utah's space-related businesses, along with those in the aerospace, defense, and advanced materials sectors, already account for 20 percent of our annual GDP, and the space segment is among the fastest growing within that combined category, according to Aaron Starks, former chief revenue officer for World Trade Center Utah and now 47G's president and CEO. He said: "I think and firmly believe that Utah's future will be shaped more by this industry than any other."

Northrop Grumman's solid rocket boosters are integral to the success of space programs that will shape the future of exploration. These powerful boosters provide the thrust necessary to lift spacecraft into orbit, and their innovation is a testament to Utah's growing influence in space technology. The company's Utah facilities, including those in Promontory, have been producing these boosters for decades, and they are renowned for their precision, reliability, and power. With the capabilities of these solid rocket boosters, missions that were once the stuff of dreams are becoming a reality.

In January of last year, two of Northrop Grumman's extended, 63-inch-diameter Graphite Epoxy Motors, more commonly known as GEM 63XL solid rocket boosters, helped power the inaugural flight of United Launch Alliance's Vulcan rocket in the first certification mission.

□ 2045

The GEM 63XL boosters are the longest monolithic, single-cast solid rocket boosters ever manufactured and flown. The boosters delivered more than 900,000 pounds of thrust, nearly two-thirds of the vehicle's total thrust at liftoff.

It is not just about technology. It is about what this technology enables. Northrop Grumman's advancements in propulsion have opened up incredible possibilities for deep-space exploration, including human missions to the Moon and Mars, asteroid mining, and future scientific discoveries beyond our current cognitive capabilities.

Each launch of a rocket booster is not just a moment of technological achievement; it is a step closer to answering the big questions about our place in the universe and the potential for future generations to reach the stars.

Utah is developing a future built on innovation and collaboration. The State is becoming a hub for aerospace innovation, with new startups and established companies like Northrop joining the effort to advance technologies that will transform space travel. Whether it is satellite development, propulsion systems, or mission planning, Utah is becoming a vital piece of the puzzle.

Northrop Grumman has sought to form partnerships and tap into expertise in Utah's colleges and universities, and the company has worked with students and faculty at the University of Utah, Weber State University, Utah State University, Brigham Young University, and Bridgerland Technical College in Logan.

Top-tier research institutions Brigham Young University, the University of Utah, and Utah State University are preparing the next generation of engineers, scientists, and innovators who will take the torch from us and continue driving humanity's exploration of space.

With these resources, the State's workforce is uniquely positioned to lead in areas that complement Northrop Grumman's work, creating a synergy that ensures the continued success of space missions.

Utah State University boasts one of the longest histories of connections to space technologies with the establishment of Electro-Dynamics Laboratories in 1959. It would later join forces with the University of Utah's Upper Air Research Laboratory to form the Logan-based Space Dynamics Laboratory in the early 1980s.

Utah universities have also been big contributors to the NASA-sponsored BIG Idea Challenge to power the Artemis program forward. The 2024 BIG Idea team was from Brigham Young University, and they developed an untethered and modular inflatable robot for lunar operations.

In 2023, we had a BIG Idea team from the University of Utah that won first place overall as the Artemis Award

Winner with their development of the “Production of Steel from Lunar Regolith through Carbonyl Iron Refining” project.

As the space industry continues to grow and evolve, Utah is at the heart of it all, leading through ingenuity, collaboration, and unwavering dedication to the future.

Mr. Speaker, I say to my good friend from Florida that his Space Coast district might be where the rockets are launched, but they wouldn't get off the ground without Utah's ingenuity.

As we look toward the stars and the limitless possibilities of the cosmos, it is clear that Utah's contribution to space exploration will be integral. From Northrop Grumman's groundbreaking solid rocket boosters to the innovation happening across our State, Utah is not only playing a role in the future of space exploration, but it is helping to define it.

The work that is being done here today will shape the course of humanity's future and space for generations to come. Together, we are laying the foundation for the next great leap in human exploration.

Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentleman from Florida for this Special Order tonight. I greatly look forward to working with him to make sure NASA is in a position to return to the Moon and take the next step of planting the Stars and Stripes on Mars.

Mr. HARIDOPOLOS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind words and, more importantly, his efforts in Utah to promote the industry and make sure we have American dominance in space.

As was mentioned, I am proud to be the new chairman of the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics. It is not only imperative to our district but to the Nation for so many different reasons.

I think the chart behind me is really telling the story about America today. Just a few short years ago, we ceded space dominance to other nations. We actually had to get a ride to space from, of all people, our former adversary, Russia. Here we are today, as you look at this graph, with, last year alone, 155 launches into space, 93 from the Kennedy Space Center in my home district. We are well on our way toward space dominance, and we are not slowing down.

In 2025 alone, 26 additional flights have left our skies and, of course, are orbiting around our world today, providing the telecommunications necessary not only for commercial use but for military use, as well, to make sure that our men and women are protected when GPS is essential.

Tonight, we will have yet another launch into the sky as SpaceX is propelling this movement forward.

As we recognize, space is important for our economy, infrastructure, and national defense. It enables modern life, from powering GPS communications to weather forecasting, artificial

limb technology, solar cells, fire-resistant fabrics, and even medical imaging and biotechnology.

Space is research and development, and space is a return on investment. The latest estimates have a 10-1 return for taxpayers when we lead the world in space and innovative technology.

We have been in this space race before. Everyone can ask their parents, or maybe a few of us in the Congress, to know that 1969 was a life changer for so many people. When you ask those folks alive in 1969 what it was like to see a man on the Moon, Neil Armstrong, making that famous proclamation, it was a game changer. We proved that anything is possible here in America. We moved forward from that with shuttle technology and, more recently, with some of the amazing advancements with SpaceX.

We are in a new space race today, unfortunately, with another communist dictatorship, that being China. The question is: Will we win that space race once again? I am confident we will do so for one simple reason: Our President is confident we can accomplish this.

Remember, our President literally created the Space Force. He is a true believer. Back in 2019, he created the Space Force because he knew that space dominance would allow us to not only improve technologically but make sure that our men and women in the military are protected.

We are confident that Artemis II, which is scheduled to go off in early 2026, will propel us to the Moon once again and beyond. We like to say: From the Lagoon to the Moon and Beyond. That is our slogan back in the Eighth District of Florida, and we are confident that that will be a reality.

It is about leadership. It is about job security. It is about economic security. It is about military security and making sure that we make the next innovations and reach the next frontier. Dominance means not just military, but it also means jobs and a brighter future for so many.

When you talk about jobs in the space industry, it is not a job to so many; it is a career. The dedicated folks at NASA are moving forward with these new technologies. They are working hand-in-hand in public-private partnerships with companies like SpaceX, Blue Origin, Rocket Lab, Boeing, L3Harris, and so many others, along with Northrop Grumman, to make sure that we are dominant in space so that we do not take second place in space and lose that technological dominance, which is so necessary to win this latest cold war.

Just a few years ago, we were playing catch-up. As I mentioned before, we were literally relying on the Russians to get our men and women off to the space station. Now, since 2016, we have moved forward, and as this graph shows behind me, we are once again space-dominant. It is again the great American comeback, and we are moving beyond it today.

In just a few weeks, we will see the SpaceX Dragon making sure that our men and women on the space station are returned back to Earth. More and more companies are developing space technologies so we can have satellites and space infrastructure, keeping ahead of our global competitors.

We cannot be complacent. Just because we lead today does not mean it is permanent. We must defend ourselves against China and Russia, which are not standing still. They are major competitors, and they are making important investments in trying to militarize space, despite the treaty from 1967. We must innovate. We must invest. We must push forward to keep our strong position today.

Sadly, China especially does not play by the rules. Just a few years ago, they literally on purpose created a collision that has led to so much space debris around our Earth today. We must use our technology for missile detection, surveillance and reconnaissance, and global communications to stay ahead of this communist dictatorship.

Fortunately, the U.S. Space Force, which, as I mentioned, was established in 2019, maintains our dominance and ensures that we are going to develop hypersonic defense, space-based missile interceptors, and AI-driven surveillance to keep us ahead of those adversaries. We cannot afford to fall behind because the price of inaction is just too high.

The economy of space has also grown dramatically over the last few years. In 2022 alone, it added \$132 billion to the U.S. GDP. It is projected that, by 2040, it will be over \$1 trillion, creating 350,000 private-sector jobs across multiple fields, including launch technicians, software developers, engineers, researchers, construction, and manufacturing everything from satellites to heat shields.

Space is not only a source of innovation but also a pillar of the American economy, fueling growth in both high-tech and blue-collar industries, as I mentioned.

Small businesses are also benefiting from this emergence. Just a few weeks ago, I had the honor of visiting a small company called Eta Space. It is a company in my district that employs 20 people, but they are having a massive impact on the changing space world. They developed a satellite that will experiment with cryogenic fuels in orbit, a key technology for orbit refueling. This innovation will pave the way for long-distance space travel, making missions to Mars and beyond more viable and more cost effective.

I might mention, as a member of the Financial Services Committee, which our Speaker is today, as well, this is an example of community banks. It was a community bank that allowed Eta Space to get the financing they needed to put this project together and lead the technological development we need to go to Mars in the future. Despite their small size, they are launching

their satellite this year, a testament to the power of American ingenuity.

These public-private partnerships are key. It is not just a government program. Companies like SpaceX, Rocket Lab, and Blue Origin have dramatically reduced launch costs and are saving taxpayers billions. These firms work alongside NASA and the Department of Defense, proving that the private industry of America can be a powerful force in advancing the United States' space leadership. Their success creates jobs, strengthens our national security, and keeps America at the forefront of the global space race.

Commercial space is the free market revolution. If you haven't already done so, read the recent book by Isaacson about Elon Musk. He basically looked at NASA, saw some of the challenges they faced after the Apollo program, the cancellation of our shuttle program, and even the challenges we face in the ARIES program, which was canceled, the Constellation program, which was canceled, and the X-33 program, and he said we can do it better at a better cost and win the space race. Commercial space is the future as they work in partnership with NASA.

□ 2100

Before SpaceX, launch costs were prohibitively high with a single mission costing hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Falcon 9 rocket, with its reusable booster system, has slashed costs by a factor of 10. This cost reduction has made space more accessible, spurring new industries, as I mentioned before, like satellite internet, space-based manufacturing, and even orbital tourism.

There are more players and more innovation. The Blue Origin New Glenn rocket launched recently; Rocket Lab's Electron rocket, future markets—space manufacturing, asteroid mining, and orbital energy production are all emerging technologies.

When these companies compete and innovate, they drive down costs for everyone and, more importantly, will have on-Earth benefits.

One of the issues that people have asked me about is this issue of rural broadband. For those who don't know, this is a program that has been allocated over \$40 billion so that everyone, not just a select few in higher urban areas, can enjoy high-speed internet access. This program, which is allocated over \$40 billion, is one which takes time, because as everyone knows who is in business, you need to get the permits. It takes a while to get the rights-of-way purchased, and it takes a while to lay that cable for high-speed internet access.

With the new Starlink system which SpaceX is launching up now, this can be not only at lower cost but, more importantly, can get to market faster so that every American can enjoy the access to high-speed internet. It will save us billions so that we can not only pay

down the debt but also afford the tax cuts which Americans deserve.

In conclusion, we are in the golden age of American spaceflight. We are witnessing a true renaissance of space exploration where the future is literally being built today.

I don't know what is next. There are stories about mining asteroids for rare-earth metals to support global industries; large commercial space stations that can replace the ISS and host research; permanent human habitation on the Moon laying the foundation for deeper space travel; and the human exploration and the settlement of Mars, an achievement that will truly define this century.

These are not science fiction novels. These are active projects by American companies, American scientists, and American engineers bringing in the golden age of American spaceflight.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the urgency of action is now. America's leadership in space is hard-earned, but it is not guaranteed. Our economy, our technological future, and our national security all depend on continued space investment.

Congress must act to ensure that the United States remains the leader in the final frontier. This is our moment. If we invest in space today, then we will be stronger, safer, and more prosperous for generations to come.

As I conclude, as the President said well: You can't be number one on Earth if you are not number one in space.

Mr. Speaker, I especially thank Congressman FONG, Congressman BEGICH, and Congressman KENNEDY for joining me tonight.

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

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2025.

Hon. MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2(a)(2) of House rule XI, the Committee on Ways and Means adopted its rules for the 119th Congress on January 14, 2025, and I submit them now for publication in the Congressional Record.

Sincerely,

JASON SMITH,
Chairman.

A. GENERAL

RULE 1. APPLICATION OF HOUSE RULES

The rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Ways and Means and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, is a non-debatable motion of high privilege in the Committee.

Each subcommittee of the Committee is part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee

and to its rules so far as applicable. Written rules adopted by the Committee, not inconsistent with the Rules of the House, shall be binding on each subcommittee of the Committee.

The provisions of rule XI of the Rules of the House are incorporated by reference as the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

RULE 2. MEETING DATE AND QUORUMS

The regular meeting day of the Committee on Ways and Means shall be each Wednesday while the House is in session. However, the Committee shall not meet on the regularly scheduled meeting day if there is no business to be considered.

A majority of the Committee constitutes a quorum for business; provided however, that two Members shall constitute a quorum at any regularly scheduled hearing called for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence. In establishing a quorum for purposes of a public hearing, every effort shall be made to secure the presence of at least one Member each from the majority and the minority.

The Chair of the Committee may call and convene, as he or she considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet pursuant to the call of the Chair.

RULE 3. COMMITTEE BUDGET

For each Congress, the Chair, in consultation with the Majority Members of the Committee, shall prepare a preliminary budget. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee. After consultation with the Minority Members, the Chair shall include an amount budgeted by Minority Members for staff under their direction and supervision.

RULE 4. PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE DOCUMENTS

Any Committee or Subcommittee print, document, or similar material prepared for public distribution shall either be approved by the Committee or Subcommittee prior to distribution and opportunity afforded for the inclusion of supplemental, minority or additional views, or such document shall prominently display near the top of its cover the following: "Majority [or Minority] Staff Report," as appropriate.

The requirements of this rule shall apply only to the publication of policy-oriented, analytical documents, and not to the publication of public hearings, legislative documents, documents which are administrative in nature or reports which are required to be submitted to the Committee under public law. The appropriate characterization of a document subject to this rule shall be determined after consultation with the Minority.

RULE 5. OFFICIAL TRAVEL

Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolution as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern official travel of Committee Members and Committee staff. Official travel to be reimbursed from funds set aside for the full Committee for any Member or any Committee staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chair. Official travel may be authorized by the Chair for any Member and any Committee staff member in connection with the attendance at hearings conducted by the Committee, its Subcommittees, or any other Committee or Subcommittee of the Congress on matters relevant to the general jurisdiction of the Committee, and meetings, conferences, facility inspections,