

Ultra Low Cost Access to Space Act



March Storm 2017

Alliance for Space Development

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SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS

- (1) Short Title -- This Act may be cited as “The Ultra Low Cost Access to Space (ULCATS) Act.”
- (2) Table of Contents
 - a. Section 1: Short Title; Table of Contents.
 - b. Section 2: Definition.
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SECTION 2. DEFINITION.

For the purpose of this act, Ultra Low Cost Access to Space refers to Earth to Space transportation systems which cost an order of magnitude less than comparable systems in 2015.

SECTION 3. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

- (1) While the value of space activities to the United States has been well established since the launch of Explorer 1 in 1958, the nation’s ability to fully utilize and pursue the scientific, economic, and security benefits of spaceflight has been severely limited by the high cost of launching payloads into and beyond Earth orbit.
- (2) A significant reduction in the cost of space access, along with an increase in frequency and reliability of access, will provide multiple benefits to the American people, including:
 - a. A dramatic improvement in quality, quantity, and robustness of U.S. military space capabilities;
 - b. an acceleration of the economic development of Earth orbit and of unique resources and locations within the solar system;
 - c. an increase in the cost-effectiveness of scientific discovery across all domains in space; and
 - d. new opportunities for affordable human exploration, economic development, and permanent settlement of the solar system.
- (3) Currently, several companies and institutions within the United States are pursuing technologies and systems for access to space that will have high-flight rates, rapid-turnaround, and surge capability, thus enabling the development of ultra-low cost access to space.
- (4) In addition to directly benefiting from the development of ultra-low cost access to space, many federal departments and agencies have unique resources and the authority to foster the U.S. commercial development of ultra-low cost access to space.

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- (5) The deployment of commercial systems and vehicles that would dramatically lower the cost of space access require closing the business case for very-large high-risk investment, and the government is in a unique position to help close this business case.
- (6) Historical examples of the United States government successfully partnering with industry, such as the EELV program and the Commercial Orbital Transportation Systems program, required using multiple contracting options during their development phase, such as grants, cooperative agreements, Space Act Agreements, and OTAs.
- (7) When partnering with commercial industry, preserving marketplace competition has proven to be critical to driving innovation and deploying successful systems.
- (8) The development and deployment of such systems, while in the strategic interests of the United States, will require changing current regulatory and business practice by all involved parties, and that government agencies will need to work with industry to understand how to implement these changes.
- (9) It is in the interest of the United States Government to partner with commercial industry to develop these systems and vehicles

SECTION 4. ENABLING ULCATS

- (1) **POLICY.**– It is the policy of the United States that the national security and economic interests of the United States require the earliest possible development by the private sector of dramatically lower-cost, higher reliability, and more abundant space launch capabilities. The President shall therefore, direct his Administration to rapidly pursue programs and policies, including the earliest practicable proposal of changes to statute and regulations, which will stimulate the creation of U.S. commercial launch capabilities which deliver Ultra-Low Cost Access to Space for public and private sector users.
- (2) **Report** – Within 180 days after the date of enactment, the President, in consultation with the Department of Defense, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Commerce, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, and other federal agencies as appropriate, will provide a report to the Senate and the House of Representatives that will detail the Executive Branch’s plan for stimulating the private sector attainment of Ultra-Low Cost Access to Space. This plan shall, at a minimum, include:
 - a. the identification of a person or organization within the Executive Office of the President to whom all relevant agencies will report on their activities in support of ULCATS;
 - b. a list of all appropriate federal agencies and their specific roles, responsibilities, and allocation of resources in FY2018 and FY2019 in support of ULCATS;
 - c. a detailed plan for and initial status report on progress made in creating a purpose-built organization within the executive branch to create and manage at least three significant public-private partnerships with the U.S. commercial space transportation industry to achieve full-scale demonstrations of ULCATS capabilities before the end of 2020, including its initial and estimated yearly budget requirements, and its specifically-granted hiring and procurement authorities so it is not dependent on any other agency to carry out its assigned mission;

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- d. any additional federal agencies which will utilize their existing or proposed Other Transactions Authority to initiate various public/private partnerships before September 30, 2018, in support of U.S. commercial ULCATS capabilities;
- e. An initial survey of federal laws or regulations which may need to be amended or streamlined to enable ULCATS capabilities to succeed in the marketplace, and an estimate of the resources required to expedite the development of proposed legislative or regulatory changes so that they are complete before 2019, if practicable;
- f. other recommended activities that would help enable ULCATS that could begin in Fiscal Year 2018;
- g. a survey of existing federal programs which could be accelerated and near-term commercial capabilities which could fostered to help achieve early successes towards ULCATS; and
- h. an initial plan for requiring federal agencies to utilize ULCATS capabilities as they enter service.