



**SECURING U.S.  
LEADERSHIP  
IN SPACE**

September 22, 2012

# Introduction

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America's space program is a strategic national asset crucial to both our security and our economy. The space capabilities of the United States and its allies create strategic military and intelligence advantages that must be maintained. U.S. satellite networks facilitate communications, navigation, remote sensing, and environmental monitoring that support the global economic infrastructure and protect the safety and security of people around the world. It is almost impossible from the modern vantage point to even imagine growing the world's food, moving its people and cargo, operating its markets, or keeping its peace without operating effectively far above its surface.

Because space is vital to our national interests and provides important benefits to science and innovation, protecting these interests and securing these benefits requires a clear and credible space policy that addresses civil, commercial, and national security activities. Just as important are the implementation and follow-through, in which policies, programs, and budgets are aligned with each other. NASA, the Department of Defense, and other agencies involved in space need to be given clear and stable priorities so that they can make pragmatic, sustainable trade-offs in managing their programs to achieve the best value for the American taxpayer.

Unfortunately, President Obama has failed to deliver a coherent policy for human space exploration and space security. As a result, he has created uncertainty and confusion within U.S. industry and the international community. The President's disjointed collection of scientific projects lack guiding principles, plausible objectives, or a roadmap for long-run success. They also have left American astronauts to hitch rides into space on Russian spacecraft. America's capabilities are eroding, and with each passing year will become more difficult to rebuild.

I will reverse this course and set a clear roadmap for space exploration. NASA will retain the intellectual capital to conduct research and to develop new generations of spacecraft for government missions that are not commercially viable, but it will promptly transition out of routine space operations in low Earth orbit as private sector capabilities mature. In improving the competitiveness of U.S. industry, government can play important supporting roles as a steady patron of R&D, an enlightened regulator, and a first buyer or anchor tenant for space goods and services. We will have a space program worthy of a great nation — one that strengthens our national security, builds peaceful engagements with other space-faring nations, and promotes the creation of a growing private sector for space commerce that will make America even stronger in the 21st century.



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# The Future Of The U.S. Space Program: Global Leadership For American Security

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The mission of the U.S. space program is to spur innovation through exploration of the heavens, inspire future generations, and protect our citizens and allies.

**Innovation.** Space is crucial to technological innovation. If we want to have a scientifically trained and competent workforce, we must demonstrate a long-term commitment to the pursuit of innovation and knowledge.

**The Economy.** Space is crucial to the global economy. From agriculture to air transportation, from natural resource management to financial management, it is almost impossible to imagine a world without the space capabilities we have today.

**National Security.** Space is crucial to national security. U.S. and allied space capabilities provide a source of strategic advantage to military and intelligence functions that has no parallel.

**International Standing.** Space is crucial to America's international standing. Independent access to space, the launch of satellites, and the travel of citizens to and from space continue to be seen as major technical achievements that convey not only America's military and economic power, but also the power of American values. The success of private sector enterprises in achieving these objectives opens a new chapter in American leadership.

America has enjoyed a half-century of leadership in space, but now that leadership is eroding despite the hard work of American industry and government personnel. The current purpose and goals of the American space program are difficult to determine. With clear, decisive, and steadfast leadership, space can once again be an engine of technology and commerce. It can help to strengthen America's entrepreneurial spirit and commercial competitiveness, launch new industries and new technologies, protect our security interests, and increase our knowledge.

*"America's space program lies at the intersection of so many important priorities, from technological innovation and economic growth to national security to international leadership. We must never waver in our commitment to this strategic national asset."*

*-Mitt Romney*

# President Obama's Failure: Without Leadership, Capabilities Erode

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Over the past four years, the Obama Administration, through poor policy and outright negligence, has badly weakened one of the hallmarks of American leadership and ingenuity — our nation's space program. For the first time since the dawn of the Space Age, the United States has no clear plan for putting its own astronauts into space. We have a space station that we cannot send astronauts to without Russian transportation. Our unmatched human capital, represented by thousands of highly skilled technicians who know how to build, launch and operate spacecraft, is rapidly eroding.

Nowhere are these failures more apparent than at NASA itself, where President Obama's lack of leadership has had a debilitating impact. NASA has been whipsawed by a lack of strategic focus and the abandonment of the bipartisan consensus for human space exploration created in the aftermath of the tragic loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia. Practical plans for engaging international and commercial partners in the next steps beyond the International Space Station have been shelved, international opportunities to cooperate in robotic explorations of Mars have been squandered, and U.S. partners have reluctantly concluded that the United States is no longer serious about leading in space.

In addition to the troubles at NASA, there are less publicized problems surrounding our national security and commercial space communities. Many of our national security space programs are significantly over budget and behind schedule, and many are designed to meet yesterday's threats. The true engine of our nation's space capabilities is our aerospace industry, but it is suffering as well. The Obama Administration's poor management of programs, its indifference to the industrial base, and the lack of investment in leading edge technological improvements have led to the U.S. aerospace industry's retreat from leading global space markets and innovation.

Today we have a space program befitting a President who rejects American exceptionalism, apologizes for America, and believes we should be just another nation with a flag. We have been put on a path that cedes our global position as the unequivocal leader in

space. The Russians are leading in human spaceflight right now. The Chinese may someday look down at us from the Moon.

A *Popular Science* writer aptly described the President's agenda as "cleaning up space junk, conducting climate research, and forging international celestial harmony." The late Neil Armstrong called it simply "devastating." Because of the President's policies, engineers are moving on. Companies are turning their attention elsewhere. Graduates are aiming for different careers. This national tragedy will be extraordinarily costly to reverse if we do not act soon.

### **WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ABOUT THE OBAMA SPACE PROGRAM:**

**Neil Armstrong, Jim Lovell, And Gene Cernan: "A Coherent Plan For Maintaining America's Leadership In Space Exploration Is No Longer Apparent."** "We will have no rockets to carry humans to low-Earth orbit and beyond for an indeterminate number of years. Congress has mandated the development of rocket launchers and spacecraft to explore the near-solar system beyond Earth orbit. But NASA has not yet announced a convincing strategy for their use. After a half-century of remarkable progress, a coherent plan for maintaining America's leadership in space exploration is no longer apparent." (Neil Armstrong, Jim Lovell, Gene Cernan, "Is Obama Grounding JFK's Space Legacy?" [USA Today](#), 5/24/11)

### **FLASHBACK: OBAMA BREAKS THE SPECIFIC PROMISES HE MADE TO FLORIDA:**

**In 2007, Obama Proposed "Delaying The NASA Constellation Program For Five Years."** "The early education plan will be paid for by delaying the NASA Constellation Program for five years, using purchase cards and the negotiating power of the government to reduce costs of standardized procurement, auctioning surplus federal property, and reducing the erroneous payments identified by the Government Accountability Office, and closing the CEO pay deductibility loophole." ("Barack Obama's Plan For Lifetime Success Through Education," [Obama '08](#), 11/20/07)

- **Obama Campaign: "Delay NASA's Program To Return To The Moon And Journey To Mars."** "To pay for his education program, Obama would eliminate tax-deductibility of CEO pay by corporations and delay NASA's program to return to the moon and then journey to Mars." (Martha T. Moore, "Obama Unveils \$18B Education Plan," [USA Today](#), 11/21/07)

**Later In The Campaign, Obama Changed His Mind: "The Money That's Going Into NASA ... Continues To Go There."** "I mentioned this earlier, I want to tell you that, you know, I know it's still being reported that we were talking about delaying some aspects of the Constellation program to pay for our early education program. I told my staff we're going to find an entirely different offset, because we've got to make sure that the money that's going into NASA for basic research and development continues to go there. That has been a top priority for us." ("Obama: We've Got To Find More Money For Constellation," [The Orlando Sentinel](#), 8/2/08)

**But As President, Obama Ended The Constellation Program.** "When the White House releases his budget proposal Monday, there will be no money for the Constellation program that was supposed to return humans to the moon by 2020. The troubled and expensive Ares I rocket that was to replace the space shuttle to ferry humans to space will be gone, along with money for its bigger brother, the Ares V cargo rocket that was to launch the fuel and supplies needed to take humans back to the moon. There will be no lunar landers, no moon bases, no Constellation program at all." (Robert Block and Mark K. Matthews, "Obama Aims To Ax Moon Mission," [The Orlando Sentinel](#), 1/27/10)

- **In The Words Of Today's Unemployed Space Coast Workers: "We Were Lied To."** "Well we were lied to when Obama came through. He gave us a lot of hope, and supposedly a lot of change. Well I got change in my pocket but the hope is gone." ("High Joblessness In The Home Of U.S. Space Flight," CBS News, [60 Minutes](#), 4/1/12)

# The Romney-Ryan Plan: Securing U.S. Leadership In Space

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America's space program is an integral element of national prestige and power that protects our citizens and allies while inspiring future generations. It is an engine of technological innovation and economic vitality. Rebuilding NASA, restoring U.S. leadership, and creating new opportunities for space commerce will be hard work, but Mitt Romney will strive to rebuild an institution worthy of our aspirations and capable once again of leading the world toward new frontiers.

He will bring together all the stakeholders — from NASA, from the Air Force, from our leading universities, and from commercial enterprises — to set goals, identify missions, and define a pathway forward that is guided, coherent, and worthy of our great nation.

*"A strong space program is vital to a strong America. We must focus our space program on our top national priorities and commit the resources necessary to achieve success."*

*-Paul Ryan*

## **Space Priorities For A Romney-Ryan Administration:**

**Focusing NASA.** A strong and successful NASA does not require more funding, it needs clearer priorities. Romney will ensure that NASA has practical and sustainable missions. There will be a balance of pragmatic and top-priority science with inspirational and groundbreaking exploration programs.

**Partnering Internationally.** Part of leadership is also engaging and working with our allies and the international community. Romney will be clear about the nation's space objectives and will invite friends and allies to cooperate with America in achieving mutually beneficial goals.

**Strengthening Security.** Space-based information capabilities are the central nervous system of the U.S. national security community. If America is to remain strong as a nation, the national security space programs must remain strong and sustainable. Romney is committed to a robust national security space program and will direct the development of capabilities that defend and increase the resilience of space assets. He will also direct the development of capabilities that

will deter adversaries seeking to damage or destroy the space capabilities of the U.S. and its allies.

**Revitalizing Industry.** A strong aerospace industry must be able to compete for and win business in foreign markets. Romney will work to ease trade limitations, as appropriate, on foreign sales of U.S. space goods and will work to expand access to new markets.

### **Embracing A Robust Role For Commercial Space:**

Mitt Romney recognizes the exciting opportunity that the commercial space industry offers for technological innovation and commerce. He will establish a clear framework that ensures NASA serves as a constructive partner for private sector initiatives.

- NASA will set the goals and lead the way in human space exploration, working from a clear roadmap in partnership with our allies, research institutions, and the private sector.
- NASA will look whenever possible to the private sector to provide repeatable space-based services like human and cargo transport to and from low Earth orbit. It will provide clear and timely guidance as to expected needs so the private sector can plan and invest accordingly.
- The private sector will handle commercially viable activities — from satellite launches to space tourism to new businesses and industries that U.S. entrepreneurs will no doubt create if provided a friendly environment for doing so. NASA will license technology as soon as is practicable, and aim to facilitate the growth of this sector.

All of these efforts will produce technologies that can be commercialized throughout our economy, spurring growth and job creation and strengthening our competitiveness.

*“All Americans should take extraordinary pride in the contributions of private sector innovation to our nation’s accomplishments in space. The successful docking of the SpaceX Dragon capsule with the International Space Station was an achievement on par with any in recent memory.”*  
**-Mitt Romney**

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# An Open Letter From Leaders In America's Space Program

*Initially released January 27, 2012*

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The U.S. space program is a strategic national asset, which makes critical contributions to our scientific knowledge, technological innovation, economic competitiveness, national security, and international leadership. We have watched with dismay as President Obama dismantled the structure that was guiding both the government and commercial space sectors, while providing no purpose or vision or mission. This failure of leadership has thrust the space program into disarray and triggered a dangerous erosion of our technical workforce and capabilities. In short, we have a space program unworthy of a great nation.

Restoring the U.S. space program to greatness will require the leadership, management skill, and commitment to American exceptionalism possessed by only one candidate in this race: Mitt Romney. We support Mitt's candidacy and believe that his approach to space policy will produce results instead of empty promises. As his long record of success in both the private and public sectors attests, Mitt will do more than provide our space program with an inspiring vision and mission of exploration. He will also set aggressive yet achievable goals, adhere to realistic budgets, and execute on a carefully drawn plan.

As president, Mitt Romney will facilitate close collaboration not only within the government's civil and national security space sectors, but also with the private sector and with research institutions. He will create conditions for a strong and competitive commercial space industry that can contribute greatly to our national capabilities and goals. And he will ensure that NASA returns its focus to the project of manned space exploration that uniquely affirms American strength and values around the globe. Under his leadership, America will once again lead the world in space.

## **Scott Pace, Chair of the Romney Space Policy Advisory Group**

Director, Space Policy Institute, The Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University  
Former Assistant Director for Space and Aeronautics, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

## **Mark Albrecht**

Chairman of the Board, USSpace  
Former Executive Secretary, National Space Council

## **Eric Anderson**

Chairman and CEO, Space Adventures

## **Gene Cernan**

Commander, Apollo XVII

## **Bob Crippen**

Pilot, First Space Shuttle Mission  
Former Director, NASA Space Shuttle Program

## **Michael Griffin**

Former NASA Administrator  
Former Head of the Space Department, The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

## **Peter Marquez**

Former Director of Space Policy, National Security Council  
Former Director of Special Programs, Department of Defense

## **William Martel**

Associate Professor of International Security Studies, The Fletcher School at Tufts University  
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*\*Organization names are provided for identification purposes only.*