

Members of the Maryland Delegation Visit Goddard Space Flight Center, Participate in Town Hall

GREENBELT, MD – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) joined Senator Barbara Mikulski and Congresswoman Donna Edwards for a town hall meeting at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center to discuss with employees legislative issues important to the Goddard community. Below are his remarks as prepared for delivery:

"I am always excited to visit NASA's Goddard Center, where you continue to carry out the mission of exploring what President Kennedy called the new frontier.

"Congress just passed NASA's budget for fiscal year 2012, and we were able to restore funding for the James Webb Telescope, which will allow us to gaze even farther into the reaches of space than ever before. This will help us remain pioneers in science and innovation, which also fuels our economic competitiveness.

"Right now, with the failure of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, Congress faces a daunting task. We must find not billions but trillions of dollars in savings. Our challenge is to do so without harming our ability to fund agencies like NASA. The budget bill we passed, which contains NASA's funding, was a good sign that responsible Republicans and Democrats can work together to preserve programs that work and that help move us forward as a nation.

"Examples include the Women, Infants, and Children Program, which helps keep some of the most vulnerable among us from going hungry. Others are the COPS Program for law enforcement in our communities and TIGER Grants for infrastructure projects across the country.

"If we were able to work together on this component of the budget, there is no reason why we

can't work together to get our fiscal house in order in a way that does not stunt our economic recovery or inhibit our long-term growth.

“As all of you here at NASA know well, at the end of the day, we are not Democrats or Republicans. We are all inhabitants of the same small planet – a ‘pale blue dot’ all alone in the vast expanse of our universe. Maybe keeping this in mind can help Congress set differences aside and make progress on our toughest challenges. Thank you, and keep up the great work.”