

NSS Starts “1% for the Future” Campaign.

The American people need a space program that’s going somewhere. Unfortunately, for the past 27 years no human has gone beyond low Earth orbit. This needs to change. Starting immediately, the NSS is calling upon congress and the administration to create a program to allow NASA to develop the technologies needed for sustainable human exploration of the Moon and Mars. Key technologies include;

- * Long duration regenerative life support systems.
- * Lightweight habitat technology for interplanetary voyages and surface bases.
- * Technology for the use of in-situ resources on the Moon and Mars
- * Lightweight flexible EVA Systems for planetary exploration
- * Surface mobility systems for human exploration
- * Advanced propulsion and power
- * Artificial Gravity systems

A budget of at least \$140 million per year, or 1% of NASA’s total, needs to be established, to allow research, development, and demonstration both on Earth and in space of these and other technologies required for sustainable human exploration missions throughout the inner solar system.

Chapters Must Take the Lead!

In order to prepare the groundwork for the successful institutionalization of such a program, NSS chapters must take the lead. Starting immediately, we are launching a campaign to meet with every member of congress to talk with them about the need for such a program. Your participation in this campaign is essential if we are to succeed.

This is what you should do:

1. Each NSS chapter should appoint a person to call up the local offices of every congressman within driving range and request a meeting with the congressman while he or she is in town. Typically each congressperson is in town in their home office about one day a week. If you call to request a meeting, you will generally get a person who will promise to get back to you, but won’t. That’s fine. Wait three days and call again.. They may ask you to fax them a letter. Do it (A sample is shown below). If you are polite and persistent, you will generally eventually get them to agree to a meeting.

2. Frequently, after being pursued by you in the manner described above, the congressperson’s office representative will call you out of the blue, and say that “an opening has opened up tomorrow at 3” (or something equally soon). “Can you make it?” Say yes. Then send an-email out to all the members of the chapter: “We have a meeting at Congressman X’s office tomorrow at 3. Everyone should meet at the Denny’s across the street by 2:30...” With luck, half a dozen members will show up. The more the better. Plan out who will lead the talking. You may want to divide up roles. That’s up to you. Then, at 2:58, enter the congressman’s office.

3. Sit down and talk with the Congressman. Keep it friendly, civil, and polite. Talk to him about the need for the 1% for the future program, and for a space program that is really going somewhere more generally. Listen to him too. You don't need to get him to sign on the dotted line. The key thing is that at the end of the day, the congressmen will have experienced a meeting with several intelligent people from his district who make it clear that they are concerned that the US space program is not doing what it needs to be doing, - to wit opening the space frontier, - and that this is an issue that needs to be addressed. So long as you get that point across, you've done what you need to do.

The value of the cumulative effect of meeting congressmen all across the nation in their home districts in this way cannot be overestimated. The US government now has the money required for a major initiative in space. The congressmen need to know that there are people out there that want that to happen. It's up to you to tell them! So pick up the phone and get started! The future depends on you!

A sample of the kind of letter you may need to fax to a congressional office is shown below.

Dear Congressman X;

The National Space Society is a nationwide organization of 20,000 people committed to furthering the success of America's space efforts. As you know, the American space program, begun so brilliantly in the years of Apollo, has spent most of the following three decades in relative stagnation. In the 1960's our space program opened new worlds while inspiring a generation of youth to get educations in science and engineering. By doing so, it helped create the technical workforce that has since made the computer and internet revolutions currently showering our economy with wealth. But unfortunately, we have not had that kind of space program since.

The National Space Society believes that NASA must once again begin to look outward, and should begin immediately by establishing a program funded at 1% of the agency's budget to develop the technologies required for sustainable human exploration of the Moon and Mars.

We, the members of the Y City chapter of the NSS, would like to meet with you in the near future to discuss these issues. Please let us know what time might be convenient.

Best regards;

John Smith
NSS Y City Chapter