

OPENING STATEMENT
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE SCIENCE AND APPLICATIONS

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Today we continue our hearings on the studies that have been submitted to the new Administration. This is indeed a time for new ideas and an opportunity to address new challenges.

Over the past several years, this Subcommittee has been active in developing the strengths of the space program to advance the national agenda. We have found the space program to offer a great resource for addressing problems in the environment, in education, in foreign policy as well as in science. As we look to the future, America will find new strength in its space investment.

Yesterday we tried to focus on broad policy areas affecting the space program. Today we intend to look at a few specific technical goals. Let me mention a few.

Yesterday, we heard about the high priority we should place on the Mission to Planet Earth. This may truly be a mission of great urgency. The effects of global warming, ozone depletion, and other environmental changes will be felt within our lifetimes. We must act to apply every technological tool at our disposal to understanding and correcting these problems.

We have also supported, in the past, a commitment to manned exploration of Mars. This is not only the ultimate goal but it is an inevitable one.

In October 1985, the Subcommittee conducted an official visit to the Soviet Union to encourage civilian space cooperation with the Soviets. We discussed at great length not only the manned Mars mission, and the global change issues, but we also explored other ideas. One such concept was in radioastronomy and the possibility of flying two independent radio telescope antennas. This would allow scientists to add their data together and increase the resolution with which we view stellar objects.

These cooperative programs are not only exciting scientifically but they will greatly benefit our world leadership role in space.

The Bush administration today has a marvelous array of goals to choose from. This is a rare opportunity few Presidents have had. Our witnesses today have given a great deal of thought to these choices and we are here to give them the full benefit of discussion.

Today, we are privileged to have with us a number of experts in space policy and in science and technology. We look forward to your testimony.

I would now like to turn to the Ranking Republican, Mr. Sensenbrenner, for any comments he may have.