

(c) Report**(1) Policy**

Not later than 1 year after October 11, 2010, the President shall transmit a report setting forth national space technology policy to the appropriate committees of Congress and to the Senate Committee on Appropriations and the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations.

(2) Implementation

Not later than 60 days after the President transmits the report required by paragraph (1) to the Congress, the Administrator shall transmit a report to the same committees describing how NASA will carry out the policy.

(Pub. L. 111-267, title IX, §906, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2836.)

§ 18405. Commercial Reusable Suborbital Research Program**(a) In general**

The report of the National Academy of Sciences, Revitalizing NASA's Suborbital Program: Advancing Science, Driving Innovation and Developing Workforce, found that suborbital science missions were absolutely critical to building an aerospace workforce capable of meeting the needs of current and future human and robotic space exploration.

(b) Management

The Administrator shall designate an officer or employee of the Space Technology Program to act as the responsible official for the Commercial Reusable Suborbital Research Program in the Space Technology Program. The designee shall be responsible for the development of short- and long term strategic plans for maintaining, renewing and extending suborbital facilities and capabilities.

(c) Establishment

The Administrator shall establish a Commercial Reusable Suborbital Research Program within the Space Technology Program that shall fund the development of payloads for scientific research, technology development, and education, and shall provide flight opportunities for those payloads to microgravity environments and suborbital altitudes. The Commercial Reusable Suborbital Research Program may fund engineering and integration demonstrations, proofs of concept, or educational experiments for commercial reusable vehicle flights. The program shall endeavor to work with NASA's Mission Directorates to help achieve NASA's research, technology, and education goals.

(d) Report

The Administrator shall submit a report annually to the appropriate committees of Congress describing progress in carrying out the Commercial Reusable Suborbital Research program, including the number and type of suborbital missions planned in each fiscal year.

(e) Authorization

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2013 to carry out this section.

(Pub. L. 111-267, title IX, §907, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2837.)

SUBCHAPTER IX—EDUCATION

§ 18421. Study of potential commercial orbital platform program impact on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

A fundamental and unique capability of NASA is in stimulating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education in the United States. In ensuring maximum use of that capability, the Administrator shall carry out a study to—

(1) identify the benefits of and lessons learned from ongoing and previous NASA orbital student programs including, at a minimum, the Get Away Special (GAS) and Earth Knowledge Acquired by Middle School Students (EarthKAM) programs, on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education;

(2) assess the potential impacts on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education of a program that would facilitate the development of scientific and educational payloads involving United States students and educators and the flights of those payloads on commercially available orbital platforms, when available and operational, with the goal of providing frequent and regular payload launches;

(3) identify NASA expertise, such as NASA science, engineering, payload development, and payload operations, that could be made available to facilitate a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics program using commercial orbital platforms; and

(4) identify the issues that would need to be addressed before NASA could properly assess the merits and feasibility of the program described in paragraph (2).

(Pub. L. 111-267, title X, §1003, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2838; Pub. L. 111-358, title II, §205(a), Jan. 4, 2011, 124 Stat. 3995.)

AMENDMENTS

2011—Pub. L. 111-358 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: "A fundamental and unique capability of NASA is in stimulating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education in the United States. In ensuring maximum use of that capability, NASA shall—

"(1) establish a program to annually sponsor scientific and educational payloads developed with United States student and educator involvement to be flown on commercially available orbital platforms, when available and operational, with the goal of launching at least 50 such payloads (with at least one from each of the 50 States) to orbit on at least one mission per year;

"(2) contract with providers of commercial orbital platform services for their use by the STEM-Commercial Orbital Platform program, preceded by the issuance of a request for proposal, not later than 90 days after October 11, 2010, to enter into at least one funded, competitively-awarded contract for commercial orbital platform services and make awards within 180 days after such date; and

"(3) engage with United States students and educators and make available NASA's science, engineering, payload development, and payload operations expertise to student teams selected to participate in the STEM-Commercial Orbital Platform program."