

Akin

Space Law, Regulation and Policy Update



May 03, 2024

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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

Lawmaker Presses Pentagon Official on Russia's Potential Space Nuke *(SpaceNews)*

At a hearing of the House Armed Services Committee's Strategic Forces Subcommittee, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy John Plumb told members of Congress that the Biden administration remains concerned that Russia is developing an anti-satellite nuclear device and stressed the need for further studies to understand the weapon's potential orbital impact.

Lamborn Opening Statement at Hearing on FY25 Budget Request for DOD Space Programs *(House Armed Services Committee)*

Rep. Lamborn (R-CO), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, noted the important role of space the joint force's operation and expressed a need for the US to "weaponize" space to meet China and Russia's initiatives. He described a need for clarity on the roles and responsibilities of increasingly important commercial actors working alongside the US Government.

Nelson Pleads with Congress to Fund ISS Deorbit Vehicle *(SpacePolicyOnline)*

During a hearing of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) 2025 budget, NASA Administrator Bill Nelson urged Congress to pass the domestic supplemental appropriations bill that includes funding to build a deorbit vehicle for the International Space Station (ISS). Nelson told members, "We don't know what the President of Russia is going to do. We can be in an emergency situation if we have to get this structure that is as big as a football stadium down and down safely in 2031. And that's why I'm making the request and I'm pleading to you all and the Appropriations Committee to put that in the emergency supplemental bill that will be coming up later."

Introduced Legislation

Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced the NASA Streamlining Partnerships for Research and Education for Engineering and Science (SPREES) Act ([S. 4421](#)) to amend title 51, United States Code, to authorize the transfer to NASA of funds from other agencies for scientific or engineering research or education.

Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) introduced [S.Res.665](#), a resolution supporting May 3, 2024, as “National Space Day” in recognition of the significant positive impact the aerospace community has and will continue to have on the United States of America. The resolution was agreed to in the Senate by unanimous consent on April 30, 2024.

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

Recent and Upcoming Congressional Hearings

April 22 - May 10, 2024

Senate

[A Review of the President’s Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request for the Department of Defense](#)

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

Wednesday, May 8 at 10:00 AM ET

House of Representatives

[An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for Fiscal Year 2025](#)

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Tuesday, April 30 at 10:00 AM ET

[Budget Hearing - Fiscal Year 2025 Request for the United States Air Force and Space Force](#)

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense

Tuesday, April 30 at 2:00 PM ET

[FY25 Budget Request for National Security Space Programs](#)

House Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

Wednesday, May 1 at 3:30 PM ET

In The Executive Branch



Articles and Quotes

[FAA Learning Period to Get Another Extension \(SpacePolicyOnline\)](#)

The text of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill includes an extension of the FAA’s learning period for human spaceflight for an additional few months. The language prevents the FAA from regulating commercial human spaceflight until the end of the extension period.

Advisory Committee Recommends Moving FAA Commercial Space Office out of the Agency. (SpaceNews)

On April 23, the FAA's Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee (COMSTAC) unanimously approved a recommendation that the FAA's Office of Commercial Space Transportation (AST) be moved out of the FAA and turned into a standalone organization directly under the Secretary of Transportation. COMSTAC members argued that moving it outside of the FAA will better position AST to receive the resources it needs to regulate the growing space launch industry.

Nelson Defends 'Very Tough Choices' in NASA's Budget Proposal (SpaceNews)

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson told members of the House Appropriations Committee's Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee that the budgetary cuts and cancellations at the agency are due in part to congressional pressures on NASA, stating "Understand the hand that you dealt us. With less money, we have to make some very tough choices." He reminded the members that the budgetary constraints at NASA are the result of budget caps enacted last year as part of the deal to raise the debt ceiling and avoid a government default.

US Space Force Renews Call for 'Reserve' of Commercial Satellite Providers (SpaceNews)

Gen. Michael Guetlein, vice chief of space operations in the U.S. Space Force, stated that the Space Force is working to figure out how to establish a "commercial space reserve" to allow the military to tap private satellite operations during a conflict. He stated, "If you look at our industry partners from the Civil War all the way forward, our industry partners have always been there. And they're always the ones that have pulled us out of the fire when the fighting got tough. They're the ones that made sure we had all the material that we needed and helped take care of the homeland when we were deployed forward. So, it's not a new lesson that we're learning, but it's a lesson that has become more acute with space."

Federal Agency Space News

Department of Defense

Space Force Official Outlines Roadmap for Commercial Partnerships (April 24, 2024)

Department of State

G7 Italy 2024 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Addressing Global Challenges, Fostering Partnerships (April 19, 2024)

The White House

Statement from National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan on Russia's Veto of the UN Security Council Resolution on the Outer Space Treaty (April 24, 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)

No relevant RFIs currently published.

Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

Rapid Mission Design Studies for Mars Sample Return

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: May 17, 2024

Research Opportunities in Space and Earth Sciences 2024 (ROSES-2024)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: May 15, 2025

Notices of Proposed Rulemakings (NPRMs)

No relevant NPRMs currently published.

International



Articles and Quotes

Russia Vetoes UN Resolution Calling for Prevention of Nuclear Arms Race in Space (Politico)

On April 24, Russia vetoed a United Nations (U.N.) Security Council resolution sponsored by the U.S. and Japan that called on all countries not to develop or deploy nuclear arms or other weapons of mass destruction in space, as banned under a 1967 international treaty that included the U.S. and Russia, and to agree to the need to verify compliance. Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia dismissed the resolution as "absolutely absurd and politicized."

Russia Proposes UN Resolution on Banning Weapons in Space, After Vetoing Similar UN-Japan Draft (AP News)

On May 1, one week after vetoing a similar measure, Russia circulated a draft resolution calling for efforts to stop weapons from being deployed in outer space and for preventing "the threat or use of force in outer space for all time."

China Launches Historic Mission to Retrieve Samples from Far Side of the Moon (Reuters)

On May 3, China launched a mission to the far side of the moon to collect soil and rocks via the Chang'e-6 probe, which will support the country's aim to build an outpost on the moon. Moon-studying payloads from France, Pakistan, Italy and the European Space Agency were on board Chang'e-6.

Nicaragua Signs Up to China's ILRS Moon Program (SpaceNews)

Nicaragua has reached an agreement with the China National Space Administration (CNSA) to partner on its International Lunar Research Station (ILRS) project, which seeks to construct a permanent lunar base in the 2030s. Nicaragua is now the tenth country to partner with China on the ILRS.

Slovenia Signs Artemis Accords (SpaceNews)

On April 19, Slovenia signed the Artemis Accords, becoming the 39th nation to join the agreement on best practices for sustainable space exploration. The Slovenia government is in the midst of petitioning the European Space Agency to become a full member after having

adopted a national space strategy, the final formal milestone before seeking full membership.

Orbital Congestion Reaching Critical Levels, Warns New Report (SpaceNews)

A new **report** from Slingshot Aerospace is warning that space is becoming increasingly crowded to unprecedented and potentially dangerous levels. The report found a 12.4% increase in the total number of satellites deployed in 2023 compared to 2022. Melissa Quinn, general manager of Slingshot Aerospace, stated that “we need to come together as an industry to make meaningful progress to coordinate the safe and sustainable use of space.”

Upcoming Space Events

GEOINT 2024 Symposium: Essential in all Dimensions and Domains

United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation
May 5-8, 2024

Space Sustainability: A Global Design for the Future

Federal Communications Bar Association
Tuesday, May 7 at 2:00 PM ET

Space and Global Communications Committee Lunch and Learn

Federal Communications Bar Association
Wednesday, May 8 at 12:15 PM ET

Service Branch Spotlight: Space Force

Government Executive Media Group
Thursday, May 9 at 2:00 PM ET

Air & Space Warfighters in Action: CMSSF John Bentivegna

Air & Space Forces Association
Friday, May 10 at 10:00 Am ET

COSMIC Convergence

Consortium for Space Mobility and ISAM Capabilities
May 15-16, 2024

AUS Space 2024: The Australian Space Summit & Exhibition

Space Connect
May 28-29, 2024

UN Conference on Sustainable Lunar Activities

UNOOSA
Tuesday, June 18, 2024

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Questions?

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