

# *News Release*

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## **Sept. 15 House of Representatives Hearing on Space Flight Includes Misconceptions; Industry Group Offers Clarity**

*Commercial procurement of Space Station crew transport is an alternative to buying seats  
from Russia, and does not compete with NASA's Constellation Program*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – September 22, 2009 – Next Step in Space, a coalition of businesses, organizations, and people working toward ensuring the future of human spaceflight in the United States, today issued a white paper titled “Acquiring U.S. Commercial ISS Crew and Cargo Services Creates New Industry in LEO, Enables Program for Exploration Beyond” to help clarify issues discussed at a September 15<sup>th</sup> hearing of the House Committee on Science & Technology on “Options and Issues for NASA’s Human Space Flight Program.”

“Some comments made at the House hearing last week incorrectly suggested that the Augustine Committee’s recommendation to procure crew services to the International Space Station would necessarily be in lieu of further development of NASA’s exploration program to travel beyond Earth orbit,” said Bretton Alexander, President of the Commercial Spaceflight Federation. “However, these two programs are complementary, not competitive. As former NASA Administrator Mike Griffin has pointed out numerous times, the Constellation Program is designed and optimized for missions beyond low-Earth orbit, not for Space Station servicing.”

With the Space Shuttle program nearing its end of life, the most economical options for transportation to the International Space Station (ISS) are: 1) sending taxpayer dollars to buy seats on the Russian Soyuz, or 2) investing in the American commercial space industry.

“The American public has begun to realize that we are about a year away from sole-sourcing our human spaceflight needs to Russia,” said Elon Musk, CEO and CTO of Space Exploration Technologies. “Fortunately numerous companies within the commercial space sector have been raising and investing private capital to develop the capability to service the ISS, and we are confident that we can be ready to transfer crew within a few years.”

Among other items included in the white paper, the Next Step in Space coalition clarified that:

1. Commercially procured crew and cargo services to the ISS do not compete with the Constellation Program, which is under development to explore beyond low-Earth orbit (LEO).
2. NASA, Congress and numerous Presidential Directives have consistently supported acquiring commercial crew and cargo services to the ISS.
3. Commercially procured crew transportation is an alternative to paying Russia to launch our astronauts to the ISS.

4. As pointed out at the Senate hearing the following day, even if NASA receives significant additional funding, only commercially procured crew and cargo services to the ISS allows its extension to 2020.
5. The lower cost of commercially acquired transportation to the ISS will allow NASA to focus its resources on the Constellation program for exploration beyond LEO.
6. Commercially acquired crew and cargo services will use existing launch vehicles and those already under development, which the U.S. government already entrusts for carriage of high-value national security and scientific assets.
7. NASA's Commercial Crew/Cargo (COTS) program is on budget and has met numerous schedule milestones.

“The best strategy for our economic growth, U.S. competitiveness and the long-term success of NASA is to support the commercial procurement of crew transportation for LEO, which will also enable NASA astronauts to once again leave Earth's orbit to new worlds beyond,” said Mark Sirangelo, Chairman of Sierra Nevada Space Systems. “We were pleased to see the Augustine Committee's endorsement of a robust program for commercial human space flight, and look forward to continuing our work with NASA to ensure that jobs are created here in the United States, not overseas.”

For a full copy of the “Acquiring U.S. Commercial ISS Crew and Cargo Services Creates New Industry in LEO, Enables Program for Exploration Beyond” White Paper, please visit [www.NextStepInSpace.com](http://www.NextStepInSpace.com).

#### **About The Next Step in Space**

The Next Step in Space is a group of businesses, organizations, and people working toward ensuring the future of commercial human spaceflight in the United States. Investment in commercial space will allow for full utilization of the International Space Station, enable NASA to focus its efforts beyond low-Earth orbit, and ensure that taxpayer dollars are reinvested in the U.S. and not spent overseas. Visit us at: [www.nextstepinspace.com](http://www.nextstepinspace.com). Become a fan and show support for commercial spaceflight on the Next Step in Space Facebook fan page at [www.facebook.com/nextstepinspace](http://www.facebook.com/nextstepinspace) and follow on Twitter @NextStepinSpace.

**It is time to take the Next Step and invest in a robust, commercial human space flight development program.**