



#### **News release**

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#### **Op-Ed**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 15, 2010**

## Sen. Hutchison leads by example

**BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS** – Today’s announcement by Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison in regard to a NASA reauthorization bill is the best news we’ve had in the last six months. It lays out a blueprint for NASA’s future. While the bill may not be seen as perfect, it certainly reestablishes the Johnson Space Center’s role in human space exploration.

This blueprint provides NASA a direction, which is critical to maintain America’s preeminence in space. The announcement is the culmination of many months of hard work by a lot of people. It emphasizes, once again, the importance of human space exploration.

The bill’s language could only have come about through tenacity and strong leadership. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison has provided that glimmer of hope we have all been seeking. She has demonstrated the leadership that has been synonymous with her long service in Washington. Texas and Bay Area Houston are grateful to Sen. Hutchison for her vision and dedication to America, this state and its people, and to Johnson Space Center and human space exploration.

The men and women who have dedicated their lives to human space exploration cannot help but be encouraged by today’s announcement. They have experienced a rollercoaster of emotions over the last six months, which is sad both for them and for the long, honorable history of this nation’s space program.

It is important to recognize, however, while this blueprint provides a vision for NASA’s future, we must still address the ramifications of the termination liability clause that a few at NASA headquarters have unwisely initiated. Unfortunately, even after everyone’s considerable efforts, there will be layoffs in the short-term unless NASA headquarters rethinks its approach in initiating this clause that has rarely, if ever, been invoked.

Although today’s blueprint is a major step in the right direction, we must continue to be aggressive in saving human space exploration. We cannot let a few individuals attempt to manipulate or alter the language of this reauthorization bill. This blueprint has bipartisan support, but it still must pass the full Senate. The House will create its own bill. We need to do as much as we can early in this process to ensure that both the House and Senate bills are reflective of each other. We cannot let our guard down

remembering that the actions of a few, working behind the scenes, could serve as a preemptive strike to the passage of this reauthorization bill. America cannot allow this to happen.

Bob Mitchell  
President  
Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership

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**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](http://www.bayareahouston.com).

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