

Akin™

## Space Law, Regulation and Policy Update



April 04, 2025

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### Good Afternoon!

*Space developments have kept a steady pace these past two weeks. NASA terminated \$420 million in contracts to align with DOGE's cost-cutting push. The U.S. Space Force plans to launch 100+ satellites in 2025—nearly doubling its unclassified operational fleet. Meanwhile, UN agencies are sounding the alarm on rising threats of satellite navigation jamming and spoofing.*

*All this and more in this week's edition of Akin's Space Law, Regulation and Policy newsletter.*

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### Akin Spotlight

Akin's [Trump Executive Order Tracker](#) provides a high-level overview of executive orders published by the new administration. These orders cut across dozens of industries and topics. The Tracker is updated as orders and Akin's in-depth analysis of specific orders are published.

Please visit Akin's [Trump Executive Order Overview](#) to view a matrix of the orders.

## On The Hill

### Articles and Quotes

#### **Cuts to Little-Known NOAA Office Could Hamper Space Companies, Put Satellites at Risk, Democrats Warn (CBS)**

Leading Democrats on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee are raising concerns over U.S. leadership in space traffic management as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of Space Commerce (OSC) has laid off about 30% of its staff due to budget cuts. Reps. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Valerie Foushee (D-NC) and Emilia Sykes (D-OJ) have sent a letter to Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick asserting that the cuts could harm national security, commercial remote sensing licensing efficiency and the space economy broadly. The layoffs come amid broader NOAA and federal government reductions, with Democratic lawmakers pushing for OSC staff reinstatement to maintain satellite oversight and public safety.

## **Congress Continues to Seek Answers on UFOs (The Hill)**

Rep. Eric Burlison (R-MO) has invited David Grusch, a former intelligence officer, to testify before the House Oversight Committee on alleged government knowledge of unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP). Burlison argues that greater transparency is needed regarding classified UAP programs. Grusch previously claimed the U.S. government possesses recovered non-human spacecraft, but officials have denied the existence of such programs. Burlison's push for a hearing aligns with bipartisan efforts to declassify UAP-related information, but it remains unclear whether House leadership will support the initiative or if new disclosures will result from the testimony.

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## **Introduced Legislation & Legislative Updates**

Rep. Jennifer McClellan (D-VA) has **introduced** the Celestial Time Standardization Act (**H.R. 2313**), which aims to establish a celestial time standardization schema for purposes of exploration interoperability.

The DOE and NASA Interagency Research Coordination Act (**H.R. 1368**) has passed the House by voice vote and been received by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Please find our Space Legislation Tracker [here](#).*

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## **Recent and Upcoming Congressional Hearings**

**(Apr 4, 2025 - Apr 18, 2025)**

On March 27, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) held a **hearing** to consider the nomination of Dr. Troy Meink to be Secretary of the Air Force.

On April 1, the House Science, Space, and Technology (HSST) Committee held a **hearing** titled "Leveraging Commercial Innovation for Lunar Exploration: A Review of NASA's CLPS Initiative."

On April 2, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (CST) held a **hearing** titled "Safety First: Restoring Boeing's Status as a Great American Manufacturer."

On April 9, the House Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee will hold its fiscal year (FY) 2026 posture **hearing**.

## **In the White House/Executive Branch**



## **Articles and Quotes**

### **NASA Terminating \$420 Million in Contracts (SpaceNews)**

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has confirmed that it is terminating \$420 million in contracts to align with Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) cost-savings initiatives. Per the agency, the canceled contracts were deemed

“redundant or misaligned with core mission[']s priorities.” Few details on the terminated deals have been released—while DOGE maintains a list of savings from such cuts across the federal government on its website, the NASA cuts it lists only total to \$45 million. Uncertainty remains as to specifics on the cuts and potential impacts on agency grants.

### **Artemis II on Track, but NASA Awaits Starship Milestones for Artemis III (Space Policy Online)**

NASA’s Artemis II mission remains on track for an April 2026 launch, but Artemis III, slated for 2027, depends on several key milestones for the Starship Human Landing System (HLS) and spacesuit development. NASA has dictated that prior to Artemis III, Starship must demonstrate both uncrewed lunar landing and liftoff capabilities. The Artemis program has previously struggled with delays, with the Artemis II launch delayed two years from 2024 to 2026.

### **Saltzman Wants ‘Fundamental Shift’ in Space Force Budget (Air and Space Forces)**

Space Force Chief of Space Operations Gen. B. Chance Saltzman is advocating for a significant budget increase for the Space Force, possibly up to 20%, citing the need for new capabilities to counter Chinese and Russian investments. The Biden administration requested \$29.4 billion for FY2025, down from \$30 billion in FY2024, marking the first proposed cut in the Space Force’s history. Saltzman argues that the current funding levels appropriated by Congress’ continuing resolution, roughly \$28.8 billion, are insufficient. The Trump administration has yet to release its FY2026 budget request.

### **White House Nominates Autry to Be NASA’s Chief Financial Officer (SpaceNews)**

The White House has nominated Greg Autry, the current assistant provost for space commercialization and strategy at the University of Central Florida and former NASA White House Liaison, to be chief financial officer (CFO) of the agency. CFO is one of the few roles that requires senate confirmation at NASA. If confirmed, Autry will replace Acting CFO Steve Shinn.

### **Space Force to Launch 100+ Sats in 2025 (Payload)**

Per Deputy Chief of Space Operations for Intelligence Maj. Gen. Gregory Gagnon, the Space Force plans to launch over 100 satellites in 2025, nearly doubling its current unclassified operational fleet. The effort aims to enhance resilience in positioning, navigation, timing, missile warning and satellite communications amid increased Russian and Chinese satellite posturing.

## **Federal Agency Space News**

### **Department of Defense**

**Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth Concludes Visit to Japan** (March 30, 2025)

**Defense Secretary Announces U.S. Forces Japan’s Upgrade to Joint Force Command** (March 30, 2025)

### **National Aeronautics and Space Administration**

**ARMD Solicitations (ULI Proposals Invited)** (March 31, 2025)

**NASA Shares SpaceX Crew-11 Assignments for Space Station Mission** (March 27, 2025)

**NASA Statement on Nomination of Greg Autry for Agency CFO** (March 25, 2025)

## International

### Articles & Quotes

#### **UN Agencies Warn of Satellite Navigation Jamming and Spoofing** ***(International Telecommunication Union)***

The United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO) have issued a joint statement warning about the increasing threat of satellite navigation jamming and spoofing, which could impact aviation, maritime and land-based transportation. The agencies urge member states to prevent harmful interference, enhance system resilience and maintain backup navigation infrastructure. They also call for improved monitoring, reporting and interagency collaboration to safeguard global positioning, navigation and timing services. The ITU Radiocommunications Bureau has tracked rising interference since 2019, highlighting the growing risks to critical navigation systems.

*Check out below for comment opportunities, requests for proposals, notices of proposed rulemaking and a look at the week ahead in space events:*

### Comment Opportunities (RFIs)

#### **Clearance of a Renewed Approval of Information Collection: Financial Responsibility for Licensed Launch Activities**

Federal Aviation Administration

Close Date: May 27, 2025

### Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

#### **5X Mission Assurance Support Services Recompete**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: April 11, 2025

#### **Evaluations, Assessments, Studies, Services, and Support (EASSS) 4**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: April 28, 2025

#### **Private Astronaut Missions 5 and 6 Flight Opportunities**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: May 30, 2025

#### **University Leadership Initiative 2 (ULI2)**

## Notices of Proposed Rulemakings (NPRMs)

No new proposed rules.

### Upcoming Space Events

#### ISPRS Geospatial Week

International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing

April 6-11, 2025

#### Sea-Air-Space Conference and Exhibition

Navy League

April 7-9, 2025

#### 40th Space Symposium

Space Foundation

April 7-10, 2025

#### Apophis T-4 Years Workshop

LPI, Universities Space Research Association

April 9-10, 2025

#### Deepening the U.S.-Japan Space Security Relationship

CSIS

April 11, 2025

#### Planetary Protection Panel

COSPAR

April 14-16, 2025

#### DEFENSE Forum (Classified)

AIAA

April 15-18, 2025

#### Public Meeting on SpaceX Launch Increase Proposal at SLC-40

Federal Aviation Administration

April 16, 2025

#### Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel

NASA

April 17, 2025

#### China Space Conference

China Space Foundation

April 23-26, 2025

## Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group

NASA

April 30-May 1, 2025

## Symposium on Small Satellites for Earth System Observation

IAA

May 4-8, 2025

## Planetary Defense Conference

IAA

May 5-9, 2025

## Legal Subcommittee Session

COPUOS

May 5-16, 2025

## Global Space Exploration Conference

IAF

May 7-9, 2025

## International Space Development Conference

National Space Society

June 19-22, 2025

## 68th COPOUS Session

United Nations

June 25-July 4, 2025



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### Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact:

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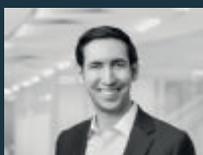


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