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**CHAIRWOMAN MIKULSKI HOLDS OVERSIGHT AND FY2013  
BUDGET HEARING FOR NASA**

*Maryland's Public and Private Space Assets Support Thousands of Science, Engineering, Research Jobs*

**WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.)**, Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS), today chaired a fiscal year 2013 oversight and budgetary hearing for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The hearing included testimony from **NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden**.

“Frugal times demand a frugal space agency. Our space programs must be affordable, balanced and wisely managed to gain support in frugal times,” **Chairwoman Mikulski** said. “But make no mistake, NASA’s mission is worth our passion.”

“As Chairwoman, I have three priorities for NASA,” **Chairwoman Mikulski** said. “First, is to implement a balanced space program. How will NASA move forward with the program Congress authorized and funded? Second, is to be an economic engine. How is NASA putting America to work out-innovating, out-educating, and out-building? Third, is oversight and accountability. How is NASA ensuring our tax dollars are spent wisely?”

Senator Mikulski has been a staunch supporter of a balanced space program and Maryland’s public and private space assets that support thousands of science, engineering and research jobs.

*Senator Mikulski's opening remarks, as prepared for delivery, follow:*

“Today the Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee welcomes NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, who will be testifying about NASA’s fiscal year 2013 budget request.

“As Chairwoman, I have three priorities for NASA. First, is to implement a balanced space program. How will NASA move forward with the program Congress authorized and funded?”

Second, is to be an economic engine. How is NASA putting America to work out-innovating, out-educating, and out-building? Third, is oversight and accountability. How is NASA ensuring our tax dollars are spent wisely?

“I want to make sure that NASA has what it needs to carry out its mission, explore the universe, understand and protect our planet, and create new technologies that lead to new breakthroughs creating jobs of the future.

“The President’s budget request for NASA is \$17.7 billion, which is \$89 million below 2012. In the last three years, NASA has been cut by \$1 billion. Within the request, NASA outlines three top priorities: Space Launch System (SLS) rocket and Orion capsule; supporting the International Space Station (ISS), including commercial flights for cargo and astronauts; and building the James Webb Space Telescope.

“NASA will be asked to accomplish those priorities with less, far less, than envisioned in the last NASA Authorization Act. In supporting those three priorities, NASA has made some tough choices. Science is cut \$179 million below 2012; funding for SLS and Orion is reduced below 2012; and NASA Education funding is cut \$38 million or 28 percent.

“Additionally, if we don’t avoid a sequester NASA will be cut by another eight percent across the board. We want to hear from Administrator Bolden on how a cut like that will impact NASA’s ability to carry out its mission.

“This subcommittee has always worked to preserve a balanced space program with science, aeronautics, and sustainable human flight. For science, this budget will keep NASA’s near term launches on track. This is good news. This supports important science missions to explore our solar system and the universe, understand the Sun, and observe and protect our planet.

“But I am troubled that the budget does not invest adequately in future missions—the next highest science priorities identified by the National Academies’ decadal surveys. We must keep making progress on the Academies’ recommendations, now and in the future.

“This year, we hope to see both SpaceX and Orbital launch cargo to the International Space Station, results of a partnership between NASA and the private sector. Once Orbital starts launching out of Wallops there will be 400 new high tech jobs on the Eastern Shore. SpaceX has created 1,500 jobs since it became part of the commercial cargo program in 2006.

“Nationwide, aerospace industries create a \$50 billion trade surplus for the U.S., and NASA should be a partner with them. Our new commercial space rockets can launch a new industry in places like Wallops Island. NASA-developed capabilities, like the satellite servicing group at Goddard, have the potential to create jobs for today and jobs for tomorrow—innovation jobs that can’t be outsourced. That’s why we have a strong coalition of Space Senators, because we believe in NASA’s ability to bring out the best of America.

“But to keep that support, NASA has got to be more frugal. Last year, NASA achieved a clean financial audit for the first time since 2002. We are counting on NASA to remain vigilant on oversight and accountability.

“I appreciate NASA’s efforts to reevaluate the James Webb Space Telescope. Now NASA must keep to the plan. GAO’s most recent assessment of NASA’s large projects found NASA’s large programs—other than JWST—average \$79 million or 15 percent over budget and eight months behind schedule.

“NASA has to do better. More than 80 percent of NASA’s funding is awarded by contract. That’s more than \$14 billion of NASA’s 2013 request. NASA’s Inspector General has identified project and contract management as top challenges for the agency. This committee will be a watchdog and we expect NASA to implement the Inspector General’s recommendations.

“Frugal times demand a frugal space agency. Our space programs must be affordable, balanced, and wisely managed to gain support in frugal times. But make no mistake, NASA’s mission is worth our passion.”

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