

The Voyager Declaration

Dear Interim Administrator Duffy,

In light of your recent appointment as Interim NASA Administrator, we bring to your attention recent policies that have or threaten to waste public resources, compromise human safety, weaken national security, and undermine the core NASA mission. We, the signatories of this letter, dissent from these policies, and raise these concerns because we believe strongly in the importance of NASA's mission, which we are dedicated to uphold.

Major programmatic shifts at NASA must be implemented strategically so that risks are managed carefully. Instead, the last six months have seen rapid and wasteful changes which have undermined our mission and caused catastrophic impacts on NASA's workforce. We are compelled to speak up when our leadership prioritizes [political momentum](#) over human safety, [scientific advancement](#), and [efficient use of public resources](#). These cuts are arbitrary and have been enacted [in defiance of congressional appropriations law](#). The consequences for the agency and the country alike are dire.

Our Shared Commitment to Dissenting Opinions

We share a commitment to dissenting views in accordance with [NASA Policy Directive 1000.0C](#),

NASA supports full and open discussion of issues of any nature (e.g., programmatic, institutional), including alternative and divergent views. Diverse views are to be fostered and respected in an environment of integrity and trust with no suppression or retribution. (NPD 1000.0C, Section 3.5.5)

Employees across the agency have raised concerns about recent actions to NASA leadership, yet we remain pressured to implement harmful measures. We choose to write to you directly because: (1) as Interim Administrator, you are the final step in the chain of Technical Authority, and (2) the issues we raise are agency-wide, rather than project-specific.

As defined in [NASA Procedural Requirement 7120.5F](#), Formal Dissent is "a substantive disagreement with a decision or action that an individual judges is not in the best interest of NASA and is of sufficient importance that it warrants a timely review and decision by higher-level management."

This document constitutes our Formal Dissent.

Our Concerns

Interim Administrator Duffy, we urge you not to implement the harmful cuts proposed by this administration, as they are not in the best interest of NASA. We wish to preserve NASA's vital mission as authorized and appropriated by Congress. We look forward to working alongside you and all of NASA leadership to continue that mission: "to explore the unknown in air and space, innovate for the benefit of humanity, and inspire the world through discovery."

- **We dissent to changes to NASA's Technical Authority capacities that are driven by anything other than safety and mission assurance.** The culture of organizational silence promoted at NASA over the last six months already represents a dangerous turn away from the lessons learned following the Columbia disaster. Changes to the system of Technical Authority, as suggested would be made [in the June 25th NASA Town Hall](#), should be made only in the interests of improving safety, not in anticipation of future budget cuts.
- **We dissent to the closing out of missions for which Congress has appropriated funding** because it represents a permanent loss of capability to the United States both in space and [on Earth](#). Once operational spacecraft are decommissioned, they cannot be turned back on. Additionally, cancelling missions in development threatens to end the next generation of crucial observations.
- **We dissent to implementing indiscriminate cuts to NASA science and aeronautics research** because this will leave the American people without the unique public good that NASA provides. Basic research in space science, aeronautics, and the [stewardship of the Earth](#) are inherently governmental functions that cannot and will not be taken up by the private sector. Furthermore, NASA has a nearly [threefold return on investment](#) in economic activity, and [supports national security](#) by ensuring the United States maintains its lead in science and technology.
- **We dissent to NASA's non-strategic staffing reductions** because they will jeopardize NASA's core mission. Thousands of NASA civil servant employees have already been terminated, resigned or retired early, taking with them highly specialized, irreplaceable knowledge crucial to carrying out NASA's mission.
- **We dissent to canceling NASA participation in international missions** because in doing so, NASA is abandoning America's allies. To date, 55 nations have signed on to the Artemis Accords, and withdrawing support from missions with our long-standing partners at the European Space Agency (ESA), Canadian Space Agency (CSA), the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and others threatens NASA's ability to lead the world in the future of space exploration.
- **We dissent to the termination of NASA contracts and grants for reasons unrelated to performance** because it [weakens state and local economies across the country](#). Capriciously terminating contracts and grants reduces the number of private sector jobs associated with the space economy and discourages private entrepreneurship by negating competitive grant selection processes.
- **We dissent to the elimination of programs aimed at developing and supporting NASA's workforce** because it undermines the agency's power to innovate for the benefit of humanity. Cuts to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility programming that have already been implemented directly conflict with the agency's core value of inclusion. Eliminating the Office of STEM Engagement would deliver a critical blow to the nation's future space economy workforce.

Who We Are

The signatories of this letter are current and former NASA employees from every NASA center and mission directorate. In addition to named signatories, we include anonymous signatories who share our concerns but choose not to be identified due to the culture of fear of retaliation cultivated by this administration. As a group of individuals from a diversity of nationalities, races, abilities, sexualities, and gender identities, we stand unified in support of NASA's core values: safety, integrity, teamwork, excellence, and inclusion.

We stand in solidarity with our colleagues at the NIH and EPA who have released [similar statements](#) concerning the administration's actions at their respective agencies.

We dedicate this letter to Gus Grissom, Ed White, Roger Chaffee, Dick Scobee, Michael J. Smith, Ronald McNair, Ellison Onizuka, Judith Resnik, Gregory Jarvis, Christa McAuliffe, Rick Husband, Willie McCool, Michael Anderson, Kalpana Chawla, David Brown, Laurel Clark, and Ilan Ramon. Their legacies underpin every conversation about our shared commitment to safety and dissenting opinions at NASA.