

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 21, 2009

The Honorable Peter Orszag  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Eisenhower Executive Office Building  
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington DC 20503

Mr. Paul Shawcross  
Chief  
Science and Space Programs Branch  
Office of Management and Budget  
New Executive Office Building, Room 8225  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington DC 20503

Dear Director Orszag and Chief Shawcross;

We are writing to express our support for the recent reversal of the budget trends for the NASA Aeronautics Research Directorate and to encourage an expansion in coming years of NASA's new proposed "Integrated Systems Research Program" (ISRP). This new "Green Aviation Program" we believe would make an excellent new "flagship" research program at NASA that would be heavy on innovation, green energy technologies and an effective use of government funds to combat climate change. The Administration has launched this new program and as such has "ownership" – *we now urge you to truly embrace this program and give it the publicity and funding necessary to make it a signature Research and Development effort of the Administration.*

We are encouraged by the Administration's efforts to put an end to the year to year downward trend in NASA's Aeronautics budget – for years we witnessed shifting research plans and fewer and fewer resources with which to accomplish them. The proposed FY10 budget and the plans for the run out of the budget over the next five years would provide some much needed relief and stability. While we are pleased with this modest improvement, there are still numerous test facility upgrade needs at the Centers that conduct Aeronautics research that are unaddressed and not budgeted for. Moreover, there is a need to return previous test assets to operational status (such as the B-757 tested research aircraft mothballed in 2006).

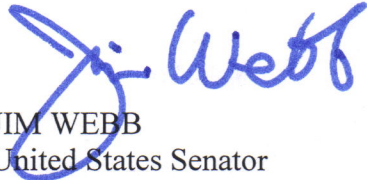
We furthermore want to express our strong support for the newly proposed "Integrated Systems Research/Environmentally Responsible Aviation Project". Awareness is growing among government regulatory agencies worldwide about the outsized impact that emissions from current aircraft are having on the atmosphere and climate change. As a result, U.S. industry and government must be forward thinking and initiate technology development efforts to begin planning for truly "next generation" aircraft that can dramatically lower harmful emissions – there is no way to modify the existing fleet of commercial airliners to achieve the desired reductions in emissions. As such, we are pleased to see that the ISRP will "focus specifically on maturing and integrating technologies in major vehicle systems and subsystems for accelerated transition to practical application."

However, we are concerned about the current budget run out for the ISRP and the lack of a commitment to flight test technologies in partnership with industry. First as currently proposed, funding over the next 5 fiscal years will remain, on average, about \$64 million annually. While this is a good start, one must strongly consider the need for "accelerated funding" during the life of a program to ramp up the resources, people and equipment needed to develop truly "transformative" flight technologies if "accelerated transition" is the desired goal of ISRP. Secondly, we feel the Aeronautics enterprise should not be restricted to just "fundamental" research in the area of environmentally responsible aircraft. Under the FY10 budget request "The goal of the Environmentally Responsible Aviation project is to explore and document the feasibility, benefits and technical risks of vehicle concepts and enabling technologies..." We believe the goal of this project should be to develop and build a research aircraft that integrates these advanced concepts and tests them in the real world. Additionally, industry cannot afford the risk of developing revolutionary new commercial aircraft concepts unless the enabling technologies are first proved by NASA, as has been the tradition in the past.

As you may know, the National Research Council (NRC) through their Decadal Survey of Aeronautics has concluded the refocused NASA Aeronautics program risks losing substantial industry support given the recent new and exclusive focus on fundamental research. The NRC attributed the move to doing only fundamental research as being budget driven. We hope with the shift in budget trends and a reversal of this policy, NASA's aeronautics workforce will have the resources to creatively design, develop and flight test technologies up to mature levels ready for handoff to industry.

Lastly, we believe it would be beneficial if one of the NASA Centers that focuses on Aeronautics research was designated the "lead Center" for this effort to increase accountability and program focus, rather than run this out of Headquarters. We of course believe that Langley would be well suited for this task since it has the broadest scope of aeronautical research capability of the NASA research centers and request your consideration of such an action. Thank you again for your efforts to bring NASA's Aeronautics programs back to national significance through new budget investments and the launch of the ISRP.

Sincerely,



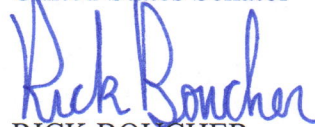
JIM WEBB  
United States Senator



MARK R. WARNER  
United States Senator



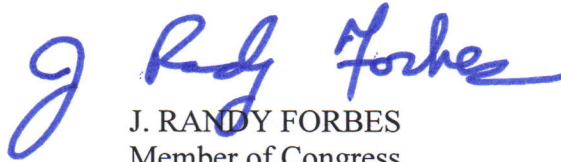
ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT  
Member of Congress



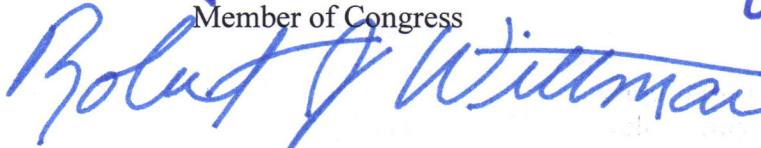
RICK BOUCHER  
Member of Congress



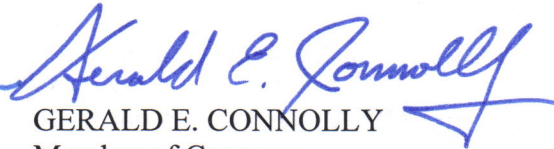
JAMES P. MORAN  
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