



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT

C.J. Karamargin
Communications Director
U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords
Arizona's 8th Congressional District
(520) 881-3588 or (520) 940-4240

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, issued the following statement today on the summary report of the Review of U.S. Human Spaceflight Plans Committee. The committee, led by Norm Augustine, is charged with examining options for NASA's human spaceflight program. The full report is expected to be released later this month.

The summary of the Augustine panel report is a sobering reminder that our position as the world's leading space-faring nation is not assured. Living up to our great legacy of leadership in space exploration means providing NASA with the resources it needs to pursue its mission.

Continued underfunding of NASA risks the good work being done by the Constellation Program, which includes vehicles capable of launching astronauts to low-Earth orbit and to the Moon. This is unfortunate, particularly because the Augustine panel found no significant technical problems with the Constellation Program.

Adequate funding is critical. This investment – like past investments in human and robotic space exploration – will pay major dividends in the future. All segments of our society benefit when we set challenging goals and then mobilize the people and resources necessary to achieve them. The pursuit of such goals benefits technological innovation and our economy, it inspires our people, and it extends our influence in the world. We need to be bold and think big.

I look forward to reviewing the full report when it is released later this month.