

WASHINGTON, DC - The U.S. House today passed a resolution recognizing the upcoming 50-year anniversary of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on July 29, 2008. Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), whose district includes Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, released the following statement:

"When NASA was created 50 years ago, space was still a new frontier, and the wonders of the universe were waiting to be explored. Half a century later, the vision behind NASA's creation has been realized beyond our wildest imagination, launching an American-led era of human space flight, science and exploration that has led to unprecedented new discoveries of our planet, our solar system and indeed, the universe.

"Today, the Congress recognizes the unqualified success of NASA and congratulates all the scientists, astronauts, engineers and technicians, whose ingenuity and innovation have put a man on the moon, expanded the breadth of human knowledge and inspired generations of Americans.

"I am proud to represent and to recognize today one of NASA's premier research and development facilities, Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. Named after Robert Goddard, the physicist credited as the father of modern rocket propulsion, Goddard Space Flight Center was established in 1959 as NASA's first space flight facility. Goddard has played a critical role in NASA's success, including one of NASA's most popular missions, the Hubble Space Telescope.

"Today, as the world struggles to confront the challenges of global climate change, Goddard's work has never been more essential. Goddard boasts the nation's largest collection of earth scientists, and its satellites provide us with critical data about our dynamic world.
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"I am grateful to all the talented professionals, at Goddard and throughout NASA, who have committed themselves to improving our understanding of the earth and the entire universe. Congratulations to NASA on an incredible first 50 years. I am excited to see the exciting discoveries that lie ahead."

House Resolution is below.

H. RES. 1315

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

June 26, 2008

Whereas the National Aeronautics and Space Administration was established on July 29, 1958;

Whereas on May 5, 1961, NASA successfully launched America's first manned spacecraft, Freedom 7, piloted by Alan B. Shepard, Jr.;

Whereas in July of 1969 President John Kennedy's vision of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth was realized with the Apollo 11 mission, commanded by Neil A. Armstrong, Lunar Module Pilot Edwin `Buzz' Aldrin, Jr., and Command Module pilot Michael Collins;

Whereas on April 12, 1981, NASA began a new era of human space flight and exploration with the launch of the first Space Shuttle Columbia, commanded by John W. Young and piloted by Robert L. `Bob' Crippen;

Whereas NASA has greatly expanded our knowledge and understanding of our planet and solar system through various unmanned vehicles utilized on numerous missions;

Whereas, during the Cold War, NASA's achievements served as a source of national pride and captured the imagination of the world by demonstrating a peaceful use of our technological capabilities;

Whereas NASA now serves as a model for international cooperation and American leadership through the International Space Station and other scientific endeavors;

Whereas thanks to NASA and the far-reaching gaze of the Hubble Space Telescope, we have seen further into our universe than ever before;

Whereas NASA space probes have landed on or flown by eight of the planets in our solar system;

Whereas the aeronautics research by NASA has led to great discoveries and advances in aircraft design and aviation;

Whereas the work done by NASA has expanded the scope of human knowledge, created new technologies, and inspired young men and women to enter scientific and engineering careers;

Whereas in the last fifty years, NASA has positively impacted almost every facet of our lives; and

Whereas, thanks to the heroism, courage, and supreme sacrifice of our astronaut corps over the last five decades, we are now able to live and work in space for the benefit of all men: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives--

(1) honors the men and women of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary;

(2) acknowledges the value of NASA's discoveries and accomplishments; and

(3) pledges to maintain America's position as the world leader in aeronautics and space exploration and technology.

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