

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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Media Contacts: Kim Smith Hicks, Zachary Kurz
(202) 225-6371

**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Hearing on Commercial Space**

Chairman Smith: Thank you Chairman Palazzo for holding this hearing. And I thank the witnesses for being here to share their expertise on this topic.

It's appropriate to have Representative McCarthy join us today to discuss his bill, H.R. 3038, the SOARS Act. This legislation seeks to streamline the regulatory process.

It also amends parts of the Commercial Space Launch Act to provide clarity regarding new systems and how they are defined. Reducing red tape for our space entrepreneurs is a necessary step to ensuring their continued growth.

The commercial space industry offers improvements to the quality of life for every person on the planet. The discoveries and applications that have come from space technology number in the hundreds.

The storied past of American ingenuity and exceptionalism is filled with examples of entrepreneurs who pushed the boundaries of the possible. The commercial space industry relies on this same creative spirit. America has always been a nation of innovators and explorers. We continue to remain on the forefront of new discoveries and technologies.

This industry could yield results that blur the lines between science fiction and science fact. Students of tomorrow could go to college to study a whole new field that resulted from the development of private space exploration.

Perhaps in the next 20 years we will see new technologies and business models that result in private space laboratories.

For example, advances in the suborbital space industry could yield the potential to send a package – or people – from New York to Hong Kong in a matter of minutes. The applications of this type of travel are limitless.

One of our witnesses today is Mr. Dennis Tito, Chairman of the Inspiration Mars Foundation. This foundation is the type of private space endeavor we should encourage. Their mission to send humans to orbit Mars in eight years or less, using mostly existing technology, might well catch the public's imagination.

We are also pleased to have Mr. Stuart Witt, CEO of the Mojave Air and Space Port. There are exciting things happening in the Mojave Desert. The work of private companies and the space port add great value to our nation's space assets.

Our final witness represents an often overlooked part of the commercial space industry that has actually been around for a long time. Ms. Patricia Cooper is the President of the Satellite Industry Association. The commercial satellite industry provides many of our modern conveniences and we are grateful for her perspective as well.

I look forward to today's hearing and to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to develop policies that encourage the growth of the commercial space industry.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

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