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Statement of
The Honorable Bill Nelson
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

before the
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Chair Shaheen, Vice Chair Moran, and Members of the Subcommittee, I am pleased to be here to discuss the President's \$25.4 billion request for NASA for FY 2025. The President's FY 2025 Budget Request for NASA expresses the continued commitment from the Biden-Harris Administration to maintain and amplify America's preeminent place of leadership in humanity's quest to know the cosmos. The President's Budget prioritizes investments with a demonstrated return of value for the American taxpayer – investments in the future of deep space exploration, sustainable aeronautics, scientific endeavor, technological might, and inspiring the next generation, the Artemis Generation.

As history has proven, as the present has shown, and as the future will continue to demonstrate, to invest in NASA is to invest in the power, the principles, and the global leadership abilities of the United States. Investing in NASA benefits America and Americans.

We benefit America through NASA's Artemis campaign. The Artemis campaign represents the most diverse and broad coalition in space exploration. We are working with American companies and international partners to return astronauts to the Moon and then land the first astronauts on Mars.

Under NASA's leadership, humanity will make new scientific discoveries, test new technologies, and explore more of the lunar surface than ever before. Earlier this year, we witnessed the first successful lunar landing by an American company carrying NASA and commercial payloads to the Moon's South Pole region. The science and technology payloads sent to the Moon's surface as a part of NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services program will help lay the foundation for human missions and creating a sustainable human presence on the lunar surface. The Artemis II crewed flight test, fully funded in the President's Budget, will, for the first time in over half a century, fly astronauts around the

Moon. The budget makes investments in the long-term architecture for Artemis, including funding for human landing systems and extra-vehicular suits; lunar transportation, habitation, and fission surface power that will enable humanity's sustainable presence on the Moon; and the Gateway lunar outpost, built with international partners, that will help enable operations on the surface of the Moon.

We benefit America through advancing our space technologies, which support the growth and competitiveness of the U.S. space industry and the creation of good-paying jobs and will enable future missions. By developing lunar robotic missions, communications on and around the Moon, in-situ resource utilization demonstrations, Commercial Lunar Payload Services, and other key elements, NASA will deepen our understanding of the Moon to prepare for humanity's long-duration stays on the lunar surface, and later, Mars. Additionally, NASA is partnering with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and industry to develop and demonstrate advanced nuclear propulsion, one of several technologies under study that could enable more effective transportation in deep space.

We benefit America through our leadership in low-Earth orbit. Last year, NASA celebrated 25 years of International Space Station (ISS) operations, including 23 years with continuous human presence. This year, we continue to use commercial services to safely transport cargo and astronauts to the ISS to conduct critical research, science, and technology demonstrations. These operations inform and reduce risk for future missions to the Moon and Mars and provide insight and breakthroughs that directly affect life on Earth, including NASA's contribution to the President's Cancer Moonshot initiative. The President's Budget supports NASA in maintaining critical operations in low-Earth orbit while paving the way for a future sustained, commercially enabled American presence in space to continue creating scientific and economic opportunities.

We benefit America through our discoveries through the eye of NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, discoveries that represent an order-of-magnitude shift in our capability to see the universe. In 2023, NASA's Webb Telescope continued to unfold the secrets of our universe and inspire the world through breathtaking images taken during its first year of operations. The Webb telescope pulled back the curtain on some of the farthest galaxies, stars, and black holes ever observed; found methane and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere of a planet outside our solar system; and more. The President's Budget Request for NASA Science will continue supporting operations of groundbreaking missions like Webb, Hubble, and Perseverance. The request also invests in new missions and capabilities that will enable the next generation of world class science, including the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, the Near-Earth Object Surveyor, Europa Clipper, Dragonfly, and Habitable Worlds Observatory Technology Maturation, to name just a few.

We benefit America through NASA's leadership in climate and Earth science. Much of what we know about our changing planet is rooted in NASA's more than 40 years of Earth observations. With over two dozen instruments aboard the ISS complementing those in free-flyer orbits, NASA uses its unique vantage point in space to better understand our changing planet. With the President's Budget, NASA will continue to bring critical, life-changing climate data back down to Earth. NASA's new Earth Information Center at Headquarters in

Washington DC, and online, helps fulfill the Biden-Harris Administration's call to make climate data more understandable and accessible for all people. Through current and future Earth science missions like Landsat Next and building out the multi-satellite Earth System Observatory, NASA will continue to help all humanity understand and address the impacts of climate change.

We benefit America through NASA's key role in improving air travel and reaching net-zero aviation greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, by accelerating research and development of aircraft technologies that are cleaner, quieter, and greener. NASA is working with American companies to develop next generation aircraft and engines that would make commercial airliners 25 to 30 percent more efficient. That will benefit our planet, the U.S. commercial aviation sector, and passengers around the world. Through ambitious experimental projects like the X-66 Sustainable Flight Demonstrator and the X-59 Quiet Supersonic Technology Low Boom Flight Demonstrator, NASA will continue to help revolutionize the future of air travel.

We benefit America when NASA identifies, enables, and utilizes talents from across all of humanity. This includes robust outreach efforts to students of every background to pursue education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and then implement that education through public service at NASA or within America's space industry.

All of these benefits—for America, for humanity, and for the planet—add up to this: To invest in NASA advances our Nation's abilities and leadership in making the impossible possible, in making the unknown known, and in inspiring the world through discovery while creating competitive and good-paying jobs in all 50 states. The President's Budget will help bring our Nation, our economy, and our people deeper into a new era of American ingenuity, innovation, imagination, and leadership.