



Space Law, Regulation and Policy Update

Good Afternoon!

If Ferris Bueller worked in Washington these days, he'd probably say, "Space policy moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

This week, NASA Administrator Isaacman will meet space industry heads in Washington to ensure alignment with NASA's evolving strategy, FCC Chairman Carr has proposed that FCC Commissioners discuss spectrum availability for "weird space stuff," and the Office of Space Commerce is weighing whether to introduce fees for orbital collision avoidance data.

Outside the U.S., Germany is leaning in on space, China returned to the launchpad after a month-long hiatus and Russia told the world it's back in the planetary exploration game.

All this and more in this edition of Akin's Space Law, Regulation and Policy Update.

On The Hill

Articles and Quotes

[US Space Command's Move to Redstone on Track, Gen. Whiting Tells Congress](#) (Fox News)

United States Space Command Commander Stephen Whiting told Congress that the relocation of the command's headquarters to Redstone Arsenal remains on track, with a phased transition already underway as the Pentagon constructs a new purpose-built command and control facility. Testifying before the House Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee, Whiting emphasized that sustaining operational readiness and retaining specialized personnel are central to the move, with relocation incentives and workforce measures in place. The relocation, expected to shift roughly 1,400 personnel over several years, reflects a broader effort to align space warfighting infrastructure with growing mission demands. For space stakeholders, the move signals continued investment in operational command-and-control architecture, regional space hubs and long-term capacity for joint space operations, with implications for workforce development, infrastructure buildout and integration with broader defense space priorities.

Senate Committee Advances NASA Deputy Administrator Nominee (*SpaceNews*)

The Senate Commerce Committee voted 23-5 to advance the nomination of Matt Anderson to serve as Deputy Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), sending his nomination to the full Senate for final consideration. Anderson, a retired U.S. Air Force officer, pledged to support Administrator Jared Isaacman and the administration's space policy priorities, including returning U.S. astronauts to the Moon by 2028 under the Artemis program. During his confirmation process, Anderson also expressed support for recently advanced NASA authorization legislation that would extend operations of the International Space Station through 2032 and codify elements of Artemis restructuring. The committee vote reflects broad bipartisan backing for NASA leadership continuity as the agency advances lunar exploration timelines and transitions toward a more commercially integrated space architecture.

Introduced Legislation & Legislative Updates

On March 17, the House passed the Small Business Innovation and Economic Security Act (**S. 3971**), which extends the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. The bill will now go to the President's desk.

Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA) **introduced** the Support for Astrophysical Observatories and National High-Energy Astrophysics Hubs Act (**S. 4044**), which would require the NASA Administrator to designate national high-energy astrophysics hubs. This legislation was included in the amended version of the NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2026 (**S. 933**), which was passed out of the Senate Commerce Committee on March 4.

Sen. Eric Schmitt (R-MO) **introduced** the Taiwan and American Space Assistance Act (**S. 3979**), which would provide for NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to expand their cooperation with Taiwan. This legislation was included in the amended version of the NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2026 (**S. 933**), which was passed out of the Senate Commerce Committee on March 4.

Rep. Gabe Amo (D-RI) **introduced** the NOAA Global Ocean Monitoring and Observing Research Act (**H.R. 7896**), which would establish a research program within NOAA dedicated to global ocean monitoring and observing.

Please find our Space Legislation Tracker **here**.

Recent and Upcoming Congressional Hearings

(March 9, 2026 - March 27, 2026)

On March 10, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) held a closed **briefing** on Operation Epic Fury.

On March 10, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) held a closed briefing on intelligence matters.

On March 11, SSCI held a closed briefing on intelligence matters.

On March 12, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation (CST) held an executive session to consider nominations.

On March 17, the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC) held a hearing titled “Reforming America’s Defense Sales.”

On March 17, CST held a hearing titled “U.S. Leadership at the World Radiocommunication Conference 2027: Strategy and Challenges Ahead of Shanghai.”

On March 17, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) held a hearing titled “U.S. Military Posture & National Security Challenges in the Western Hemisphere.”

On March 17, the HASC Strategic Forces Subcommittee held a hearing titled “FY27 Strategic Forces Posture.”

On March 18, HASC held a hearing titled “U.S. Military Posture and National Security Challenges in Europe.”

On March 18, the HASC Seapower & Projection Forces Subcommittee and Readiness Subcommittee held a joint hearing titled “Posture and Readiness of the Mobility Enterprise.”

On March 18, the HASC Intelligence & Special Operations Subcommittee held a hearing titled “U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command - Challenges and Resource Priorities for FY27.”

On March 18, the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (SST) held a markup of the NOAA Weather Radio Modernization Act (H.R. 7813).

On March 18, the SST Communications & Technology Subcommittee held a hearing titled “Securing U.S. Leadership of Communications Technology.”

On March 18, SSCI held an open hearing on worldwide threats.

On March 19, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) held an open hearing on worldwide threats.

On March 19, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense (HAC-D) held a member day hearing.

On March 24, SASC will hold a hearing to examine low-cost munitions.

On March 24, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations will hold a **hearing** on the State Department's oversight of arms control and international security programs.

On March 24, HPSCI will hold a **business meeting**.

On March 24, SASC will hold open and closed **hearings** to examine the posture of United States Space Command and United States Strategic Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2027 and the Future Years Defense Program.

On March 25, the HASC Strategic Forces Subcommittee will hold a **hearing** on national security space programs and activities.

On March 25, HFAC will hold a **hearing** on arms control and international security.

In the White House/Executive Branch

Articles and Quotes

FCC Announces Tentative Agenda for March Meeting (*Akin*)

Chairman Brendan Carr of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced that the agency's March Open Meeting will include a major space-focused rulemaking aimed at expanding spectrum access for emerging space activities. The proposed "**Spectrum Abundance for Weird Space Stuff**" Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) seeks to address growing demand for radiofrequency spectrum from non-traditional space operations, including spacecraft requiring telemetry, tracking and command functions outside of traditional communications satellite services. The proposal would explore new regulatory frameworks to provide more predictable spectrum access, including allowing "frequency piggybacking" between nearby spacecraft, expanding secondary allocations for the Space Operation Service (SOS) and enabling spectrum leasing arrangements to support emerging missions. Officials said the effort reflects increasing pressure on existing spectrum resources as commercial and government space activities proliferate, positioning spectrum policy as a key enabler of future space operations, innovation and U.S. competitiveness in the space domain.

Isaacman Summons Space Companies to Washington (*Politico*)

NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman is convening major space industry leaders in Washington for a two-day summit aimed at aligning contractors with NASA's evolving strategy for its highest-priority missions. Scheduled for March 24-25, the meeting will outline how NASA plans to execute the administration's national space policy, including accelerating the Artemis program, achieving a crewed lunar landing by 2028 and advancing plans for a permanent lunar outpost. The summit is expected to include briefings on near-term mission requirements, upcoming procurement opportunities and broader program direction, as well as discussions on NASA's forthcoming

roadmap for space exploration and initiatives such as deploying a nuclear reactor on the Moon by 2030. The engagement signals a push by NASA leadership to better coordinate with industry as program changes and compressed timelines reshape requirements for contractors and commercial partners.

Office of Space Commerce Weighing Options for TraCSS User Fees (*SpaceNews*)

The Office of Space Commerce (OSC) is weighing whether to introduce user fees for its Traffic Coordination System for Space (TraCSS), a civil space traffic management platform designed to provide space situational awareness data to satellite operators. The debate follows a December **Executive Order** that removed language in Space Policy Directive 3 requiring such services to be provided “free of direct user fees,” creating flexibility for potential cost-recovery models. Trump administration officials emphasized that no decision has been made, with options ranging from traditional fees to in-kind data-sharing arrangements, as policymakers consider how best to position the United States as a leader in space safety services and standards. The discussion comes amid rapid growth in commercial space traffic management capabilities and broader uncertainty about TraCSS’s future, including prior proposals to cancel the program in the fiscal year (FY) 2026 budget before Congress restored funding. The outcome could shape how satellite operators access critical collision-avoidance data and influence the balance between government-provided and commercial space safety services.

To Accelerate Space Capabilities, Pentagon Ups Golden Dome Spending Plan by \$10 Billion (*Breaking Defense*)

The Department of Defense (DoD) has increased the projected cost of its Golden Dome missile defense initiative to \$185 billion, adding \$10 billion to accelerate development of key space-based capabilities, according to Michael Guetlein, the Space Force general leading the effort. The expanded funding is intended to speed work on systems including space-based tracking sensors, a space data transport network and capabilities supporting airborne moving target indication, all of which are central to the program’s layered homeland defense architecture. Officials said the primary challenge is not technological feasibility but scaling these capabilities affordably and quickly enough to meet evolving threats. The funding increase underscores the growing role of space assets in missile defense and broader national security architectures, even as lawmakers continue to press the Pentagon for more details on program structure, contracting mechanisms and long-term execution plans.

Federal Agency Space News

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

About Integrated Aviation Systems Program (IASP) (March 12, 2026)

NASA’s X-59 Prepares for Second Flight (March 17, 2026)

NASA Finalizes Artemis II Rollout, Crew Begins Quarantine (March 18, 2026)

Federal Aviation Administration

[FAA Streamlines Commercial Space License Approvals](#) (March 17, 2026)

Office of the Director of National Intelligence

[ODNI Releases 2026 Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community](#) (March 18, 2026)

Office of Space Commerce

[OSC to Host Space Workforce Forum - May 7](#) (March 12, 2026)

[USG Seeks Participation in Engagements with Commercial Space Stakeholders](#) (March 13, 2026)

[Commercial Data Program Industry Day - April 9](#) (March 16, 2026)

[TraCSS Publishes 'Dataset for Conjunction Assessment Verification'](#) (March 18, 2026)

U.S Department of Defense

[Joint Interagency Task Force Spearheads Contract, Unifies Drone Defenses](#) (March 13, 2026)

[Air Force Research Laboratory Tests Draper Liquid Rocket Engine in Flight](#) (March 17, 2026)

U.S. Space Force

[DAF Space Medicine Leaders, Civilian Partners Strategize Policy at Inaugural Space Force Medicine Summit](#) (March 11, 2026)

[Space Force Announces Second Tranche of PAEs](#) (March 17, 2026)

International

Articles & Quotes

[Russia Aims to Regain Space Supremacy with 2036 Venus Mission](#) (*Daily Galaxy*)

Russia has announced plans for its Venera-D mission, targeting a 2036 launch to Venus as part of an effort to revive its planetary exploration program and build on its historic Venera program achievements. The mission will include an orbiter, a lander and a balloon designed to study Venus' surface and atmosphere, with objectives including analyzing extreme environmental conditions and investigating the potential for microbial life in the planet's clouds. Officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov, have framed the effort as a return to Russia's

legacy as the first nation to land a spacecraft on Venus, while advancing new scientific goals using updated technologies. The announcement comes amid increasing international interest in Venus exploration, with multiple countries and organizations developing their own missions to the planet.

China Ends Month-Long Launch Hiatus With Separate Guowang and Shiyang-30 Satellite Missions (*SpaceNews*)

China resumed orbital launch activity after a month-long pause with two missions deploying satellites for both communications and technology development. A Long March 8A rocket launched a new batch of satellites for the Guowang low Earth orbit constellation, part of China's planned 13,000-satellite broadband network, with around 163 satellites currently in orbit and a target of 400 by 2027. Hours later, a Long March 2D launched the Shiyang-30 (03 and 04) satellites, which are described as technology demonstration spacecraft used to test capabilities such as Earth observation, inter-satellite links and autonomous operations. The launches reflect China's continued push to expand satellite internet infrastructure and advance on-orbit technology testing, as well as its broader goal of increasing launch cadence and potentially exceeding 100 orbital launches in 2026.

Germany's Conquest of Space (*The Trumpet*)

Germany is increasing its focus on space through expanded funding, new strategy documents and closer coordination with European partners, including the European Space Agency (ESA). Germany is set to become the largest contributor to ESA, with its funding rising to \$5.8 billion as part of a broader European budget increase, supporting efforts in launch capabilities, lunar exploration and satellite development. A new national space strategy emphasizes strengthening space security, protecting satellites and developing military space capabilities, while reducing reliance on non-European systems. German officials have also outlined plans to invest in satellite constellations, reconnaissance capabilities and emerging technologies such as lasers and space-based systems, alongside efforts to expand domestic launch options through partnerships in Europe. The developments reflect a broader push to enhance Europe's space capabilities, support its growing commercial space sector and increase autonomy in space infrastructure and operations.

Check out below for comment opportunities, requests for proposals, notices of proposed rulemaking and a look at the week ahead in space events:

Comment Opportunities (RFIs)

Aerospace Power Systems Laboratory (APSL) Facility

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: March 31, 2026

USSF Intelligence Facility at Wright Patterson AFB

Department of Defense

Close Date: April 2, 2026

Commercial Satellite Communications (COMSATCOM) for USSOCOM J6

Department of Defense

Close Date: April 9, 2026

Solicitation: National Space Test and Training Complex (NSTTC) Innovative Technology & Engineering - Space Test and Range (NITE-STAR)

Department of Defense

Close Date: April 17, 2026

Private Sector Participation in Domestic and International Events on Spaceflight Safety, Responsible Practices and Commercial Space

Department of State

Close Date: December 31, 2026

Requests for Proposals (RFPs)

Solicitation for COMET Defense Intelligence Agency Missile and Space Intelligence Center

Department of Defense

Close Date: April 3, 2026

Johnson Space Center Multiple Award Construction Contract (JMACC)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Close Date: April 6, 2026

Notices of Proposed Rulemakings (NPRMs)

No new proposed rules.

Upcoming Space Events

SATShow Week 2026

Satellite x GovMilSpace

March 23-26, 2026

Space Science Week

National Academies

March 23-27, 2026

2026 Space Diplomacy Forum

Meridian International

March 25, 2026

Science for a New Era of Expl: Path from the Moon to Mars

USRA/SPI

March 26, 2026

March 2026 Open Commission Meeting

FCC

March 26, 2026

Moon Farside Protection Symposium

IAA

March 26-27, 2026

March ISU Space Café with the Netherlands Embassy

International Space University

March 30, 2026

Central Eurasia Space Technology Conference

Uzcosmos

March 30 - April 1, 2026

4th Annual Spacepower Security Forum

Mitchell Institute

April 1, 2026

Nuclear Launch Seminar

ACSP

April 2, 2026

5th IAA Conference on Space Situational Awareness

IAA

April 7-9, 2026

41st Space Symposium

Space Foundation

April 13-16, 2026

Earth and Space 2026 Conference

ASCE

April 13-16, 2026

2026 Spring Meeting

LSIC

April 28-30, 2026

Learn more about our Space Law and Policy practice.

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Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact:

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