



News release

Contact: Kathryn Cooper
Communications Manager
18045 Saturn Lane
Bay Area Houston, Texas 77058
Phone: 832.536.3244
Fax: 832.536.3258
Email: kathryn@bayareahouston.com
Visit: www.bayareahouston.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2011

CSE works to ensure Congress' continued support for NASA

BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS – For the past 20 years, representatives from Citizens for Space Exploration have traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with members of Congress or their staff to discuss the benefits of space exploration. From May 31 through June 2, 2011, 88 travelers from 21 states once again sought congressional support for a robust, NASA-led human space exploration program. Over the course of two days, the travelers, who divided into 25 teams, made 330 office visits.

CSE is nation's largest grassroots effort

The CSE trip has grown to be the nation's largest, pro-NASA, pro-space exploration grassroots annual trip to Washington in terms of the most congressional offices contacted. CSE is comprised of a diverse group of small and large business representatives, college students and teachers, and county/municipal officials and employees. This year 24 students from colleges and universities across America gathered with the group in Washington to lend their valuable support. They were sponsored by the Aerospace Advisory Committee of the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership as well as Jacobs and Barrios Technology.

Time of transition critical

“In this time of transition until our next generation spacecraft, the Orion / Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle, is ready to fly, it is even more critical that we keep members of Congress fully informed of the importance of human space exploration. Last year we worked closely with our congressional delegation to ensure the passage of the 2010 NASA Authorization Act. We must continue to be diligent to make absolutely sure that this administration funds the programs that Congress authorized and approved,” stated Bob Mitchell, BAHEP president.

CSE finds continued success in teamwork

Much of CSE's continued success is due to the team effort of the CSE Steering Committee and many others who play important supportive roles. BAHEP is home to the CSE-Texas Committee, chaired by Joe Mayer, senior manager, Business Development & External Relations for Lockheed Martin. He observed, "Human space exploration is critical to American leadership. It drives innovation, supports high-tech jobs, and encourages science and math education, while improving our quality of life from health care, to transportation, to public safety and the environment. Our message concerning the importance of space and support for timely implementation of the 2010 NASA Authorization Act really hit the mark with the members of Congress and their staff we met with in Washington. We are grateful to the congressional champions of human space exploration."

Braun heads up logistics

David Braun, BAHEP aerospace marketing manager, was instrumental in handling the logistics for the trip, which took months to organize. In Washington, he took responsibility for the Command Center that was established at the Westin City Center hotel to ensure that everything went according to plan. Braun reported that the national debt is a huge concern for Congress but that the visits were positive overall. "Tim Kropp, who is executive vice president with MRI Technologies, was the trip chairman this year. He said that our many years of walking the Hill are paying off, and I definitely have to agree," Braun related.

Facts key to understanding

Detailed information about NASA's Fiscal Year 2010 obligations for each state was given to congressional representatives during each office visit in order for them to better understand how NASA affects the lives of their constituency. The data included leading NASA business contracts within the state as well as institutions leading the way in NASA education funding.

NASA writes, "Much of what we gain from space exploration is in the scientific and technological progress that comes in the process of doing it. NASA's investment in aerospace R&D ultimately benefits the American consumer and global competition." The impact of NASA innovations within each state was also included in the group's information packets.

Each year a Congressional Reception is held in the Rayburn House Office Building to recognize and thank those members of Congress who have been instrumental in supporting NASA and human space exploration. Attending this year's reception were: Reps. Kevin Brady (TX-8), Bill Flores (TX-17), Gene Green (TX-29), Ralph M. Hall (TX-4), Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18), Pete Olson (TX-22) who emceed the event, Lamar Smith (TX-21), and Mo Brooks, (AL-5).

-END-

The 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 more than 260 investor companies, business professionals, local governments, and educational institutions encompassing 13 cities, Galveston and Harris counties, and the Port of Houston Authority. Visit www.bayareahouston.com.

Space Alliance Technology Outreach Program is administered by the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership. It is a State of Texas funded initiative designed to transfer the knowledge and technology of the U.S. Space Program to small businesses to solve technical challenges they are unable to solve themselves. Visit www.spacetechnolutions.com/bahep.