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## April & May 2023

# SGAC U.S. Task Force on Space Policy

### *A Space Generation Advocacy and Policy Platform (SGAPP) Team*

Welcome to the Space Generation Advisory Council's "[U.S. Task Force on Space Policy](#)." newsletter!

Compiled and sent every two months, this newsletter provides information, updates, details, and resources on the latest developments in civil, commercial, and international space policy in the United States and across the world - as well as insight into the latest about space on Capitol Hill and in politics. It also features the policy position papers and blogs written by the Task Force's Policy subteam.

Interested in supporting the Task Force newsletter? We'd be thrilled to have you join us! Please reach out to Cody Knipfer, Newsletter Subgroup Co-Lead, at [Cody.Knipfer@SpaceGeneration.org](mailto:Cody.Knipfer@SpaceGeneration.org) - and join the Newsletter channel on the Task Force Slack.

## USTF Policy Blogs

- **Rocket Exhaust: The Need for Proper Regulations (Barbara Milewski)**

There are an increasing number of rocket launches every year and with that comes a greater risk to the environment and human health. The space sector's unique reach into the heights of the atmosphere means the environmental impact of rocket launches must be given special consideration. The standards

for aviation cannot simply be transplanted into the space industry, as has been done so far. **See the full blog [here](#) and on our [website](#).**

- **Satellite Data Sharing: Paths toward Data Democracy (Tatiana Quercia)**

Increasing geopolitical tensions require more thoughtful and responsible use of the latest available satellite technologies. The war in Ukraine and recent environmental disasters, namely the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria, have alarmed the space policy community on the criticality of sharing Earth Observation (EO) and remote sensing data for human and environmental security. **See the full blog [here](#) and on our [website](#).**

- **Takeaways from the Space Generation Fusion Forum (Lindsey Wisner, Anja Sheppard, Sunny Narayanan, and SGFF Delegates)**

The U.S. Task Force was honored to host a breakout session at the 2023 Space Generation Fusion Forum (SGFF) in Colorado Springs, CO. Young professionals and students from around the world applied to be SGFF delegates for this three day event, which included three hours of breakout group discussion. The U.S. Task Force hosted a discussion on government, industry, and community collaborations for environmental stewardship in the space community. Ultimately the group chose to focus on sustainability of the space environment, also recognizing the benefits this subject has for the Earth environment. **See the full blog [here](#).**

## **Civil Space Policy**

- **[NASA Establishes Moon to Mars Program Office](#) (SpacePolicyOnline)**

NASA announced a new organizational structure to carry out its program of human exploration beyond low Earth orbit. The new Moon to Mars Program Office will be led by Amit Kshatriya. The move responds to congressional direction in the 2022 NASA Authorization Act. NASA's congressional authorization committees wanted a more traditional management structure with a single individual responsible and accountable for executing the Moon to Mars program and ensuring Mars remains the goal. Congress supports missions to the Moon, but only as a proving ground for Mars.

- **[NASA Details Strategy Behind Blueprint for Moon to Mars Exploration](#) (NASA)**

As NASA evolves its blueprint for shaping exploration throughout the solar system, the agency is detailing its process to develop a sustainable, resilient path forward for exploration. In a document published in April, the agency explains its methodology behind developing NASA's Moon to Mars Objectives that drive its architecture, plans, and efforts to enable long-term human presence and exploration throughout the solar system.

- [NASA Administrator Nelson Supports Continuing Restrictions on NASA Cooperation with China \(SpaceNews\)](#)

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said he supports continuing current restrictions on the agency's ability to work with China in spaceflight as he warns of a "space race" between the countries. He showed little desire to expand cooperation, citing a lack of transparency in actions like recent Long March 5B launches that left core stages in orbits that resulted in uncontrolled reentries. "I would hope that China, the Chinese government, would finally come to realize that they've got to be more open and transparent about all of their stuff falling back to Earth and that we could cooperate together," he said.

## **Commercial Space Policy**

- [New Report Recommends Ending Human Spaceflight Safety "Learning Period" \(SpaceNews\)](#)

A new report recommends that current restrictions - the "learning period" - on the Federal Aviation Administration's ability to regulate safety for people flying on commercial spacecraft be allowed to expire later this year. The report, by the RAND Corporation, concluded that despite limited progress on establishing voluntary industry safety standards, the FAA and industry were now ready to start the process of developing formal safety standards for those participating in commercial spaceflight. The learning period was originally intended to expire in 2012 but was extended in subsequent legislation because of a lack of commercial human spaceflight activity that could serve as an experience base upon which to build regulations.

- [Speed and Safety are Top Priorities for U.S. Commercial Space Regulators \(SpaceNews\)](#)

Efforts to streamline and accelerate U.S. space licensing procedures to keep up with rapid innovation are bearing fruit. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration now takes just 15 days to issue a commercial

remote sensing license. Julie Kearney, chief of the Federal Communications Commission's recently created Space Bureau, said the regulator hopes to introduce streamlined rules for satellite applications "really soon" after closing a comment period.

## **International Space Policy**

- [The United States and South Korea Agree to Expand Space Cooperation](#) (SpaceNews)

The United States and South Korea signed an agreement April 25 to enhance cooperation on space activities ranging from lunar exploration to Earth science. Neither government released the text of the agreement, but a White House official, speaking on background, said it would cover activities in "areas of mutual interest" such as lunar science, Earth science and other space science activities, as well as space communications and navigation.

- [Czech Republic to Sign International "Artemis Accords"](#) (EsEuro)

The Czech Republic will sign the Artemis Accords during a ceremony at NASA headquarters in Washington next Wednesday. Agency Administrator Bill Nelson will participate in the agency signing ceremony and Foreign Minister Jan Lipavský will sign on behalf of the Czech Republic. Acting Assistant Secretary Jennifer R. Littlejohn and Czech Ambassador to the US Miloslav Stašek will also take part in the ceremony.

- [More Countries Join Pledge Against Anti-Satellite Tests](#) (SpacePolicyOnline)

Three more countries recently joined the U.S.-led pledge not to conduct destructive antisatellite tests in space. The Netherlands, Austria and Italy bring the total to 13 countries who have agreed to avoid ASAT tests that leave hundreds or thousands of pieces of space debris in their wake, threatening not only satellites, but the International Space Station. In addition to these specific pledges, the United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a similar resolution in December 2022 by a vote of 155-9 with 9 abstentions.

## **On Capitol Hill**

- [NASA's Plans Win Praise from Capitol Hill Appropriators](#)  
(SpacePolicyOnline)

House Republican leadership may be proposing dramatic funding cuts for agencies like NASA, but the Republicans — and Democrats — on NASA's appropriations subcommittee seem much more concerned about staying ahead of China. At a hearing on NASA's FY2024 budget request, the praise for NASA and the agency's Administrator, Bill Nelson, could not have been more glowing. Other subcommittee members, including Ranking Member Matt Cartwright (D-PA) who chaired the subcommittee in the last Congress, heaped praise on Nelson and the agency on many fronts. The undisputable message was that they strongly support NASA on a bipartisan basis not only because of what it is doing today, but because it is key to maintaining U.S. leadership over China. Almost every member brought up China and the importance of funding NASA to stay ahead.

- [The DoD Asks Congress for Authority to Start Space Programs Before Funding](#) (Breaking Defense)

The Defense Department is asking Congress to allow the initiation of new development programs before a final budget is approved, a new set of authorities that are aimed at meeting emerging threats or getting ahead of game changing technology. How much support can be found in Congress isn't clear at this point. Members did not weigh in on the proposal during either hearings. But while speaking with reporters, Secretary of the Air Force Kendall stressed that the concept does not impede congressional oversight authority because it only allows early activities.



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