

### *FAA Designation Would Allow for Spacecraft to Be Launched from Colorado*

**Washington, DC** – Highlighting Colorado's leadership in space research and development, the Colorado Congressional delegation is expressing its support for the creation of a spaceport in Colorado.

The entire Colorado Congressional delegation, including Senators Michael Bennet and Mark Udall and Representatives Diana DeGette, Mike Coffman, Cory Gardner, Ed Perlmutter, Doug Lamborn, Scott Tipton and Jared Polis, sent a letter late last week to Dr. George C. Nield, associate administrator for commercial space transportation at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), who will be responsible for the selection of future spaceport states.

The FAA is considering the state's request for spaceport status, which would allow the launching of commercial aircraft into space from Colorado.

"Colorado's assets will make it an excellent spaceport state," the delegation wrote in the letter. "Its well-established aerospace community, well-educated workforce, excellent higher learning institutions, and high technology business environment make Colorado the perfect place for a future spaceport.

"As Colorado begins the spaceport licensing process, its recognition as a proposed spaceport state would leverage Colorado's proven success in space and build on these strengths to bolster our nation's larger aerospace economy."

The Front Range Airport, located in northeast Aurora and 6 miles from Denver International Airport, has been identified as a potential site for a Colorado spaceport by the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). OEDIT is partnering with private and public stakeholders to develop a spaceport strategy for Colorado and to keep the state engaged in the commercial space industry. If spaceport designation is granted, the next step is upgrading the airport to support space travel.

Currently, Alaska, California, Florida, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and Virginia are designated spaceport states.

The full text of the letter follows:

Dear Dr. Nield:

We write today to express our strong support for Colorado's efforts to become a spaceport state. As the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) works with Colorado's Front Range Airport on its spaceport certification, we wish to highlight Colorado's leadership in space research and development and demonstrate the strong, unified support for this designation from the entire Colorado congressional delegation. Colorado's long history with military and civilian space operations and its continually growing scientific and aerospace industries make it an ideal candidate for this designation.

Colorado is already home to numerous military space operations including the Air Force Space Command, the Army Space and Missile Defense Command, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), and three space-related Air Force bases: Buckley, Peterson, and Schriever. The 50th Space Wing at Schriever Air Force Base provides command and control for over 170 Department of Defense satellites and also hosts the Space Innovation and Development Center. The Global Positioning System (GPS), which is used around the world for accurate navigation and positioning, also operates from Colorado. In addition to military space installations, the state has one of the highest concentrations of federal science and research labs in the nation. This is due in part to the excellent higher learning institutions in Colorado, which have some of the highest ranking aerospace engineering programs in the country and consistently top the list of high-tech graduates each year.

Several commercial space firms have also utilized Colorado's strategic location, educated workforce and dynamic business atmosphere to make it the second largest aerospace economy in the country. Hundreds of large and small aerospace companies operate in the state, including Boeing, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, Northrop Grumman, Sierra Nevada Corporation, Ball Aerospace, United Launch Alliance (ULA), and Raytheon. The level of innovation in Colorado's industrial base is immense and already a driving force to new, cost-effective spacecraft research and development, manufacturing, unmanned flights, suborbital flights, and pilot and crew training. Colorado also has extensive experience in traditional and transitional

space lift services as expressed by ULA and Sierra Nevada Corporation's Dream Chaser program, both located in Colorado.

To that end, Colorado has initiated development of a spaceport strategy through Colorado's Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). OEDIT has partnered with both private and public stakeholders to determine how best to develop a spaceport, increase Colorado's engagement in the growing commercial space industry, and help the nation.

OEDIT and its working group identified the Front Range Airport as a potential site for a spaceport in Colorado. Front Range Airport has 4,000 acres of land, surrounded by 6,000 acres of privately owned industrial property. Its location is remote, yet only six miles from Denver International Airport (DIA) and approximately thirty miles from Denver. DIA management has expressed full support for development of a spaceport at Front Range Airport. We understand that a spaceport facility at this site would not interfere with DIA's airspace and that Front Range Airport's infrastructure makes it suitable for horizontal takeoff. In Colorado's state-wide coordinated proposal, the Colorado Springs area has also stepped up to generate one of the nation's spaceport command and control centers, a natural fit considering the extensive space command and control activity already present there.

Colorado's assets will make it an excellent spaceport state. Its well-established aerospace community, well-educated workforce, excellent higher learning institutions, and high technology business environment make Colorado the perfect place for a future spaceport. As Colorado begins the spaceport licensing process, its recognition as a proposed spaceport state would leverage Colorado's proven success in space and build on these strengths to bolster our nation's larger aerospace economy.

We thank you for your consideration of Colorado for proposed spaceport state designation and look forward to working with you in the future.

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