



July 7, 2004

The Honorable Christopher Bond
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on VA, HUD and
Independent Agencies
130 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6032

The Honorable James Walsh
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on VA, HUD and
Independent Agencies
H-143 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515-6022

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on VA, HUD and
Independent Agencies
128 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6032

The Honorable Alan Mollohan
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on VA, HUD and
Independent Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6015

Dear Senators Bond and Mikulski and Representatives Walsh and Mollohan:

The Electronic Industries Alliance (EIA) represents more than 2,500 corporate members in a partnership of electronics and high-tech associations and companies whose mission is promoting the market development and competitiveness of the U.S. high-tech industry through domestic and international policy efforts. Included in the membership of the Government Electronics and Information Technology Association (GEIA), one of the five sector associations under the EIA umbrella, is every major defense and aerospace company in the U.S. As the president of EIA, I am writing to encourage your strong support for the Vision for Space Exploration, which was announced to the nation by President Bush on Jan. 14, 2004.

Essential ingredients to the economic vitality of the U.S. include sustaining American jobs, pursuing technology development, stimulating education and expanding the frontiers of science. The Vision for Space Exploration lays out a logical and cost-effective approach for long-term space exploration and the future of NASA with achievable milestones. Among other important elements, the FY2005 NASA budget request includes: the integration of both robotic and human spacecraft trips in further exploration of the Moon and Mars; a return to flight of the Space Shuttle next year in full compliance with the recommendations of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board (CAIB); completion of the International Space Station with an emphasis on research that will further human space exploration and habitation; and development of a new Crew Exploration Vehicle.

Over the past decade, NASA has been operating under tight fiscal constraints. As noted in the CAIB report, between 1993 and 2002, the NASA budget fell from \$14.31 billion in FY1993 to a low of \$13.6

billion in FY2000, to \$14.87 billion in FY2002. This represents a decrease of 13% in purchasing power over the decade. During the Apollo program, NASA's budget represented almost 4% of the federal budget, but since the early 1970s, it has remained at 1% or less.

The FY2005 budget request asks for a sensible increase in the NASA budget, as well as laying out a sound blueprint for the agency's future that properly focuses it on a long-term path so necessary for successful space exploration and discovery. I know that you have been strong supporters of NASA over the years and hope you will keep that tradition in mind as you develop this year's appropriations bill, which is so critical to the future of U.S. space initiatives. I urge you to fully fund the FY2005 NASA budget request.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave McCurdy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave McCurdy
President
Electronic Industries Alliance (EIA)