

SPACE

MR. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise today to address the Report to Congress of the Independent Assessment Panel on the Organization and Management of National Security Space, which was released on Tuesday, September 16th. The Institute for Defense Analyses, led by Mr. A. Thomas Young and a team of six qualified and experienced experts, undertook this project to provide the Congress with a comprehensive assessment of the state of our national space policy, especially as it relates to our national security and our position as the global leader in space.

I raised concerns in 2006 when then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld suggested that the commander of Air Force Space Command, based in Colorado Springs, should be downgraded from the four-star level to three stars. I reminded the Secretary that space is critical to our armed forces; that nearly every military operation we carry out makes use of assets in space in one way or another, be it using our satellites to locate the position of the enemy, providing instant communications, or gathering dependable intelligence. I was pleased the Pentagon opted not to institute this troublesome proposal.

Following this episode, I authored legislation in the 2007 Defense Authorization Bill to establish a new space commission, similar to the 2001 Commission to Assess US National Security Space Management and Organization. I wanted an independent panel of space, intelligence, and military experts to study, analyze, and make recommendations to the Congress on the current state and future vision of America's national space agenda. This review began last fall and I am pleased that it was completed in a timely manner.

Mr. President, the panel began their report articulating what I have always understood to be true, that U.S. leadership in space is paramount to the preservation of our national security. It is key to our lasting ability to ward off modern and unexpected threats against our homeland or our

allies and essential to maintaining our economic superiority in the ever-changing information age. Most importantly, the report reinforced that space-based technology is essential to our intelligence gathering and war fighting capabilities. As such, according to the panel, and I agree, updating and modernizing our national space policy and its related personnel structure must be a top priority. America's willingness and capacity to continue to lead in space provides our nation with a priceless strategic advantage that will pay dividends for generations to come.

As a result of their extensive research and thorough investigations, the panel uncovered what they believed were fundamental structural and organizational flaws with the federal government's space sector. Such flaws include major management problems, poor communication among and between involved agencies, a lack of proper oversight and direction, a lack of expert professional personnel, and a host of others. The panel also recognized a scary reality – space technology is rapidly proliferating to all corners of the earth, and America is not keeping up with its space competitors. This proliferation, combined with our space industry bogged down by aging legacy space projects that take vital resources away from newer, more modern projects, has taken its toll on our competitive edge with China and other emerging nations.

Although some of these and other deficiencies were recognized and exposed by the 2001 Space Commission, drastic measures to adequately deal with the problems uncovered were not proposed and undertaken. This panel, however, took an alternate route, and recommended bold proposals to re-direct and radically improve our national space agenda. The panel recommends, and again I agree, that America needs a top-to-bottom overhaul to restore the vitality of our space programs and regain and sustain the competitive advantages afforded the United States by our preeminence in space. In no uncertain terms, the panel outlined a bold new vision for the

future of America's role in space. It laid out four suggestions of significant substance to restructure our approach to space and realign our defense, intelligence, and commercial priorities as they relate to space.

First, it calls for the President to create and implement a truly *national* space strategy. The President should announce to the American people that he is updating and modernizing America's space program immediately and elevating its priority status to the top tier of the national agenda.

The panel recommends the President reestablish the National Space Council in the Executive Office of the President, under the leadership of the National Security Advisor, to implement the new strategy and coordinate its activities with the Department of Defense, the Intelligence Community, NASA, and other responsible agencies. This will provide one of the President's top advisors with the power to assign responsibilities, set priorities, and break through the barriers to cooperation that have stymied progress on key space programs in the past.

Second, the panel believes that no one is really in charge of the national space agenda. They discovered that in the midst of so much bureaucracy and competing authorities, regrettably there has been no one at the helm. This needs to change.

The authorities and responsibilities for all government space programs are spread widely throughout the Pentagon and within various intelligence agencies. Therefore, the panel recommends the creation of a National Security Space Authority that will be responsible to the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence. The proposed arrangement is needed to remedy the ruinous deficiencies in the current system, including the frequent inability to reconcile budget priorities and the common failure to ensure that innovative acquisition

program requirements are affordable and integrated across military and intelligence space domains.

Third, the panel recommends to strip the National Reconnaissance Office and the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center of their status as traditional, independent entities; and incorporate their personnel and functions, as well as the functions of other parts of the Air Force Space Command, into a single National Security Space Organization. Under unified leadership, this organization could allow all the space experts to work more effectively together. The panel recommends this path because it most effectively utilizes the scarce talent available to achieve our nation's goals in space. Under this type of organizational structure, the government's space management team can focus on installing best engineering and acquisition practices, including early systems engineering and cost estimating. I'm not sure I agree yet with this recommendation, but I feel it does warrant serious consideration by the Congress.

It is true that the continual problem of space acquisition program delays, cost overruns, and cancellations, has drained resources and caused America to rely heavily on satellite constellations that have matured beyond their original design lives. This is simply unacceptable, and I think the panel is correct when they say that small modifications to the status quo, which have been proposed time and again in the past, are not enough. A new and innovative organizational structure is a good idea, but the details of the panel's third recommendation need to be vetted before I can lend my full support.

Finally, the panel suggests that the Intelligence Community and each of the military branches adopt and execute strategies for identifying, selecting, educating, training, and managing a sufficient number of government experts and professionals to support the country's space acquisition obligations. The careers of these space acquisition and technical professionals should

be designed and administered so that they can provide continuity for the execution of long-term projects, while remaining eligible and competitive for career advancement.

It is unrealistic to expect that we can modernize our space strategy and succeed in developing complex space systems without enough technically capable and sufficiently experienced government scientists, engineers, and acquisition experts that are immersed in the space arena and assigned to see projects through to completion. These types of professionals are critical to the success of our future endeavors in space.

Throughout my time in the Congress I have fully supported science-related education. This support includes space, defense, and national security studies as well. For example, I have supported funding requests for the Center for Space and Defense Studies at the US Air Force Academy. The mission of this Center is to build and define space policy studies curriculum for the undergraduate cadets. I have long supported the Center for Geosciences and Atmospheric Research at my alma mater, Colorado State University. This Center is a national resource for the Department of Defense in the areas of atmospheric and hydrologic research, which are both critical to our national security.

America needs more engineers, physicists, rocket scientists, mathematicians, and the like. We need them now and in the coming decades more than we ever have in the past. The future of our national security and defense capabilities rests with our ability to recruit, train, and equip more and more Americans with the critical knowledge and know-how of the hard sciences. The first step is making this type of education a top national priority, and it is my hope that America's future leaders will do so.

Mr. President, I appreciate all four and fully support three of the panel's suggestions for the improvement of our national space strategy. In my opinion, if we fail to act on these

recommendations, we face the possibility that our preeminence in space will erode to the point at which we will no longer enjoy a significant competitive national security advantage in an all-important global arena.

Along with the American people, I am indebted to the panel for their hard and thoughtful work on this study. Their discoveries and suggestions for improvement are invaluable. It is my hope that the next Congress and the next Administration will take a serious look at this study and craft an aggressive and coherent strategy for America's future presence in space.

Thank you, Mr. President.