

to explore our solar system and universe, and push the boundaries of flight.

All too often, changes in administrations lead to upended plans at NASA. While ever-changing goals and priorities challenge all agencies, it is particularly problematic for NASA, which undertakes extremely complex programs that literally take decades to accomplish.

The bill before us today provides the necessary guidance and support to ensure NASA's success and meet the rising challenge that the Chinese Communist Party poses to the United States in space.

I hope that the other Chamber will seize the opportunity to take up this important piece of legislation before the end of this year so that NASA will have the certainty that it needs to carry out the bold activities that we have tasked it with.

I also thank the chairman of the Science Committee, my friend from Oklahoma, FRANK LUCAS, for his support in drafting this legislation, as well as his leadership on the committee over the past 6 years. I also thank Ranking Members LOFGREN and SORENSEN for their collegiality through this process and for their important contributions to the bill.

Finally, I thank the staff for their tireless work. Charlie Scales, Kelsey McBarron, Vishal Amin, Brent Blevins, and Tom Hammond from the majority staff and Pam Whitney and Ashlee Wilkins from the minority staff all put in a lot of time to get us where we are today. I thank them, as well.

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Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MIKE GARCIA) to speak on the bill.

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman LUCAS and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology staff for their leadership on this very important bill.

Mr. Speaker, you can't tell the story of my district without also telling the story of NASA, whether it is Chuck Yeager breaking the sound barrier in the X-1 about 77 years ago, Pete Knight setting the record as the fastest man ever in the X-15 in 1967, the development and first flights of the space shuttle in the seventies and eighties, or now the upcoming first flight of the X-59, which is a commercial supersonic aircraft that will bring supersonic flight back to the United States for the commercial industry.

NASA's DNA is simply ingrained in the Antelope Valley, or as we affectionately call it in my district, the aerospace valley. That is why I am so proud to rise in support of the NASA Reauthorization Act of 2024.

This bill advances the Artemis program, returning Americans to the Moon for the first time in nearly 50 years. It supports our still-emerging commercial space economy, which is

essential for Artemis, national security, and our scientific interests. It also includes my bill, the ACERO Act, to support work already underway at NASA to integrate unmanned aerial vehicles and ground systems into wildfire response, which will help stop fires before they spread.

We need to ensure that our firefighters are equipped like combat warfighters on the battlefield with cutting-edge technology to keep them safe, help them accomplish the mission as quickly as possible, and put the fires out as quickly as possible.

These UAVs will act as a force multiplier for firefighters to help protect communities like those in my district and usher in the next generation of firefighting technology so that our firefighters make sure that they come home safely at night.

This bill is about the next chapter for NASA, a chapter that starts in the aerospace valley and reaches all the way out to the edges of our solar system.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to support this bill, and I encourage my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to do the same.

Mrs. FOUSHEE. Mr. Speaker, I have no requests for time to speak on this bill, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 8958, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, NASA has long been a driving force in space exploration, but as I have said previously, we cannot take the decades of American leadership in space for granted. This is especially true as the growing interest in space drives greater activity and competition into the domain, particularly from the Chinese Communist Party.

An effective and efficient NASA is the key to maintaining U.S. space leadership. Congress must provide NASA with clear, forward-thinking guidance.

This is why one of my top priorities on the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology this Congress is passage of the bill currently before us.

I fully support the thoughtful guidance this bill provides NASA. It ensures NASA continues making progress toward returning humans to the Moon, developing the best strategy for NASA's future operations in LEO, and promotes a range of scientific research and technological development activities.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate Ranking Member LOFGREN and her staff for working with me and my staff to craft this important bill, and I look forward to working with our colleagues in the Senate to see this across the finish line.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8958, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### ACCESSING SATELLITE DATA TO ENABLE NEW DISCOVERIES ACT

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6219) to require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish a program to identify, evaluate, acquire, and disseminate commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery in order to satisfy the scientific, operational, and educational requirements of the Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6219

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Accessing Satellite Data to Enable New Discoveries Act" or the "ASCEND Act".

#### SEC. 2. COMMERCIAL SATELLITE DATA.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Section 60501 of title 51, United States Code, states that the goal for the Earth Science program of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (referred to in this section as "NASA") shall be to pursue a program of Earth observations, research, and applications activities to better understand the Earth, how it supports life, and how human activities affect its ability to do so in the future.

(2) Section 50115 of title 51, United States Code, states that the Administrator of NASA shall, to the extent possible and while satisfying the scientific or educational requirements of NASA, and where appropriate, of other Federal agencies and scientific researchers, acquire, where cost effective, space-based and airborne commercial Earth remote sensing data, services, distribution, and applications from a commercial provider.

(3) The Administrator of NASA established the Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition Pilot Program in 2019 to identify, validate, and acquire from commercial sources data that support the Earth science research and application goals.

(4) The Administrator of NASA has—

(A) determined that the pilot program described in paragraph (3) has been a success, as described in the final evaluation entitled "Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition Program Pilot Evaluation Report" issued in 2020;

(B) established a formal process for evaluating and onboarding new commercial vendors in such pilot program;

(C) increased the number of commercial vendors and commercial data products available through such pilot program; and

(D) expanded procurement arrangements with commercial vendors to broaden user access to provide commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery to federally funded researchers.

(b) COMMERCIAL SATELLITE DATA ACQUISITION PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 603 of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“§ 60307. Commercial Satellite Data Acquisition Program**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall establish within the Earth Science Division of the Science Mission Directorate a program to acquire and disseminate cost-effective and appropriate commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery in order to satisfy the scientific, operational, and educational requirements of the Administration, and where appropriate, of other Federal agencies and scientific researchers to augment or complement the suite of Earth observations acquired by the Administration, other United States Government agencies, and international partners.

“(b) DATA PUBLICATION AND TRANSPARENCY.—The terms and conditions of commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery acquisitions under the program described in subsection (a) shall not prevent—

“(1) the publication of commercial data or imagery for scientific purposes; or

“(2) the publication of information that is derived from, incorporates, or enhances the original commercial data or imagery of a vendor.

“(c) AUTHORIZATION.—In carrying out the program under this section, the Administrator may—

“(1) procure commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery from commercial vendors to advance scientific research and applications in accordance with subsection (a); and

“(2) establish or modify end-use license terms and conditions to allow for the widest-possible use of procured commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery by individuals other than NASA-funded users, consistent with the goals of the program.

“(d) UNITED STATES VENDORS.—Commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery referred to in subsections (a) and (c) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, be procured from United States vendors.(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following information regarding the agreements, vendors, license terms, and uses of commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery under this section:

“(1)(A) In the case of the initial report, a list of all agreements that are providing commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery to NASA as of the date of the report.

“(B) For each subsequent report, a list of all agreements that have provided commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery to NASA during the reporting period.

“(2) A description of the end-use license terms and conditions for each such vendor.

“(3) A description of the manner in which each such agreement is advancing scientific research and applications, including priorities recommended by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine decadal surveys.

“(4) Information specifying whether the Administrator has entered into an agree-

ment with a commercial vendor or a Federal agency that permits the use of data and imagery by Federal Government employees, contractors, or non-Federal users.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for chapter 603 of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“60307. Commercial Satellite Data Acquisition Program.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. FOUSHEE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 6219, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the ASCEND Act, led by my colleague, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey.

The ASCEND Act creates a permanent commercial satellite data acquisition program within NASA's Science Mission Directorate.

As the global space sector rapidly evolves, it is critical for NASA to have access to the very best tools and research our Nation has to offer, ensuring its continued leadership as the world's premier space agency.

This bill supports those efforts by enabling NASA to procure remote sensing data from commercial providers under the new acquisition program. By taking this step, researchers will have access to cutting-edge datasets and imagery obtained from the commercial space sector. These resources will play a significant role in advancing research and development in vital areas, such as precision agriculture and natural disaster monitoring.

By utilizing industry data, our NASA researchers can obtain valuable insights that enhance their already innovative work. The more knowledge we acquire, the better we can lead in this field.

The bill also requires the NASA Administrator to submit an annual report to Congress on the uses and impact of commercial data products and licensing agreements. This information will be valuable for us as we monitor and support the program's efforts.

As we look forward to the future, maintaining our leadership in the space sector will depend on various factors, including our collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors. Allowing NASA to expand its commercial data procurement program through the ASCEND Act will only help achieve the agency's current and long-term goals.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative KEAN and Representative BONAMICI for

working together to get this bill to the floor today. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. FOUSHEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of the ASCEND Act, which is sponsored by Representatives KEAN and BONAMICI. Their bill would codify the existing program, the Commercial Satellite Data Acquisition program, after NASA successfully demonstrated the viability of purchasing commercial small-satellite data to support NASA's Earth system science programs.

During evaluation of the initial pilot project, the data acquisitions were shown to complement the suite of Earth observations taken by NASA's fleet of satellites and instruments. NASA has continued the activities as the Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition Program. This bill capitalizes on the accomplishments of the initial pilot by authorizing the program.

It also authorizes the Administrator, in carrying out the program, to procure commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery from commercial vendors and to establish or modify end-use license terms and conditions to allow for the use of the procured data and imagery by individuals other than NASA-funded users.

The bill includes measures to support data publication and transparency, reporting to Congress on the program, and the widest possible use of the data procured under the program consistent with program goals.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the bill's sponsors for their work on the ASCEND Act, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. KEAN), to speak on his bill.

Mr. KEAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my gratitude to the Speaker's Office, the majority leader, Chairman LUCAS, and my colleagues for their collaborative efforts in addressing the urgency of passing my bill, H.R. 6219, the Accessing Satellite Data to Enable New Discoveries Act, the ASCEND Act.

I also extend my appreciation to Representative BONAMICI for co-leading the ASCEND Act, which will establish a program through which NASA can procure satellite imagery and data from commercially operated satellites to support and complement its science objectives.

Space, once dominated by government actors, is now home to a growing variety of commercial operators. This commercial space industry includes commercial operators of small satellite constellations that produce remote sensing imagery and data. NASA could obtain cost-effective imagery and data for its science missions by purchasing such products from these commercial providers as one of their many customers.

In 2017, NASA established a pilot program called the Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition, CSDA, Program to identify and to evaluate commercial capabilities that could add value to NASA research. The program also established new processes to acquire and use such products.

The CSDA pilot program proved to be a great success, with participating scientists finding commercial datasets to be both reliable and highly valuable for a wide range of research applications.

The ASCEND Act seeks to build upon the success of the pilot program and to permanently authorize the CSDA Program within NASA, thus ensuring the program's continued growth and longevity.

This bill directs the NASA Administrator to establish a commercial satellite data acquisition program within NASA's Science Mission Directorate, allowing scientists and agencies to access cost-effective commercial satellite data products.

The bill also allows the Administrator to both obtain commercial Earth remote sensing imagery and data needed by agencies and scientists and to also encourage growth of private-sector space entities.

Additionally, this legislation requires the Administrator to submit a report to Congress describing the implementation of the program, including the types of data acquired, the sources of that data, its uses within NASA, and any impacts.

Not only does this program benefit NASA scientists, but it also supports federally funded and accredited researchers across various agencies, such as NOAA, USDA, or DOI, as well as Federal grantees, including the National Science Foundation and other agencies.

By utilizing a diverse set of capabilities and data sources, and leveraging advancements in the private sector, we are ensuring that America remains at the forefront of scientific discovery and technological advancements for generations to come.

Now is an important time for Congress to reaffirm our support for this program by enacting it into statute, thus ensuring its continued growth and success for the Federal scientific community.

Access to such timely, high-quality satellite data is essential for improving our understanding of natural disasters, enhancing response capabilities, and mitigating impacts, especially for flood-prone coastal areas like New Jersey. This data will help protect our communities by informing more accurate predictions and better preparation efforts.

The ASCEND Act demonstrates a strong commitment to advancing our scientific capabilities, such as by providing data that would enhance disaster preparedness and response efforts and by supporting commercial space efforts.

This bipartisan legislation reinforces our dedication to promoting sound re-

search and innovation in space exploration and ensuring NASA remains at the forefront of scientific discovery and public service.

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Again, I thank the Speaker's Office, the majority leader, and Chairman LUCAS for helping advance this impactful legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mrs. FOUSHEE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers to speak on this bill, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Again, I thank Representatives KEAN and BONAMICI for their bipartisan efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6219, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules and pass:

S. 2228;  
H.R. 8958; and  
S. 3764.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

#### BUILDING CHIPS IN AMERICA ACT OF 2023

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2228) to amend the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 to clarify the scope of a major Federal action under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 with respect to certain projects relating to the production of semiconductors, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 257, nays 125, not voting 49, as follows:

[Roll No. 440]

YEAS—257

Aderholt	Good (VA)	Norman
Aguilar	Gooden (TX)	Nunn (IA)
Alford	Graves (MO)	Oberholte
Allen	Green (TN)	Owens
Allred	Griffith	Palmer
Amodei	Grothman	Panetta
Arrington	Guthrie	Pappas
Babin	Harder (CA)	Pelosi
Bacon	Harris	Peltola
Baird	Harshbarger	Pence
Balderson	Hern	Perez
Banks	Higgins (LA)	Perry
Barr	Hill	Peters
Bentz	Himes	Pettersen
Bera	Hinson	Pfleger
Bergman	Horsford	Posey
Bice	Houchin	Quigley
Biggs	Houlihan	Reschenthaler
Bilirakis	Hoyer	Rogers (AL)
Bishop (GA)	Hudson	Rogers (KY)
Boebert	Huizenga	Rose
Bost	Hunt	Rouzer
Brecheen	Issa	Roy
Brown	Jackson (TX)	Ruiz
Bucshon	James	Rulli
Budzinski	Johnson (LA)	Rutherford
Burchett	Johnson (SD)	Ryan
Burgess	Jordan	Scalise
Burlison	Joyce (OH)	Schneider
Calvert	Joyce (PA)	Scholten
Cammack	Kaptur	Schrier
Caraveo	Kean (NJ)	Schweikert
Carbajal	Keating	Scott, Austin
Carey	Kelly (MS)	Scott, David
Carl	Kelly (PA)	Self
Carter (GA)	Kiggans (VA)	Sessions
Carter (TX)	Kildee	Sewell
Cartwright	Kiley	Sherrill
Cline	Kilmer	Simpson
Cloud	Kim (CA)	Slotkin
Clyde	Kim (NJ)	Smith (MO)
Cole	LaLota	Smith (NE)
Comer	LaMalfa	Smith (NJ)
Connolly	Landsman	Smith (WA)
Correa	Langworthy	Smucker
Courtney	Larsen (WA)	Sorensen
Craig	Larson (CT)	Soto
Crane	Latta	Spanberger
Crenshaw	LaTurner	Spartz
Crow	Lawler	Stanton
Cuellar	Lee (FL)	Steel
D'Esposito	Lee (NV)	Stefanik
Davids (KS)	Lesko	Steil
Davidson	Letlow	Steube
Davis (NC)	Lopez	Strickland
De La Cruz	Loudermilk	Strong
DelBene	Lucas	Suozy
Deluzio	Luna	Sykes
Diaz-Balart	Luttrell	Tiffany
Donalds	Lynch	Timmons
Duarte	Mace	Titus
Dunn (FL)	Malliotakis	Torres (CA)
Edwards	Mann	Trone
Ellzey	Manning	Turner
Emmer	Massie	Valadao
Estes	Mast	Van Drew
Ezell	Matsui	Van Dyne
Fallon	McBath	Van Orden
Feenstra	McCaul	Vargas
Ferguson	McClain	Vasquez
Finstad	McCormick	Veasey
Fitzpatrick	Meuser	Walberg
Fleischmann	Miller (OH)	Waltz
Fletcher	Miller (WV)	Wasserman
Flood	Miller-Meeks	Schultz
Fong	Mills	Weber (TX)
Fox	Molinaro	Webster (FL)
Franklin, Scott	Moolenaar	Wenstrup
Fulcher	Moore (AL)	Wild
Gaetz	Moore (UT)	Williams (NY)
Garamendi	Moran	Williams (TX)
Garcia, Mike	Moskowitz	Wilson (SC)
Golden (ME)	Moulton	Wittman
Gomez	Mrvan	Womack
Gonzales, Tony	Newhouse	Yakym
Gonzalez, V.	Nickel	Zinke

NAYS—125

Adams	Barragan	Blumenauer
Amo	Bean (FL)	Blunt Rochester
Auchincloss	Beatty	Bonamici
Balint	Beyer	Boyle (PA)