

NASA to serve as a key component to expand human presence beyond low-Earth orbit.  
(Pub. L. 111-267, § 3, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2808.)

SUBCHAPTER I—POLICY, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES FOR HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT AND EXPLORATION

§ 18311. United States human space flight policy

(a) Use of non-United States human space flight transportation services

(1) In general

The Federal Government may not acquire human space flight transportation services from a foreign entity unless—

- (A) no United States Government-operated human space flight capability is available;
- (B) no United States commercial provider is available; and
- (C) it is a qualified foreign entity.

(2) Definitions

In this subsection:

(A) Commercial provider

The term “commercial provider” means any person providing human space flight transportation services, primary control of which is held by persons other than the Federal Government, a State or local government, or a foreign government.

(B) Qualified foreign entity

The term “qualified foreign entity” means a foreign entity that is in compliance with all applicable safety standards and is not prohibited from providing space transportation services under other law.

(C) United States commercial provider

The term “United States commercial provider” means a commercial provider, organized under the laws of the United States or of a State, that is more than 50 percent owned by United States nationals.

(3) Arrangements with foreign entities

Nothing in this subsection shall prevent the Administrator from negotiating or entering into human space flight transportation arrangements with foreign entities to ensure safety of flight and continued ISS operations.

(b) United States human space flight capabilities

Congress reaffirms the policy stated in section 70501(a) of title 51, that the United States shall maintain an uninterrupted capability for human space flight and operations in low-Earth orbit, and beyond, as an essential instrument of national security and of the capacity to ensure continued United States participation and leadership in the exploration and utilization of space.

(Pub. L. 111-267, title II, § 201, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2811; Pub. L. 115-10, title III, § 302(d), Mar. 21, 2017, 131 Stat. 25.)

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.<sup>1</sup>

(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 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

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be “century.”