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## **Commercial Spaceflight Federation President Bretton Alexander Testifies Before House Science Committee on Spaceflight Safety**

**Washington, D.C., December 2, 2009** – Bretton Alexander, President of the Commercial Spaceflight Federation, testified this morning before the Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee of the House Science Committee on the topic of commercial spaceflight safety. Alexander, who also chairs the Commercial Space Committee of the NASA Advisory Council, said in his opening statement that, “Safety is paramount to everyone in this industry. ... We firmly believe that NASA and commercial industry can and must work together to develop safer human spaceflight capabilities.”

Alexander added, “Commercial crew systems will only begin crewed flights once reliability has been demonstrated through multiple successful test flights without crew. Demonstrated launch reliability is essential for overall safety. The Atlas family, for example, has had over 90 consecutive successes. The Atlas V has a perfect record of 19 successful launches. And the Falcon 9 will have been launched more than a dozen times for cargo and satellite missions before crew missions begin.”

Alexander thanked the Subcommittee and the full Committee for their support of commercial spaceflight, and noted that letting the commercial sector handle the less difficult task of Space Station servicing will enable NASA to focus its resources and expertise on exploration beyond Low Earth Orbit.

Discussing government oversight, Alexander explained, “While the FAA would retain overall licensing authority, NASA would maintain oversight as the customer. In particular, NASA would establish astronaut safety requirements in consultation with industry; establish mission-unique requirements, such as crew capacity and requirements for Space Station docking; and most importantly, have final approval authority over the launch of NASA astronauts.”

Alexander testified along with five other witnesses: Bryan O'Connor, Chief of Safety and Mission Assurance at NASA; Jeff Hanley, Constellation Program Manager at NASA; John Marshall, Council Member of the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel; Joseph Fragola, Vice President at Valador Inc; and Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Thomas Stafford.

The panelists took questions from members of Congress including Subcommittee Chair Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ), Committee Ranking Member Rep. Ralph Hall (R-TX), and Subcommittee Ranking Member Rep. Pete Olson (R-TX).

### **About the Commercial Spaceflight Federation**

The mission of the Commercial Spaceflight Federation (CSF) is to promote the development of commercial human spaceflight, pursue ever higher levels of safety, and share best practices and expertise throughout the industry. CSF member organizations include commercial spaceflight

developers, operators, and spaceports. The Commercial Spaceflight Federation is governed by a board of directors, composed of the member companies' CEO-level officers and entrepreneurs. For more information please visit [www.commercialspaceflight.org](http://www.commercialspaceflight.org) or contact Executive Director John Gedmark at [john@commercialspaceflight.org](mailto:john@commercialspaceflight.org) or at 202.349.1121.

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