



July 29, 2011

The Honorable Bill Nelson
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: House FY12 Commerce, Justice & Science Appropriations Bill

Dear Senator Nelson,

I would like to ask for your help on an issue of concern to me and our State. While it was already on its knees from the retirement of the Space Shuttle, the House Appropriations Committee has chosen to heap further misery on to Florida's Space industry and its workforce. Not only did the Appropriations Committee slash the Administrations NASA budget request by approximately \$2 billion dollars, but it singled out Florida and Kennedy Space Center for particularly harsh and irrational treatment.

Much of the immediate job potential at KSC over the next few years was the design, engineering and construction required to transition Florida's Spaceport infrastructure from the Shuttle to the new vehicles of the future, whether they are Government or Commercial. The funding for that effort was substantially cut last year but now the House has chosen to slash that line item by more than half. These projects represent hundreds of jobs within both the Civil Service and Contractor community building the foundation for the new economic engine of Space in Florida for the decades ahead. This cut would cripple that effort moving forward.

Inexplicably, the House Appropriators have also eliminated all the funding needed to transition and safe the Shuttle Orbiters before their transition to museums around the country, including the Shuttle Atlantis for display here in Florida. This represents approximately 1100 desperately needed jobs for much of next year for the USA employees before the last of the Shuttle workforce is officially disbanded. Nonsensically, this same legislation demands NASA report back to the Congress on the progress of moving these Orbiters to their final locations, but yet at the same time takes away the funding to do just that.

In addition to devastating the immediate future for jobs in Florida with these cuts, this budget also wreaks havoc on our future by placing in jeopardy a viable Commercial Space marketplace so essential to replacing the Russian vehicles with those made in America as soon as possible. And, to add insult to injury, it slashes the Technology budget that was so necessary to diversify the KSC mission away from just launch operations, and thus assuring this KSC workforce would be the last to bear the sole brunt of a major program cancellation.

Space Florida looks forward to working with you, as a key member of our Federal delegation, to rectify this seriously flawed legislation as it moves forward in Congress. This state, community, and industry at this time, deserves nothing less than our success.

Please feel free to contact me if any additional information is needed.

Frank A. DiBello
President

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Space Florida