



## Space Law, Regulation and Policy Update

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Good Afternoon!

*It's been a busy couple of weeks in space policy. Although the House Appropriations Committee kept defense funding flat at FY25 levels, it significantly increased funding for Space Force and RDT&E. On the north side of the Capitol, the Senate Commerce Committee designated \$10 billion for NASA's Moon to Mars plan and other key projects, Sen. Deb Fischer's Secure Space Act of 2025 seeks to restrict satellite licenses for entities posing national security risks, and Sen. John Cornyn's LAUNCH Act seeks to streamline FAA regulations for commercial space launches.*

*Across the Atlantic, The European Union is set to introduce its first unified legal framework for space services, the Space Act, by the end the month.*

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

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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

#### [House Appropriators Unveil Defense Bill, Boost Space Force Funding](#) (SpaceNews)

The House Appropriations Committee has released its defense spending legislation for fiscal year (FY) 26, which aims to maintain FY25 defense funding at \$831.5 billion. The bill, which largely aligns with the President's budget request, makes several departures in terms of the Space Force funding—including by increasing the branch's overall purse by nearly \$3 billion. The legislation

aims to make small cuts to budgets allocated for personnel and operations, while also giving a small boost to procurement funding and a substantial \$3.6 billion boost to research, development, testing and evaluation (RDT&E).

#### **Senate Committee Wants to Keep Gateway, SLS and Orion** (*Space Policy Online*)

The Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, which has jurisdiction over the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), has released its reconciliation text that designates \$10 billion for the space agency. The bill diverges in several ways from the Trump-administration supported One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1): support for NASA's current Moon to Mars plan, full funding for Gateway, a fourth Orion spacecraft, two more space Launch System (SLS) rockets and increased International Space Station (ISS) funding. Chair Ted Cruz (R-TX) said that the legislation, while bolstering human spaceflight efforts, will still reduce deficits by \$40 billion and make cuts to wasteful spending at the agency.

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## **Introduced Legislation & Legislative Updates**

Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE) has **introduced** the Secure Space Act of 2025 (**S. 1962**), which aims to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) from granting satellite licenses or market access for foreign-licensed satellite systems to any entity affiliated with national security risks.

Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) has **introduced** the Licensing Aerospace Units to New Commercial Heights (LAUNCH) Act (**S. 1961**), which aims to require the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to take several steps to streamline the application of regulations for commercial space launches and reentry requirements.

Rep. David Scott (D-GA) has **introduced** the Rural American Vitalization in Extraterrestrial Space (RAVES) Reporting Act of 2025 (**H.R. 3697**), which aims to require the Department of Defense (DOD) to report on the potential conversion of abandoned rural sites into space-industry manufacturing hubs.

*Please find our Space Legislation Tracker **here**.*

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## **Recent and Upcoming Congressional Hearings**

(June 13, 2025 - June 27, 2025)

On June 10, the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee (HAC-D) held a closed **markup** of the FY26 Defense appropriations bill. On June 12, the full Committee held its **markup**

On June 11, the House Oversight Military Affairs Subcommittee held a **hearing** titled "Clearing

the Path: Reforming Procurement to Accelerate Defense Innovation.”

Also on June 11, the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee (SAC-D) held a [hearing](#) on the DOD’s FY26 budget request.

Also on June 11, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee (CST) held a [hearing](#) to consider the nomination of Bryan Bedford to serve as FAA Administrator.

Also on June 11, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee (SST) held a markup of the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response Operations (ACERO) Act ([H.R. 390](#)).

On June 12, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence held a [hearing](#) to examine the FY26 Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) and Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence budget requests, while the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) held a [hearing](#) to examine the DOD’s FY26 budget request. Also on June 12, the House Foreign Affairs South and Central Asia Subcommittee held a [hearing](#) to examine the Bureau of Industry and Security’s (BIS) FY26 budget request.

Also on June 12, the House Financial Services Committee held a [hearing](#) titled “Evaluating the Defense Production Act.”

On June 17, SAC-D will hold a closed [hearing](#) on the intelligence community’s FY26 budget request.

## In the White House/Executive Branch

### Articles and Quotes

#### [Pulled NASA Nomination Blindsides Space Community: ‘Major Blunder’](#) (*The Hill*)

Space industry and policy stakeholders on both sides of the aisle have criticized the recent withdrawal of Jared Isaacman’s nomination to be NASA Administrator, questioning the administration’s lack of reasoning. After being cleared by the Senate Commerce Committee in a 19-9 vote, the Senate was just days away from a final vote before the withdrawal. Isaacman has since commented on the development, voicing disappointment with the decision. The White House has yet to announce a new nominee for the agency, now at six months without an Administrator.

#### [US Rural Broadband Shift Opens Door Wider for Starlink](#) (*SpaceNews*)

The Trump administration issued new rules for allocating \$42.5 billion in rural broadband funds under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program, adopting a “technology-neutral” approach. This change eases program restrictions, making satellite providers like Starlink and Amazon’s Project Kuiper eligible for federal subgrants alongside fiber.

### **Trump's Budget Boosts USAF, Cuts Space Force Spending** *(Air and Space Forces)*

The Trump administration's FY26 budget proposes \$260.8 billion for the Department of the Air Force, including \$26.4 billion for the Space Force—a decrease of \$600 million from FY25. The Space Force's procurement and R&D budgets would be reduced, with significant cuts to classified programs and certain launch-related activities. Despite the overall funding decrease, Space Force military personnel levels would grow by 3%, while civilian personnel reductions continue. The proposal reflects shifting priorities as the administration emphasizes near-term readiness over some longer-term space acquisition programs.

### **How Private Space Drives Space Force's Intel Delivery** *(Payload)*

The U.S. Space Force's Tactical Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Tracking (TacSRT) program, launched in 2023, enhances intelligence delivery by leveraging private space data for military operations. Practical successes after use by U.S. Africa Command led to a formal agreement with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) to streamline space intelligence roles. TacSRT's quick and flexible responses support a variety of missions, from disaster response to monitoring satellite launches, emphasizing collaboration with commercial partners. In this article, Payload walks through the ins and outs of TacSRT's history and future with an emphasis on the program's private partnerships.

## **Federal Agency Space News**

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

**NASA, Partners Delay Axiom Mission 4, Reviewing Launch Date** (June 10, 2025)

**ARMD Research Solicitations** (June 6, 2025)

**NASA Awards Third Crowdsourcing Contract Iteration** (June 5, 2025)

**NASA's Webb Observations Update Asteroid 2024 YR4's Lunar Impact Odds** (June 5, 2025)

**Jack Kaye Retires After a Storied Career at NASA** (June 5, 2025)

### **Office of the Director of National Intelligence**

**DNI Releases FY 2026 Budget Request Figure for the National Intelligence Program** (June 4, 2025)

### **U.S. Space Force**

**US Space Forces Indo-Pacific Commander Highlights Growing Role of Space in Regional Security at Australian Space Summit** (June 2, 2025)

## International

### Articles & Quotes

#### [Europe's Far-Reaching Space Act Nears Launch](#) (*SpaceNews*)

The European Union (EU) is set to introduce its first unified legal framework for space services, the Space Act, by the end of June. This legislation aims to create a cohesive single market for space services, reducing administrative burdens and ensuring consistent regulations across member states. While certain details remain unreleased, some experts anticipate a move away from voluntary guidance towards binding obligations in certain space policy areas. The Space Act aligns with the EU's 2023 Space Strategy for Security and Defence, potentially impacting defense procurement and market access for non-EU companies.

#### [In Second Straight Failure, Japanese Probe Makes Mission-Ending 'Hard' Landing on the Moon](#) (*CBS*)

The Japanese lunar lander Resilience, built by ispace, experienced a mission-ending crash landing on June 5, due to a laser rangefinder malfunction that prevented proper deceleration. Attempts to re-establish communications with the lander were unsuccessful. The lander carried cameras, a rover and several science payloads. The crash marks the second consecutive failure for ispace, one of few companies attempting to provide non-governmental lunar payload services, following a similar incident in 2023.

*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)

#### [NASA Beyond the Algorithm Call for Submissions and Self-Nominations for Judges](#)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: June 20, 2025

#### [Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement \(DFARS\) Part 237, Service Contracting, and Related Clauses](#)

Department of Defense

Close Date: August 5, 2025

### Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

## Artificial Intelligence for Space Professionals Training Course

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: June 16, 2025

## Notices of Proposed Rulemakings (NPRMs)

No new proposed NPRMs.

## Upcoming Space Events

### Luncheon with Jay Schwarz (FCC)

WSBR

June 16, 2025

### MILSATCOM USA

SAE Media Group

June 16-18, 2025

### Paris Air Show

SIAE

June 16-22, 2025

### Space Threats and Acquisition Forum

NSSA

June 18, 2025

### Luncheon with NRO Director Christopher Scolese

MSBR

June 18, 2025

### Workshop on Interoperability and Lunar Activities Database

LSIC

June 19, 2025

### International Space Development Conference

National Space Society

June 19-22, 2025

### International Planetary Probe Workshop

NASA Langley, ESA

June 23-27, 2025

Living Planet Symposium

ESA

June 22, 2025

Geospatial Intelligence - New Data to Solutions

SpaceNews

June 25, 2025

Smallsat and Space Access Summit

Defense Strategies Institute

June 25-26, 2025

68th COPUOS Session

United Nations

June 25-July 4, 2025

Leadership Dinner with Gen. Michael Guetlein

INSA

July 2, 2025

Progress in Understanding the Pluto System

LPI

July 14-18, 2025

Moon Farside Protection Symposium

IAA

July 15-16, 2025

UK Space Conference 2025

UK Space Agency

July 16-17, 2025

Space Investors Symposium

NSSA

July 17, 2025

ASCEND 2025

AIAA

July 22-24, 2025

IAFI Space Policy Conference

IAFI

July 24-25, 2025

Learn more about our Space Law and Policy practice.

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## Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact:

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