

Congressman Mo Brooks (AL-05):

Chairman José Serrano and Ranking Member Aderholt;

I come before you today to emphasize the importance of the Space Launch System, commonly referred to as the SLS, to achieving our nation's space policy goals.

As a nation, we must strive to inspire the next generation. The SLS will be the catalyst that will inspire the next generation of engineers and explorers to achieve their dreams and do the impossible.

Since the dawning of our space program, the men and women of Alabama have played a vital role for NASA. I am proud of the work that is done at the Marshall Space Flight Center. They play an integral role in the designing, engineering, and testing of the SLS. It is because of the great work by folks at NASA, and its suppliers all around the country, that the next generation has the chance to turn science fiction into reality.

The SLS will ensure American dominance in space and fulfill President Trump space priorities set out when he signed Space Policy Directive No. 1. President Trump has set out an ambitious vision for space in this directive, that includes returning astronauts to the Moon for long-term exploration and exploration to Mars and

beyond.<sup>1</sup> I support the Trump Administration's goals and believe that the SLS will be integral toward accomplishing President Trump's directive because it is the only launch vehicle that can generate the thrust and lift necessary to send the Orion spacecraft, astronauts, and a large cargo to the Moon on a single mission.

The SLS will be the most powerful rocket that man has ever dreamed.<sup>2</sup> The lift capabilities of the SLS are unparalleled, with transformative capability. There is no other rocket built or in production with anywhere near the capability of the SLS.

America's long-term space priorities will benefit from staying the course. As a matter of policy, the SLS should remain the launch vehicle for the Exploration Missions. The SLS will be the most powerful rocket ever built, and the only rocket powerful enough to carry the weight of the Orion spacecraft or the Deep Space Gateway to the Moon, both of which are necessary to accomplish our nation's space policy goals.

It is important that Congress stay the course, support existing law, and continue to provide enough funding so that our nation can achieve greatness in space exploration once again. Space should

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<sup>1</sup> Presidential Memorandum, Reinvigorating America's Human Space Exploration Program (December 11, 2017); <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-will-make-america-leader-space-exploration/>

<sup>2</sup> Space.com, (op-ed) *Yes, NASA's New Megarocket Will Be More Powerful Than the Saturn V*, Mike Wall (August 16, 2016); <https://www.space.com/33691-space-launch-system-most-powerful-rocket.html>

remain a bipartisan area for Congressional support. I ask that this Committee to continue the spirit of bipartisanship cooperation in space policy with support for the SLS. Through a reinvigorated space exploration program, America can achieve greatness once again by exploring the unexplored.

Adequate funding for the SLS is critical to achieving our nation's space policy. The Appropriations Committee has been consistent over the past several years in providing the funding needed for these programs and I ask this Committee to continue to support full funding in the FY 2020 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations bill.