

Akin

Space Law, Regulation and Policy Update



June 28, 2024

[Subscribe](#) | [Share](#)   

Good Afternoon!

This is Akin's biweekly policy newsletter on space policy and regulatory developments, providing information on major space headlines and forthcoming space-related events and hearings:

On The Hill

Articles and Quotes

House Appropriations Committee Pares Back Space Force Budget Request *(SpaceNews)*

The House Appropriations Committee advanced an \$833 billion defense spending bill for fiscal year 2025, \$16.5 billion below President Biden's request. The bill was approved by a 34-25 vote and allocates \$28.7 billion for the Space Force, approximately \$900 million less than requested. Cuts affect several Space Force research, development and procurement programs, both classified and unclassified.

Senate Armed Services Committee Advances 2025 Defense Policy Bill *(SpaceNews)*

The Senate Armed Services Committee approved its version of the fiscal year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act on June 14, and it now moves to the Senate floor. The bill includes a compromise on the transfer of Air National Guard space units to the active-duty Space Force.

House Intelligence Chair Blasts White House Over Russia's Space Nuke Threat *(SpaceNews)*

House Intelligence Committee Chair Mike Turner (R-OH) criticized the Biden administration for a lack of transparency regarding intelligence on Russia's potential development of a space-based nuclear weapon. At a Center for Strategic and International Studies meeting, Turner accused the administration of withholding information about the Russian anti-satellite weapon program and likened its significance to the Cuban Missile Crisis.

AIA President and CEO Raises Concerns About House Appropriations Committee Bill for FY25 *(SpaceNews)*

Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) President and CEO Eric Fanning expressed gratitude to the House Committee on Appropriations for their investment in NASA and NOAA space

programs within the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies funding bill for fiscal year 2025. However, he noted disappointment in the reduction of NASA's budget below the President's request, highlighting missed opportunities for space exploration and STEM initiatives.

Committee Releases FY25 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (House Appropriations Committee)

The House Appropriations Committee released the Fiscal Year 2025 bill for the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee on June 25.

Introduced Legislation

The House passed H.R. 8774, the Department of Defense spending bill, in a 212-200 vote on Friday, June 28. Of note, the Space Force was allocated the following:

- \$5,146,272,000 for operations and maintenance
- \$3,933,719,000 for procurement
- \$18,279,469,000 for research and development.

On Wednesday, June 26, the FY25 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Act was approved by its Subcommittee. The House is planning to pass all 12 appropriations measures before the August recess.

Please find our Space Legislation Tracker [here](#).

Recent and Upcoming Congressional Hearings

July 1 - July 12, 2024

There are no upcoming hearings in the Senate or the House.

In The Executive Branch



Articles and Quotes

Boeing Sent Two Astronauts into Space. Now It Needs to Get Them Home. (Wall Street Journal)

NASA and Boeing have delayed the return of astronauts Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams on the Starliner vehicle due to helium leaks and thruster issues. Originally planned for eight days, their mission is now extended to about 20 days. NASA and Boeing are conducting thorough analyses before authorizing the astronauts' return. The space station has adequate supplies for an extended stay, and Starliner can remain docked for up to 45 days.

U.S. to Rely on Commercial Satellites to Image Spacecraft in Orbit (SpaceNews)

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) is seeking input from commercial satellite imagery companies to monitor objects in Earth's orbit. On June 12, the NGA

released a request for information targeting the non-Earth imagery (NEI) market, which focuses on imaging spacecraft, satellites and space debris.

Blue Origin, SpaceX, ULA to Compete for \$5.6 Billion in Pentagon Launch Contracts (SpaceNews)

The U.S. Space Force has awarded Blue Origin, SpaceX and United Launch Alliance contracts for the National Security Space Launch Phase 3 program, potentially totaling \$5.6 billion over five years. These companies will compete for launch orders from fiscal year 2025 to 2029.

Pentagon Embracing SpaceX's Starshield for Future Military Satcom (SpaceNews)

In a stark illustration of how rapidly the satellite communications landscape is shifting toward large constellations of smaller satellites in low-Earth orbit, the Defense Department plans to add more than 100 of SpaceX's Starshield satellites to its future satcom architecture.

Redwire Wins Contract for VLEO Demonstration (SpaceNews)

Redwire has been awarded a contract to act as the prime mission integrator for a DARPA satellite equipped with an innovative propulsion system for very low Earth orbit (VLEO). The satellite, named SabreSat, will support government intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions and will feature "air-breathing" electric propulsion systems developed through DARPA's Otter program.

Space Force Taps Four Firms for Laser Network Project (SpaceNews)

The Space Systems Command (SSC) awarded contracts to Blue Origin, CACI International, General Atomics and Viasat to develop prototypes for laser communication terminals. This initiative marks the first phase of the \$100 million Enterprise Space Terminal program. The selected companies will compete to design and prototype optical communications terminals, which will function as high-powered modems using lasers to transmit and receive data over long distances.

ExLabs Wins Funds to Accelerate Space Robotics (SpaceNews)

Exploration Laboratories, a startup specializing in space resources, received a \$1.9 million Tactical Funding Increase (TACFI) from SpaceWERX to expedite the development of technology for the autonomous capture of space objects.

Lockheed Martin Wins Contract to Build U.S. Geostationary Weather Satellites (SpaceNews)

Lockheed Martin has been contracted to develop and build the next generation of U.S. geostationary weather satellites for NOAA. The contract's estimated value, with options, is \$2.27 billion and involves three Geostationary Extended Observations (GeoXO) satellites and options for four more.

Lockheed Martin Secures \$977.5 Million Contract Extension for Missile-Warning Satellites (SpaceNews)

On June 21, the Pentagon awarded Lockheed Martin Space a \$977.5 million contract extension for the continued development, testing and on-orbit support of two geosynchronous missile-warning satellites. This extension increases the total value of Lockheed Martin's contract for the Next-Generation Overhead Persistent Infrared (Next-Gen OPIR) program to \$8.2 billion.

NASA Awards SpaceX Contract for Space Station Deorbit Vehicle (SpaceNews)

NASA awarded SpaceX an \$843 million contract to develop the U.S. Deorbit Vehicle (USDV) for the final phases of deorbiting the International Space Station around the end of the decade.

Family Whose Roof Was Damaged by Space Debris Files Claims Against NASA (Ars Technica)

This potentially precedent-setting suit, related to damages caused by a battery pack jettisoned from the International Space Station in 2021, advances claims under the Federal Torts Claims Act and may be an indicator about the way NASA will handle such claims going forward.

Federal Agency Space News

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NASA's Wallops Flight Facility to Launch Student Experiments (June 14, 2024)

NASA, Boeing to Discuss Starliner's Mission (June 14, 2024)

NASA Awards Contract for Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory Operations (June 17, 2024)

NASA Awards Logistic Services, Management Contract (June 18, 2024)

NASA Updates Coverage for US Spacewalks 90, 91 Outside Space Station (June 18, 2024)

Augmented Reality Speeds Spacecraft Construction at NASA Goddard (June 20, 2024)

NASA CubeSats Loaded for Launch (June 20, 2024)

NASA's SLS Rocket: Block 1 vs. Block 1B Configuration (June 21, 2024)

NASA Advances Research to Grow Habitats in Space from Fungi (June 26, 2024)

Federal Aviation Administration

FAA and EASA Pledge Strong Cooperation to Address Aviation Challenges of the Next Decade (June 13, 2024)

U.S. Space Force

Space Test Course Integrates Satellite Operations into Curriculum for First Time (June 17, 2024)

98th Space Range Squadron Takes Warfighter Readiness to Next Level (June 18, 2024)

Connecting with Industry Partners a Priority for Space Systems Command (June 21, 2024)

Jones Underscores Importance of US, Australian Alliance at Australian Space Summit (June 24, 2024)

DAF Releases FY25 Special Duty Assignment Pay Tables (June 24, 2024)

Space Force Releases Promotion Cycle Statistics (June 21, 2024)

Check out below for comment opportunities, requests for proposals, notices of proposed rulemaking and a look at the week ahead in space events:

Comment Opportunities (RFIs)

Information Collection: NASA Applied Remote Sensing Training Program Follow-Up Survey

National Aeronautical and Space Administration
Close Date: August 5, 2024

Federal Acquisition Regulation: Prohibition on Certain Semiconductor Products and Services

Department of Defense, National Aeronautical and Space Administration, & General Services Administration
Close Date: Aug 2, 2024

Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

Living with a Star Science

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Close Date: Aug 13, 2024

Artificial Intelligence Applications in Heliophysics

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Close Date: Aug 20, 2024

Heliophysics U.S. Participating Investigator

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Close Date: Jan 29, 2025

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER OPPORTUNITY: Smart Coating for Corrosion Detection and Protection (KSC-TOPS-1)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Close Date: June 4, 2025
*Request to License

Notices of Proposed Rulemakings (NPRMs)

There are no new notices or proposed rules.

International



Articles and Quotes

Historic Moon Mission Moves China Ahead in Space Race with U.S. (Wall Street Journal)

China's Chang'e 6 mission successfully brought back rock samples from the far side of the moon, marking a significant milestone in the U.S.-China space race. China aims to establish a lunar base by 2035, intensifying competition over the lunar south pole. The United States, through NASA's Artemis program, faces delays but plans to develop lunar infrastructure.

China Takes Small Step Towards the Moon with Rocket Test (SpaceNews)

China's main space contractor, the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC), successfully conducted a static fire test of a Long March 10 rocket first stage on June 14 in Beijing's Fengtai district. The China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology (CALT) confirmed that the stage started, operated and shut down as planned.

U.S. and India Advance Human Spaceflight Cooperation (SpaceNews)

On June 17, the U.S. and India announced plans for cooperation on human spaceflight at the U.S.-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) in New Delhi. The White House fact sheet outlined the arrangement for a joint NASA-ISRO astronaut mission to the International Space Station.

U.S. Space Command Ready for Potential Russian Satellite Attack, General Says (SpaceNews)

U.S. Space Command is preparing for potential threats to American satellites from Russia, according to Gen. Stephen Whiting. He noted that Russia has deployed "co-planar" spacecraft to monitor U.S. satellites. On June 24, at the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, Whiting mentioned Russia's launch of the Cosmos 2576 satellite, a counter-space weapon, on May 16 into low Earth orbit.

Upcoming Space Events

UN/Austria Symposium 2024 "Climate action: transforming space-based technology projects into sustainable services that support policy-making"

UNOOSA

July 17-18, 2024



Learn more about our Space Law & Policy practice.

[Learn More >](#)

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact:

Authors



Michael C. Mineiro
Space Policy & Regulation
[Email](#)
+1 202.887.4068



Thomas J. McCarthy
International Trade
[Email](#)
+1 202.887.4047

Jennifer L. Richter

Hans C. Rickhoff



Telecom, Media & Technology

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4524



Lobbying & Public Policy

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4145



Steve A. Rowings

Telecom, Media & Technology

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4412



Marta A. Thompson

Government Contracts

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4055



Lamar Smith

Lobbying & Public Policy

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4031

Contributors



Chase Hamilton

International Trade

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4018



Sharanya Sriram

Telecom, Media & Technology

[Email](#)

+1 202.887.4278



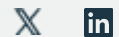
Siva Cidambaram

Lobbying & Public Policy

[Email](#)

+1 202.416.5097

akingump.com



© 2024 Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. All rights reserved. Attorney advertising. This document is distributed for informational use only; it does not constitute legal advice and should not be used as such. Prior results do not guarantee a similar outcome. Receipt of this information does not create an attorney-client relationship. Do not act upon this information without seeking professional counsel. All content is presented by Akin and cannot be copied or rebroadcasted without express written consent. Akin is the practicing name of Akin Gump LLP, a New York limited liability partnership authorized and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority under number 267321. A list of the partners is available for inspection at Eighth Floor, Ten Bishops Square, London E1 6EG. For more information about Akin Gump LLP, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP and other associated entities under which the Akin network operates worldwide, please see our [Legal Notices](#) page.

[Update Your Preferences](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Forward to a Friend](#) | [Legal Notices](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

This email was sent by: 2001 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006-1037