

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

In subsec. (b), “section 70501(a) of title 51” substituted for “section 501(a) of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16761(a))” on authority of Pub. L. 111–314, §5(e), Dec. 18, 2010, 124 Stat. 3443, which Act enacted Title 51, National and Commercial Space Programs.

AMENDMENTS

2017—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 115–10 amended subsec. (a) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “It is the policy of the United States that reliance upon and use of non-United States human space flight capabilities shall be undertaken only as a contingency in circumstances where no United States-owned and operated human space flight capability is available, operational, and certified for flight by appropriate Federal agencies.”

§ 18312. Goals and objectives**(a) Long-term goals**

The long-term goals of the human space flight and exploration efforts of NASA shall be—

- (1) to expand permanent human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and to do so, where practical, in a manner involving international, academic, and industry partners;
- (2) crewed missions and progress toward achieving the goal in paragraph (1) to enable the potential for subsequent human exploration and the extension of human presence throughout the solar system; and
- (3) to enable a capability to extend human presence, including potential human habitation on another celestial body and a thriving space economy in the 21st Century.¹

(b) Key objectives

The key objectives of the United States for human expansion into space shall be—

- (1) to sustain the capability for long-duration presence in low-Earth orbit, initially through continuation of the ISS and full utilization of the United States segment of the ISS as a National Laboratory, and through assisting and enabling an expanded commercial presence in, and access to, low-Earth orbit, as elements of a low-Earth orbit infrastructure;
- (2) to determine if humans can live in an extended manner in space with decreasing reliance on Earth, starting with utilization of low-Earth orbit infrastructure, to identify potential roles that space resources such as energy and materials may play, to meet national and global needs and challenges, such as potential cataclysmic threats, and to explore the viability of and lay the foundation for sustainable economic activities in space;
- (3) to maximize the role that human exploration of space can play in advancing overall knowledge of the universe, supporting United States national and economic security and the United States global competitive posture, and inspiring young people in their educational pursuits;
- (4) to build upon the cooperative and mutually beneficial framework established by the ISS partnership agreements and experience in

¹ So in original. Probably should be “century.”

developing and undertaking programs and meeting objectives designed to realize the goal of human space flight set forth in subsection (a); and

(5) to achieve human exploration of Mars and beyond through the prioritization of those technologies and capabilities best suited for such a mission in accordance with the stepping stone approach to exploration under section 70504 of title 51.

(Pub. L. 111–267, title II, §202, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2812; Pub. L. 115–10, title IV, §§411, 412, Mar. 21, 2017, 131 Stat. 33.)

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AMENDMENTS

2017—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 115–10, §411, amended subsec. (a) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “The long term goal of the human space flight and exploration efforts of NASA shall be to expand permanent human presence beyond low-Earth orbit and to do so, where practical, in a manner involving international partners.”

Subsec. (b)(5). Pub. L. 115–10, §412, added par. (5).

§ 18313. Assurance of core capabilities**(a) Sense of Congress**

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the ISS, technology developments, the current Space Shuttle program, and follow-on transportation systems authorized by this chapter form the foundation of initial capabilities for missions beyond low-Earth orbit to a variety of lunar and Lagrangian orbital locations; and

(2) these initial missions and related capabilities should be utilized to provide operational experience, technology development, and the placement and assured use of in-space infrastructure and in-space servicing of existing and future assets.

(b) Sense of Congress regarding human space flight capability assurance

It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator shall proceed with the utilization of the ISS, technology development, and follow-on transportation systems (including the Space Launch System, multi-purpose crew vehicle, and commercial crew and cargo transportation capabilities) under subchapters II and III of this chapter in a manner that ensures—

- (1) that these capabilities remain inherently complementary and interrelated;
- (2) a balance of the development, sustainment, and use of each of these capabilities, which are of critical importance to the viability and sustainability of the U.S. space program; and

(3) that resources required to support the timely and sustainable development of these capabilities authorized in either subchapter II or subchapter III of this chapter are not derived from a reduction in resources for the capabilities authorized in the other subchapter.

(c) Limitation

Nothing in subsection (b) shall apply to or affect any capability authorized by any other subchapter of this chapter¹

¹ So in original. Probably should be followed by a period.