

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 381

To direct the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to submit to Congress a report on the merits of, and options for, establishing an institute relating to space resources, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 7, 2019

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To direct the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to submit to Congress a report on the merits of, and options for, establishing an institute relating to space resources, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Space Resources Insti-
5 tute Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. REPORT ON MERITS AND OPTIONS FOR ESTAB-**
2 **LISHING AN INSTITUTE RELATING TO SPACE**
3 **RESOURCES.**

4 (a) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date
5 of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall sub-
6 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a report
7 on the merits of, and options for, establishing an institute
8 relating to space resources to advance the objectives of
9 NASA in maintaining United States preeminence in space.
10 Such objectives shall include the following:

11 (1) Identifying, developing, and distributing
12 space resources, including by encouraging the devel-
13 opment of foundational science and technology.

14 (2) Reducing the technological risks associated
15 with identifying, developing, and distributing space
16 resources.

17 (3) Developing options for using space re-
18 sources to—

19 (A) support current and future space ar-
20 chitectures, programs, and missions; and

21 (B) enable such architectures, programs,
22 and missions that would not otherwise be pos-
23 sible.

24 (b) ADDITIONAL MATTERS.—The report required
25 under subsection (a) shall also include the following as-
26 sessments of the Administrator:

1 (1) Whether a virtual or physical institute relat-
 2 ing to space resources is most cost effective and ap-
 3 propriate.

4 (2) Whether partnering with institutions of
 5 higher education and the aerospace industry, and
 6 the extractive industry as appropriate, would be ef-
 7 fective in increasing information available to the in-
 8 stitute with respect to advancing the objectives de-
 9 scribed in subsection (a).

10 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
 12 trator” means the Administrator of NASA.

13 (2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
 14 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
 15 mittees” means—

16 (A) the Committee on Science, Space, and
 17 Technology of the House of Representatives;
 18 and

19 (B) the Committee on Commerce, Science,
 20 and Transportation of the Senate.

21 (3) EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY.—The term “ex-
 22 tractive industry” means companies and individuals
 23 involved in the processes of extracting, including
 24 mining, quarrying, drilling, and dredging, raw, nat-
 25 ural materials or energy sources.

1 (4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
2 term “institution of higher education” has the
3 meaning given such term in section 101(a) of the
4 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

5 (5) NASA.—The term “NASA” means the Na-
6 tional Aeronautics and Space Administration.

7 (6) SPACE RESOURCE.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “space re-
9 source” means an abiotic resource in situ in
10 outer space.

11 (B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “space re-
12 source” includes a raw, natural material or en-
13 ergy source.

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