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May 30, 2008

The Honorable Bart Gordon (D-TN)  
Chairman  
House Science and Technology Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ralph Hall (R-TX)  
Ranking Member  
House Science and Technology Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Udall (D-CO)  
Chairman  
House Science and Technology Committee  
Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Feeney (R-FL)  
Ranking Member  
House Science and Technology Committee  
Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Gordon and Udall and Ranking Members Hall and Feeney:

The Aerospace Task Force and the Aerospace Division of ASME would like to express their support for HR. 6063, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Reauthorization bill currently under consideration by the House Science and Technology Committee. This bill authorizes \$20.2 billion for NASA in FY (fiscal year) 2009. The Task Force assures that this money is desperately needed by NASA to implement the space related goals of the agency.

We applaud the House Science and Technology Committee's work on HR. 6063 because it acknowledges and seeks to correct the competing priorities of NASA with a limited budget to complete historic goals. The authorization bill would fund the Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate at \$853 million, which is \$407 million above the Administration's FY 2009 request.

In the FY 2009 position statement issued by the Task Force and the Aerospace Division, it was recommended that the aeronautics portion of the NASA budget be gradually increased to \$2 billion over the next eight years, with a long-term target of attaining a level of 10 percent of the total NASA budget. The \$853 million being proposed by the authorizing Committee would represent a significant investment toward our recommended goal.

Additionally, this legislation establishes a research initiative to study the effects of aviation on climate change. Although it is commonly accepted that aircraft engines emit noise pollution, gases and particulate emissions that contribute to climate change, this research initiative should help quantify the scale and magnitude of their contributions and provide recommendations on mitigating their impact. The research initiative would be conducted with the assistance of the National Research Council and the U.S. Climate Change Science Program.

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We understand the difficult choices that the members of Congress must make in the current budgetary environment, however, we urge strong investment in NASA to ensure that the United States retains its long-term leadership in the fields of aviation science and space exploration. Congress must help the U.S. remain competitive and innovative by supporting NASA's research and technology investments because this also positively impacts the industry and the U.S. economy. We also urge your colleagues in the Senate to undertake similar language and for appropriators to adhere to these recommendations. If you, or your staff, have any questions or would like more information from ASME on this topic, please contact Anthony R. Quinn, Senior Government Relations Representative at 202-785-7392 or [quinna@asme.org](mailto:quinna@asme.org).

Sincerely,

(Sig)

Ephraim Garcia, Ph.D.  
Chair  
Aerospace Division

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