

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Private Citizens Speak Out for The Vision for Space Exploration

Washington, D.C., June 5, 2006 – As Congressional markup of the NASA budget approaches, the Space Exploration Alliance (SEA) launched today its 2006 Space Blitz on Congress to demonstrate citizen support for space exploration.

The Space Exploration Alliance brings together the sixteen leading non-profit space organizations to represent over 100,000 Americans, the largest group of space-interested citizens in the nation.

The SEA Space Blitz is a legislative outreach event that brings together ordinary people from around the country to voice their support for the Vision for Space Exploration and for full funding of a space program that the US can be proud of. These citizens donate their time and pay their own way because they believe that the US must continue to lead the future of space exploration and development.

According to Greg Allison, Executive Vice President of the National Space Society and an organizer of this year's event, "We are here to tell Congress that space is deeply important to the American people. We are here to keep the Vision for Space Exploration a key priority for the United States. Congressional votes on space funding matter to the members of SEA and will determine how we vote in the upcoming elections this November."

The main focus of this year's Blitz is to request that Congress fund NASA at the full authorized level of \$17.9 billion, which would require an additional \$1.1 billion over the President's request. This level is required to enable NASA to implement the full mandate of the 2005 NASA Authorization Act, in which Congress endorsed the Vision for Space Exploration.

Specifically, the additional funds will allow NASA to aggressively develop the next generation of space exploration vehicles, while pursuing other important objectives like: Connecting upcoming lunar exploration work with future human exploration of Mars; stimulating private sector efforts with programs like Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) and the Centennial Challenge program; and sustaining vital science missions, including the Terrestrial Planet Finder (TPF), a dedicated probe of the Planet

Jupiter's moon Europa, and the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOPHIA).

During this blitz, the organizers plan to take these messages to the offices of the members of the House Committee on Appropriations, plus key members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations and other Congressional leaders.

The 2006 Space Blitz represents the third straight year that SEA has come together to demonstrate its support for space before Congress. It is also the second in a series of four legislative programs that SEA is planning for 2006.

According to Chris Carberry, Blitz Chairman and Political Director of the Mars Society, "It is our goal to keep up the pressure on Congress - not just to visit Congress once a year, but to bring the message to our legislators and their staff continually."

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About the Space Exploration Alliance

The Space Exploration Alliance (SEA) is an unprecedented partnership of the nation's premier non-profit space organizations with a combined membership of more than 100,000 people throughout the United States.

The Alliance includes the American Astronautical Society, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Aerospace Industries Association, Aerospace States Association, the California Space Authority, Federation of Galaxy Explorers, Florida Space Authority, Moon Society, Mars Society, NASA Alumni League, National Coalition of Spaceport States, National Society of Black Engineers, National Space Society, The Planetary Society, Space Access Society, the Space Generation Foundation, and the X PRIZE Foundation.

SEA members believe that the Vision is a bold and substantial mandate for human and robotic exploration of the solar system that will assure American technological and scientific preeminence in the 21st century.

Website: www.spaceexplorationalliance.org

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