

Congress Unanimously Passes Paul Resolution Praising Space Shuttle Discovery Mission

July 20, 2006 Washington, DC: Congress today unanimously passed H.ConRes 448, introduced by Congressman Ron Paul to praise the successful NASA Discovery mission.

The following are excerpts of Congressman Paul's remarks on the House floor:

"Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to sponsor H.Con.Res. 448, a resolution commending the people of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for the latest mission of the Space Shuttle Discovery. Successfully launched on July 4 this mission, known as STS-121, marks the second mission on the Return to Flight sequence. STS-121 originally was scheduled to perform just two space walks. However, due to the overall success of the launch, the mission was extended from twelve to thirteen days, allowing for an additional space walk.

Among the tasks that were performed on this mission are tests of shuttle safety improvements to build on findings from Discovery's flight last year, including a redesign of the shuttle's external fuel tank's foam insulation; in-flight inspection of the shuttle's heat shield; improved imagery during launch; and the ability to launch a shuttle rescue mission. The external tank, which underwent work prior to the mission to reduce foam loss, performed well this time especially early in the flight.

The STS-121 mission also bolstered the International Space Station by making a key repair and delivering more than 28,000 pounds of equipment and supplies, as well as adding a third crew member to the Space Station.

STS-121 was NASA's most photographed mission in shuttle history as more than 100 high definition, digital, video, and film cameras assessed whether any debris comes off the external tank during the shuttle's launch, while four new videos have been added to the solid rocket boosters.

Mr. Speaker, the success of STS-121 is a tribute to the skills and dedication of all NASA employees, especially the Space Shuttle Discovery's crew of Colonel Steve Lindsey; Commander Mark Kelly; Piers Sellers, PhD; Lt. Colonel Mike Fossum; Commander Lisa Nowak; Stephanie Wilson; and Thomas Reiter."