



## **Opening Statement of Chairman Frank Lucas**

Full Committee Markup

*H.R. 6213 - The National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization Act*

*H.R. 6131 – The Commercial Space Act of 2023*

November 15, 2023

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Thank you all for joining us at this markup.

Today we're considering two bills that are crucial to our global competitiveness – the National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization Act and the Commercial Space Act.

First up is a bill to strengthen quantum information sciences by reauthorizing the National Quantum Initiative Act.

This bill was first passed in 2018 in an effort to jumpstart our nation's quantum development.

Since then, we've seen tremendous progress.

The United States currently leads the world in quantum technologies, and we have a thriving private sector working on quantum advancements.

But our leadership is by no means guaranteed. In the last few years, foreign competition in the quantum field has surged. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is investing nearly as much in quantum science as the combined total from the rest of the world's governments.

Quantum technologies have incredible potential – they will revolutionize health care, food production, transportation, and countless other industries.

Quantum computers can solve challenges in moments that traditional computers would struggle with for years.

The nation that leads the way in the development of quantum sciences not only benefits from the new technologies and economic gains, but also earns protection against bad actors who would seek to use quantum technologies for attacks against our economy or national security.

We simply cannot afford to fall behind the Chinese Communist Party in quantum technologies.

So it's time to reevaluate how we're supporting quantum development here in the U.S.

The National Quantum Initiative Reauthorization Act takes the progress we've made over the past five years and positions us strategically to take the next steps forward.

It continues the basic research that is foundational to our success, while also adding a focus on translational research to help develop applied quantum technologies.

It also focuses on workforce development, because without a strong workforce we won't be able to develop and deploy these new technologies.

Finally, it ensures we're taking full advantage of our international partnerships so that we're working together to address the threat from the CCP.

The second bill before us today is the Commercial Space Act of 2023.

This bill was developed over the course of months, with input gathered from a wide range of stakeholders.

In our conversations, and during our hearings on this topic, we heard repeatedly that American competitiveness depends on a vibrant commercial space economy.

Globally, the space industry is worth nearly \$550 billion, and it's projected to keep growing. We can either encourage that growth here at home, or we can allow it to flow to other countries who have friendlier environments.

The bill before us today supports the growth of the American commercial space industry by providing a more certain regulatory environment, helping us comply with our international treaty obligations, and encouraging innovation.

To begin with, it creates a certification process for all nongovernmental space activities, which reduces the administrative burden for companies looking to operate in space.

It promotes responsible behavior and best practices related to space debris and supports research and development at NASA on how to manage space debris and improve space situational awareness.

The bill also elevates the Office of Space Commerce within the Department of Commerce to ensure it has the authority it needs.

Finally, it extends the learning period for commercial human spaceflight activities so we have adequate time to innovate and grow this sector.

I understand that the White House Space Council is working on commercial space proposals of their own, that have been released this morning.

While I respect that effort, these proposals simply go in the wrong direction and hurt rather than support America's space industry.

For one thing, the Space Council proposals go way beyond satisfying our international obligations and instead trespass into space sustainability, asking for the authority to regulate anything under the national interest that they deem needs regulation. This is a needless expansion of government authority.

Their proposals also fail to extend the crucial learning period for human spaceflight activities. Instead, they add new regulations, requiring multiple new processes separate from launch and reentry.

This would create at least three new licenses on top of the mire of licenses already needed.

Whereas our bill creates a one-stop shop to the extent possible, under this proposal, organizations would be forced to get multiple licenses from multiple cabinet-level departments.

It also expands the number of people who are brought in on consultation and can veto spaceflight activities.

This interagency review process has already been tested with remote sensing, and has led to companies going overseas. It stifles U.S. industry and keeps us behind everybody else.

Finally, the Space Council would establish a regulatory process for space traffic management, which is code for – you guessed it – more regulation.

In short, instead of streamlining already convoluted processes, the Space Council is adding to bureaucracy and stifling innovation. The bill before us today, however, is smart policy which supports our commercial space industry and ensures this crucial sector will continue to thrive here in the United States.

I encourage my colleagues to support both this bill and our bipartisan quantum bill today.