



S A T O P
SPACE ALLIANCE TECHNOLOGY OUTREACH PROGRAM

News release

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Citizens for Space Exploration descend on Capitol Hill in support of NASA

BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS – For the 17th year in a row, a Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership committee, Citizens for Space Exploration (CSE), descended on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., with a singular purpose – to support a robust space exploration program with a goal of investment in NASA set at 1 percent of the federal budget.

From May 19-22, 2008, 147 CSE citizen taxpayers from 29 states, including 49 from Texas, visited 333 congressional offices. They met individually with members of Congress or their staff and discussed the importance of the 1 percent funding for NASA – an increase from the current level of 0.6 percent of the federal budget. Historically, this level of funding is not unprecedented. During the years of the Apollo Program, funding reached 5 percent of the federal budget.

CSE works with elected officials, corporate and individual contacts to ensure continued political and public support for our nation's space programs, particularly the International Space Station, the Space Shuttle, and the new Constellation Program. CSE is comprised of a diverse group of small and large business representatives, students and teachers, and county/municipal officials and employees.

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership is home to the CSE-Texas Committee, chaired by Joe Mayer, senior manager of Business Development for Lockheed Martin. Bob Mitchell, BAHEP president, said, "The significance of CSE's annual visit to Washington cannot be underestimated. By meeting personally with these decision makers in Washington, we are better able to impress upon them NASA's scientific, technological, and economic impact that affects us in so many positive ways."

One of the priorities of the CSE is to inform elected officials of the importance their constituents place on the space program. Among these constituents are 36 undergraduate and graduate students, from colleges and universities across the nation, who traveled as part of the CSE group. The Coalition for Space Exploration, in conjunction with BAHEP's Aerospace Advisory Committee, sponsored the students whose majors include astrophysics, aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, math and physics. The future of the space program and its many initiatives relate directly to their future careers. The students wanted to ensure that their representatives were aware not only of their support of NASA but also of the electoral influence that they and their fellow students and faculty carry.

Interaction between the elected officials and the CSE extended beyond congressional offices when they gathered for a CSE-sponsored Congressional Reception on Tuesday, May 20, in the Rayburn Building on Capitol Hill. Mitchell welcomed the delegates and introduced the speakers including: Rep. Nick Lampson (D-TX), Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), Rep. Ralph Hall (R-TX), Rep. Gene Green (D-TX), Rep. Kevin Brady

(R-TX), Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX), Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Rep. Tom Feeney (R-FL), Rep. Dave Weldon, M.D. (R-FL), Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), and Sen. David Vitter (R-LA).

David Braun, BAHEP's aerospace marketing manager, after spending months organizing the details of the CSE 2008 visit to Washington, stated, "Once again, I feel as though our considerable efforts to educate members of Congress on the importance of a 1 percent federal funding of our space program were well received. The ramifications of anything less are far reaching, and we will continue working toward this goal until it is achieved."

For more information on the work of the CSE-Texas Committee, Contact Braun at 281.486.5535 or email david@bayareahouston.com.

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Bay Area Houston is an economically and internationally diversified, high-tech region that is home to NASA-Johnson Space Center and numerous industries including aerospace, specialty chemical, and a rapidly growing health care industry.

Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment in southeast Texas. Its members include aerospace, petrochemical, and healthcare companies, developers, bankers and real estate brokers, 13 cities and Galveston and Harris Counties. Visit www.bayareahouston.com.

Space Alliance Technology Outreach Program is funded by the State of Texas and NASA. The program provides technical assistance to small businesses to solve technical challenges they are unable to solve themselves. Visit www.spacetechnologies.com

Coalition for Space Exploration is a collaboration of space industry businesses and advocacy groups organized to help educate and inform the public about the value and benefits of space exploration. Visit www.spacecoalition.com.