



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY

Opening Statement

Space Subcommittee Ranking Member Valerie Foushee (D-NC)

Space Subcommittee Hearing:

“A Review of the Office of Space Commerce’s Mission Authorization Proposal”

July 15, 2026

Good morning, and thank you Chairman Haridopolos for holding today’s hearing to review the Trump Administration’s mission authorization proposal. I want to welcome Director Jordan and thank you for being here to testify before the Subcommittee.

Mission authorization and a regulatory framework for novel space activities may seem far removed from the concerns most Americans face every day. Families are focused on whether they can afford health care, groceries, gas, housing, and education costs, and whether good-paying jobs and economic opportunities will be available in their communities. Those concerns must remain at the center of our work, and I am fighting to ensure that every American has affordable access to the everyday essentials and the resources they need to build a secure and prosperous future.

Space policy is connected to that work. Space-based technology and services support communications, navigation, weather forecasting, environmental monitoring, national security, and other systems that Americans rely on every day. In fact, if you used GPS or checked the weather on your phone this morning, you relied on technology in space. Space is, quite literally, in our pockets.

But space also inspires us to look beyond the everyday and creates opportunities to build the workforce and capabilities that move our country forward—just look at the successful Artemis II mission and the benefits it has already delivered.

The growing commercial space economy can also create jobs and expand economic opportunity, but those benefits must reach communities across the country, not just a select few. Like other emerging technologies, a mission authorization framework must strike the right balance between expanding economic opportunity and ensuring meaningful oversight, accountability and appropriate guardrails.

This is a governing challenge with which I'm deeply familiar through my work on artificial intelligence. As I have made crystal clear, technological progress cannot come at the expense of other important U.S. interests, including national security, scientific advancement, foreign policy, safety, privacy, and the environment. That is why we must consider the implications, impacts, and potential unintended consequences of any mission authorization proposal and process.

Large satellite constellations, for example, can interfere with optical and radio astronomy due to their reflectivity and radio transmission interference. Further, future commercial spacecraft that might land on the surface of Mars, could bring contamination that could affect the search for life, a fundamental scientific pursuit.

We must also carefully consider how new space technologies and mission proposals could affect orbital debris risks or threaten the sustainability of the space environment. Let me be clear. Supporting technological progress and requiring responsible behaviors from commercial companies are not competing goals. We can do both, and any mission authorization framework must reflect that principle.

I look forward to hearing about the Office of Space Commerce's mission authorization proposal, and looking ahead, I also hope the Subcommittee will seek input from other federal agencies, industry experts, scientists, and additional stakeholders.

Before I close, Mr. Chairman, I want to note my disappointment that the Committee was not provided with advanced notice of the Office of Space Commerce's release of their mission authorization proposal, a briefing on the proposal, or even a briefing on the National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s fiscal year 2027 request for the Office of Space Commerce, despite multiple requests. This is not the transparency we expect as the Committee of jurisdiction.

With that, I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.