Lockheed Martin Commends Bi-Partisan Support For NASA FY 2011 Budget

Lockheed Martin today applauded the recent actions taken by House and Senate NASA oversight committees as Congress moves forward on a bi-partisan spending plan for NASA. This important legislation provides an achievable path forward for a robust human space flight program that continues the Orion crew exploration vehicle to help achieve that goal and includes funding for advancements in technology that will ensure U.S. leadership in space.

"We are very pleased to see strong bi-partisan support in Congress for the nation's human exploration program and recognition of the significant progress that has been made in developing Orion in just four years," said John Karas, Lockheed Martin vice president and general manager, Human Space Flight. "We commend the cooperation between Congress and the Administration in achieving this important step to assure continued U.S. leadership in space."

The Orion team has completed ground testing for major subsystems and is expected to complete the critical design review next year that will finalize 90 percent of the design. A test of the Orion Launch Abort System was successfully conducted in May 2010 and the NASA and industry team completed a rigorous Phase 1 safety review in early July 2010, assuring that mission critical safety requirements have been met.

The Orion crew spacecraft incorporates the latest advances in human spaceflight technologies and is inherently designed to provide the highest level of safety for the crew during long-duration missions. Continuation of the program will enable achievement of the President's mandate for a mission to an asteroid or other scientifically important destinations, even before the end of this decade with the accelerated heavy lift launch vehicle.

"These important actions by Congress with the Administration will promote STEM education, and maintain the highly skilled workforce and resources vital to the nation's future as the space shuttle is retired and we transition to the next generation of space flight systems and missions to explore beyond low Earth orbit," added Karas.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 136,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's 2009 sales from continuing operations were $44.5 billion.

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