Lockheed Martin Commends Congressional Action On NASA Spacecraft

DENVER, April 15, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Following months of short-term, stop-gap funding for NASA, Lockheed Martin welcomes final passage of the FY 2011 budget by the Congress, which has been sent forward for President Obama's signature. As stated by Congressional committee members, continuing the development of the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle (MPCV) along with the heavy lift launch vehicle ensures that the United States will continue to be the world's leader in human space flight.

Orion was designed from inception to serve as the nation's next generation spacecraft to safely take humans on a variety of multi-purpose deep space missions throughout our solar system. The 2010 NASA Authorization Act, and now the FY 2011 Appropriations Act, continues Orion on a clear path forward to its first orbital flight in 2013 and crewed operations by 2016.

Nearly 3,000 people work on the Orion program across the country, of which about 2,200 are employed by Lockheed Martin, its subcontractors and commercial suppliers. In addition, the program contracts with hundreds of small businesses nationwide through its expansive supply chain network. Lockheed Martin also has nearly $750 million in business commitments to small disadvantaged businesses, of which approximately $20 million is committed solely to Historically Black Colleges, Universities and Minority Institutions.

The NASA/industry Orion team has made significant contributions to space flight safety and technology with the flawless test flight of a new launch abort system and the creation of a new navigation and docking system that will be tested on orbit during the upcoming STS-134 shuttle mission. The team has completed production of the first Orion spacecraft which is now at Lockheed Martin's Denver, Colorado facilities being prepared to undergo rigorous testing to validate the spacecraft's ability to endure the harsh environments of a deep space mission.

Lockheed Martin is committed to maintaining excellence on Orion's progress and is working closely in partnership with NASA to ensure success for the nation's future human space exploration endeavors. With the impending retirement of the Space Shuttle fleet, it is imperative to restore U.S. human space flight capabilities for exploration.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin [NYSE: LMT] is a global security company that employs about 132,000 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 2010 sales from continuing operations were $45.8 billion.

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