

**Testimony of Rep. Ed Perlmutter
House CJS Subcommittee Members' Day Hearing
March 3, 2020**

Chairman Serrano, Ranking Member Aderholt, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for holding this Members' Day hearing as you begin your work on the 2021 Commerce, Justice, and Science appropriations bill. I appreciate the opportunity to testify this afternoon about funding for NASA and working together to get our astronauts to Mars by 2033!

Supporting NASA and our aerospace industry is one of my top priorities. Colorado has some of the best minds, companies, and capabilities in the aerospace industry. After all, we're a mile closer to space! We have one of the country's largest space economies because we have just about everything in our state from the strong scientific research community, to small, medium, and large commercial space companies which work across the civil and defense communities.

That's why I've been such a strong supporter for NASA on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, and importantly for getting our astronauts to Mars by 2033. This is when the orbits of Earth and Mars align to save travel time and reduce risk for our astronauts. I believe we need this concrete goal for us all to work towards because this is a complicated undertaking requiring NASA to lead a team of public-private and international partners to get this done.

Exploration is in our DNA as Americans and as humans. We don't necessarily know where our exploration will take us, but the benefits we've seen right back here on Earth from our investment in exploration since the Mercury Program 60 years ago has been tremendous. We have a skilled and driven workforce we are investing in, and the inspiration for the next generation will open new doors for new technologies and answering new questions we can't even imagine today.

And while there are many things I disagree about with the current administration, I do think aerospace is an area of bipartisan agreement here in Congress, in the White House, and at NASA. I support the goals for accelerating human missions to land on the Moon again, now called the Artemis Program, as long as that program continues to focus on reducing the risks for our human missions to Mars by 2033.

Space exploration is hard, and it will require sustained investment from this Subcommittee and continued ingenuity by the smart people at NASA and in the commercial sector. I'm asking for your help this year and for the next 13 years to provide NASA with the resources for the Mars 2033 mission and the technologies needed for it like nuclear thermal propulsion; entry, descent, and landing systems for Mars; a Mars transport vehicle to get our astronauts to the red planet; and the many other long lead investments needed.

I look forward to continuing to work with this Subcommittee and the entire Congress so we can get our astronauts to Mars by 2033. I'm going to leave each of you with one of my bumper stickers – Mars 2033, We Can Do This! – so you can be a part of this journey we're taking together. Thank you again for allowing me to testify today. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have.