



**Recommendations to the NASA Presidential Transition Team  
submitted by  
The Tennessee Valley NASA Advocacy Committee (TVNAC)**

**Constellation Program**

We strongly endorse the NASA Constellation program and in particular the current launch system architecture. Now is the time to move forward with the development of U.S. capability to reach beyond low Earth orbit. Revisiting the architecture decisions exacerbates the gap in U.S. human space flight capability. Moreover, we contend that any alternative architecture presented will face its own technical and cost challenges as it matures from concept to actual systems development. It is extremely important to provide continuity to the NASA and industry team that is focused on launch vehicle development, especially given the discouraging start/stop history of the previous two decades and the consequent erosion of national technical capability. We also assert that such capabilities are strategic assets in the areas of defense and intelligence which the nation should not be without.

**Shuttle Transition**

The TVNAC believes it is imperative to retire the Space Shuttle as soon as possible in the 2010 timeframe. Funding for Constellation and a robust human exploration program depend upon Retirement of the Shuttle. More importantly, extension of the Shuttle should be weighed against the risk associated with continued operation. The system is inherently vulnerable given that it is not equipped with a crew escape system, the crew is positioned in the middle of the propulsion stack, the vehicle flies through its own debris field, and reentry risks are extreme.

**International Space Station (ISS) Utilization**

We support full utilization of the ISS because of its value as a space-based research laboratory and a test-bed for future exploration efforts. And we applaud policies that encourage the commercial development of space such as cargo delivery to the Space Station.

**Science**

Through focused efforts on topics such as climate change and alternative energy research including space solar power, NASA is well positioned to contribute to pressing national issues.

**Administrative Issues**

In NASA's laudable effort to achieve "Ten Healthy Centers", it seems to have marginalized important, concentrated capability. For example, Marshall Space Flight Center possesses world-class capability in high energy astrophysics but has no programmatic assignments in that area because it is not a designated "science center". We encourage the Administration to balance programmatic assignments to optimize existing concentrations of capability.

**Conclusion**

The Tennessee Valley NASA Advocacy Committee stands ready to support the efforts of the Obama Administration to advance U.S. capabilities in space exploration. Paramount to us and of strategic value to the nation is the continuation of the Ares I and V launch vehicle efforts.

