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Contact:
John Gedmark
202.349.1121

Commercial Spaceflight Federation Welcomes New NASA Human Spaceflight Plan, Congratulates Commercial Crew Development Winners

Washington, D.C., February 1, 2010 – The Commercial Spaceflight Federation welcomes the decision today by President Barack Obama to place U.S. human spaceflight on a new trajectory with major investments in technology, science, exploration, and commercial spaceflight. As part of this plan, NASA’s new competitive commercial crew initiative will invest \$6 billion over five years for multiple companies to develop human spaceflight capabilities that will take astronauts to and from the International Space Station.

“President Obama has given NASA a bold and exciting new mission: to once again push the limits in technology and exploration, promote innovation, and foster a vibrant commercial spaceflight sector,” said Bretton Alexander, President of the Commercial Spaceflight Federation. “In particular, the commercial crew initiative will create thousands of new high-tech jobs, help open the space frontier with lower-cost launches, and inspire a new generation with high-profile missions. This initiative is on par with the government Airmail Act that spurred the growth of early aviation and led to today’s passenger airline industry, which generates billions of dollars annually for the American economy.”

The Commercial Spaceflight Federation is also congratulating today the winners of \$50 million in seed money from the Commercial Crew Development (CCDev) competition, which is NASA’s precursor to the full \$6 billion commercial crew program. Boeing, United Launch Alliance (ULA), Paragon Space Development Corporation, Blue Origin, and Sierra Nevada Corporation were selected as winners in the CCDev program, which aims to demonstrate hardware milestones on the path to commercial human spaceflight.

Alexander added, “Investing in commercial spaceflight will allow us to create U.S. jobs, rather than continuing to send billions of dollars to Russia to fly our astronauts to space. With so many capable American companies here at home, why would we send all of U.S. human spaceflight to Russia? Let’s create those thousands of jobs right here in the United States.”

Alexander stated, “Commercial crew will reduce the gap in U.S. human spaceflight by using launch vehicles that are either already flying today or are close to launch, such as the Atlas, Taurus, and Falcon. To build orbital capsules for these existing launch vehicles is on a comparable level to the Gemini program in the 1960s, which required only about three years from contract signed to the first flight of a crew.”

“Using demonstrated launch vehicles will not only reduce the gap, but help ensure safety,” emphasized Alexander. “Upcoming cargo flights mean that the Atlas, Taurus, and Falcon

rockets will have long track records by the time astronauts are placed onboard. Safety is paramount for the commercial spaceflight industry – commercial spaceflight providers are already trusted by the U.S. government right now to launch multi-billion dollar military satellites, upon which the lives of our troops overseas depend. And over a dozen distinguished former NASA astronauts, including Buzz Aldrin, published an op-ed a few months ago in the *Wall Street Journal* stating that commercial companies can safely handle the task of low-Earth orbit transportation.”

Alexander concluded, “With President Obama’s historic decision, we stand on the threshold of a new era in space. The commercial spaceflight industry is working to extend the legacy of the Wright Brothers into space, for the mutual benefit of both NASA and the nation.”

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 or contact Executive Director John Gedmark at john@commercialspaceflight.org or at 202.349.1121.

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