

**Statement for the Record**  
**Ranking Member Donna F. Edwards**  
**Subcommittee on Space**

*“Mars Flyby 2021:  
The First Deep Space Mission for the Orion and Space Launch System?”*

February 27, 2014

---

Good morning and welcome to our distinguished panel of witnesses.

As an authorizing committee, it is our obligation to provide NASA with a challenging vision, one that its employees, contractors, and supporting university researchers can seize and translate into inspiring missions, programs, and projects. Indeed, the American people need this vision too.

That is why I challenged NASA to come up with a clear roadmap that would lead to an eventual human mission to Mars in the NASA Authorization Bill I introduced last July.

NASA does not currently have such a roadmap or integrated strategic framework. As a result, NASA cannot provide us with specifics on Mars mission risk areas, potential risk mitigation approaches, and the rationale for planned intermediate destinations. Nor can it articulate how its programs or selected interim destinations contribute effectively to making progress on such a roadmap.

In the absence of such an integrated roadmap, reaching a consensus on interim destinations, as many Members know, has been challenging. Travelling to an asteroid, the Moon, a Lagrangian point--or even using the International Space Station towards this endeavor--all have their legions of supporters and detractors.

I would have found it more helpful if NASA were here to provide us with the latest status on the development of the Space Launch Vehicle System and Orion and explained how these vehicles relate to architecture options and potential missions that would support the development of a roadmap.

Nonetheless, it is my hope that the Committee will work in a bipartisan fashion and provide, in an Authorization Bill, the necessary guidance for NASA and its allies and partners in the private sector and scientific community, including our international partners, to establish such a roadmap.

Finally Mr. Chairman, I would like to end by noting that the success of a human mission to Mars will need more than just a good roadmap or strategy.

We will not succeed in landing a crew on Mars and returning to Earth without securing support across many Congresses and Administrations, including the necessary funding, and without generating the kind of enthusiasm and inspiration worthy of sustained interest among generations of Americans.

I am hopeful that our witnesses today can provide us with their insights into this and other areas.

I yield back the balance of my time.