November 3, 2015

The Honorable John Culberson
2352 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Michael Honda
1713 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Coalition for Aerospace and Science (CAS) is an alliance of organizations representing a broad swath of our nation’s academic, industrial, and scientific communities. As you allocate the additional funding made available under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, we request that you make strong investments in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) by increasing their budgets at least 5.2 percent above FY15 levels – the same level of increase to discretionary spending the new framework provides.

As severe storms have grown in intensity, losses of life and property have been substantially mitigated as a result of NOAA’s greatly improved forecasting capability. Meanwhile, our dependence on accurate forecasts has grown to the point where over one third of our America’s GDP is impacted by weather and environmental factors. Increased funding for NOAA will preserve and improve that forecast through investments in polar and geostationary satellites, as well as ocean and coastal observing systems.

Inflation has degraded NASA’s purchasing power over the past 20 years, hurting its ability to develop world-class research and space exploration missions. The recent New Horizons Pluto mission, another in a long line of inspirational space missions, almost never left Earth thanks to budget pressures and fiscal uncertainty at a time when NASA’s purchasing power was significantly higher than today. A sustained commitment to strong NASA funding, starting with a robust increase to NASA’s budget for FY 2016, can ensure NASA’s continued leadership in exploration and technology development. Investing in new science missions, human spaceflight programs, space technology and aeronautics across NASA benefits our nation through new scientific discoveries, innovative new technologies, and a growing economy.

By investing in NASA and NOAA along with smart program management, Congress can inspire future generations of scientists and engineers, secure communities across the United States from weather related incidents, and position the United States as a global innovation leader in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Aerospace Industries Association
American Astronautical Society
American Astronomical Society
American Geophysical Union
American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics

Consortium for Ocean Leadership
Geological Society of America
The Planetary Society
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute