

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0525**

September 30, 2016

The Honorable Lamar Smith  
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, &  
Technology  
2321 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Ranking Member, Committee on Science,  
Space, & Technology  
2321 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Johnson,

As you work with your Senate counterparts to craft a final NASA authorization bill for Fiscal Year 2017, we write to respectively urge your support for the top line budget level for the Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate of \$712 million requested in the Fiscal Year 2017 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill.

The proposed CJS funding level for NASA's aeronautics research reflects the rapid progress and importance of several of the Directorate's primary programs such as the X-57 SCEPTOR/"Maxwell," the quiet supersonic aircraft, and the unmanned aircraft system integration into the National Airspace System project. The increase over the enacted Fiscal Year 2016 level is a necessary step given the life-cycle costs for each of these programs as they advance through their design and development phases and into flight testing.

Upcoming X-planes and X-systems are part of NASA's New Aviation Horizons initiative, which seeks to demonstrate the revolutionary designs and technologies that will define the next generation of safer, faster, and quieter air travel. Once validated, these innovations will produce improvements to our quality of life and economic impacts that will be felt immediately by the American public.

The Senate-proposed National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2016, S. 3346, requests a \$40 million cut to the Fiscal Year 2016 enacted level for aeronautics research. This not only fails to do justice to the Agency's strategic goals but will arrest the advancement of United States aviation at a time the global industry is undergoing unprecedented growth and transformation.

American leadership in aviation technology, a sector that generates an \$82.5 billion positive trade balance and supports 1.2 million jobs, is facing emerging challenges from aircraft companies in Russia, China, India, and Brazil that are benefiting from multi-billion dollar investments by their governments. Over the next 17 years, the market for new aircraft sales, parts and services will grow to between \$8 trillion and \$10 trillion. Now is not the time to tie our own hands in aeronautics research.

In addition to funding the Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate at \$712 million, we would like to request \$40 million to establish a 21st Century Aeronautics Capabilities Initiative within the Construction and Environmental Compliance and Restoration Account to upgrade and create facilities for civil and national security aeronautics research. This new account, modeled on the success of the 21st Century

Launch Complex Program, would enable significant and urgently needed modernization to the facilities where U.S. breakthrough advances are tested and validated.

We strongly urge you to maintain a position that adequately supports our nation's aeronautics enterprise in negotiating authorized funding levels for NASA for Fiscal Year 2017 with your counterparts in the Senate. We must recommit ourselves to an aeronautics program that is capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century, positions America's industry to lead tomorrow's global aviation market, and maintains the nation's air dominance.

Sincerely,



Steve Knight  
CA-25



Marcy Kaptur  
OH-09



David Joyce  
OH-14



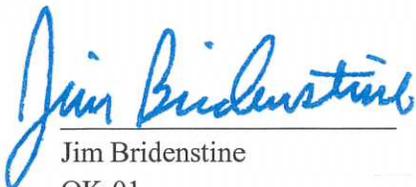
Michael M. Honda  
CA-17



Steve Stivers  
OH-15



Michael E. Capuano  
MA-07



Jim Bridenstine  
OK-01



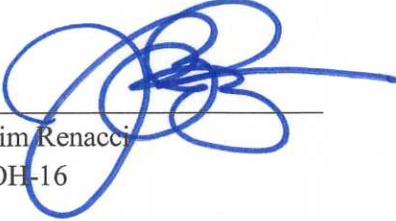
Derek Kilmer  
WA-06



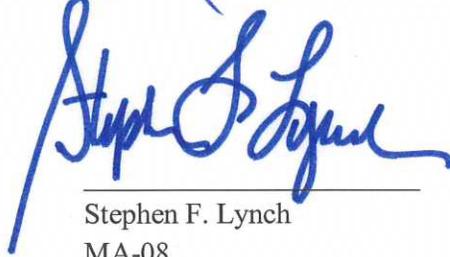
Tim Ryan  
OH-13



John Garamendi  
CA-03



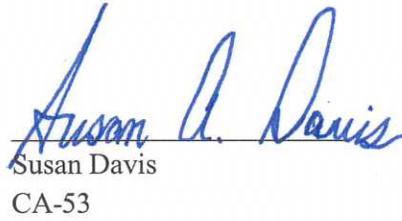
Jim Renacci  
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Stephen F. Lynch  
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Mike Coffman  
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Susan Davis  
CA-53