



## **Human Space Exploration Update (June 8-12, 2015)**

### **Congress**

- **Senate Appropriations Committee Markup:** [Commercial Crew Bears Brunt of Senate's NASA Cut](#) The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a 2016 NASA spending bill that totaled \$239 million less than the White House request. At \$18.29 billion, however, the Senate measure equals \$280 million more than the agency received in 2015. The House version for 2016 totals \$18.529 billion. However, the House version shifts some White House favored spending from commercial crew and space technology to the Space Launch System exploration rocket and planetary science. (See also: [Bolden Blasts Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Cut to Commercial Crew](#))
- **House Space Subcommittee Leadership:** [Babin becomes Johnson Space Center's third new ally in Congress](#) Texas has assembled new political clout for NASA and its Johnson Space Center in Houston, the agency installation responsible for developing U.S. human spacecraft and managing their operations. Congressman Brian Babin, an East Texas dentist, was recently appointed chairman of the U.S. House subcommittee on space.

### **International Space Station**

- **Scott Kelly:** [Scott Kelly Checks in from the International Space Station](#) Kelly reflects on the first weeks of a year-long mission to the International Space Station that began with his launching in late March with Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko. There's lots of scientific research and maintenance, says Kelly, who spent about six months on the station several years ago. Kelly says the secret to his long stay is pacing his work.
- **Crew Returns:** [U.S.-Russian-Italian crew returns to Earth](#) NASA's Terry Virts, the European Space Agency's Samantha Cristoforetti and Russia's Anton Shkaplerov descended safely to Earth in Kazakhstan early Thursday, ending nearly 200 days in orbit aboard the International Space Station. (See also: [Italian astronaut on Space Station sets new mission duration record by a woman](#))

### **Orion and Space Launch System**

- **Orion Heat Shield:** <http://www.nasa.gov/langley/orion-heat-shield-completes-journey-to-langley> The Orion heat shield that was critical to the success of the spacecraft's first flight last December arrived at NASA's Langley Research Center Thursday, June 4. The 16.5-foot-diameter heat shield will be integrated onto a high-fidelity Orion mockup later this year and undergo water-impact tests at Langley's Hydro Impact Basin next spring.
- **SLS Engine Test:** [NASA and Aerojet Fire Up Stennis with Full Duration SLS Engine Test Fire #3](#) NASA's prototype rocket engine for the first stage of the Space Launch System exploration rocket fired for the third time in a series of ground tests at the Stennis Space Center. During the

test firings, engineers are sizing up changes to generate more power from the RS-25 development engines, rockets that once powered the space shuttle.

### **Commercial Space Transportation**

- **SpaceX Pad Abort Test:** <http://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-commercial-crew-partner-spacex-achieves-pad-abort-milestone-approval-0> NASA has approved a \$30 million milestone payment to SpaceX under the agency's Commercial Crew Integrated Capability (CCiCap) agreement with the company following a recent and successful pad abort test of its Crew Dragon spacecraft.

### **Space Budgets, Policy, Missions, Benefits, International ...**

- **America's Investment in Space:** ['Thank you NASA!'](#) Retired NASA astronaut Clayton Anderson expresses gratitude for his three decades at NASA's Johnson Space Center. The space agency represents an investment for Americans, he writes in an op-ed that touches on advances developed through NASA that range from improved health care to power tools. (See also: [Clayton Anderson shares his journey to space](#))
- **Mars Mission:** [A manned mission to Mars: How NASA could do it](#) Human explorers could reach the Martian surface by 2039 without stressing NASA's budget, according to a study led by the agency's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The study opens the door for a precursor mission that would take astronauts to a base on the Martian moon Phobos by 2033. The base hardware for the Martian explorations would be launched using NASA Space Launch System exploration rocket. Details of the plan were presented in May.
- **US-China Space Cooperation:** [Buzz Aldrin: Why the U.S. Should Partner with China in Space](#) Apollo 11's Buzz Aldrin urges an end to a U.S. ban on cooperation with China in space. Future cooperation, exhibited first at the U.S. led, 15 nation International Space Station, would enhance science and safety as a global partnership expands into cis-lunar space and the human exploration of Mars

### **Florida**

- **Voice of Apollo Passes:** [Jack King, NASA's 'Voice of Apollo,' dies at 84](#) Jack King, a veteran of NASA public affairs in the agency's early years, described the countdown and historic launch of Apollo 11, the first mission to place humans on the moon.
- **FL Company Wants to Train Space Passengers:** [Space-training company awaits congressional decision](#) Starfighters, a Florida company with plans to train passengers preparing for commercial spaceflight, awaits a change of heart by the FAA. The company plans to use former F-104 fighter jets to prepare prospective passengers for high gravitational forces and aerial maneuvers. The high performance military aircraft are considered experimental by the FAA.

**Citizens for Space Exploration** – a pro-space, taxpayer, grassroots advocacy group ([http://www.bayareahouston.com/content/c\\_s\\_e/c\\_s\\_e](http://www.bayareahouston.com/content/c_s_e/c_s_e)) – has travelled to Washington, D.C. the past 23 years to meet face-to-face with Members/staff of Congress to discuss the value of America's investment in space exploration. In order to sustain that dialogue on a regular basis, Citizens distributes "Space Exploration Update" to Congressional offices on a weekly basis. The intent is to provide an easy, quick way to stay abreast of key human space exploration program and policy developments.