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June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013

The Honorable Lamar Smith  
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space and Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2409 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steven Palazzo  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics  
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
331 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Chairman Palazzo,

The Planetary Society strongly supports the funding levels authorized for Planetary Science in the *National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2013* proposed in the United States House of Representatives. The House Science Committee, working within very stringent budgetary limitations, prioritized funding for the Planetary Science Division commensurate with its importance to NASA's core mission of exploration. With this level of support, NASA is well-positioned to achieve the amazing science outlined in the National Research Council's recent Planetary Science Decadal Survey, including the potential first step in a Mars sample return mission.

Furthermore, we strongly support the committee's statements endorsing the Europa Clipper multiple-flyby mission, a 24-month cadence for Discovery-class missions, 60-month cadence for New Frontiers missions, and adherence to the recent Space Science Decadal Surveys.

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As we approach ten years of continuous operation on the surface of Mars by the Opportunity rover, one year of nearly flawless operations by Curiosity, and nine years of Cassini returning spectacular science in orbit around Saturn, we have all seen the unique capability and engineering talent developed by NASA in service of planetary exploration. We applaud the House Science Committee's support of these activities within NASA.

Sincerely,



Bill Nye  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Planetary Society

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