



November 17, 2008

President-Elect Barack Obama  
John C. Kluczynski Federal Office Building  
230 South Dearborn St.  
Suite 3900 (39th floor)  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Dear President-Elect Obama:

Congratulations on your election as President of the United States! I and all my friends, family and colleagues are thrilled.

I am writing to you specifically about the U.S. space programs. I have been in the space business since 1979. I started as a research associate at MIT, worked at the Charles Stark Draper Laboratory on the Space Shuttle and early incarnations of the space station, worked at GE Astro Space on numerous satellite programs, including GPS IIR, and founded my own company, Princeton Satellite Systems in 1992. During that time I have worked with many engineers at NASA and in the Air Force on spacecraft and missile projects. I can assure you that they are an impressive and dedicated group who can accomplish whatever goals you set.

The next few years will be critical for the U.S. space program and I think that it is important to clearly define the goals of the U.S. space program and the mechanisms for accomplishing those goals. I think the program should have three goals:

1. Continue and expand the space science programs. This includes robotic missions to the planets and observatories of both deep space and the earth.
2. Prepare for sustained manned exploration of the Moon and Mars.
3. Lay the foundation for commercialization of space, both manned and robotic.

These goals are the same goals NASA had in the 1960's and 1970's. Unfortunately, they have been side tracked by political decisions, not NASA missteps. For example, the Space Shuttle was not the vehicle NASA wanted. NASA wanted a smaller, fully reusable vehicle. Political decisions forced NASA to accommodate large Air Force satellites leading to the current design even though the Air Force did not want to use the Shuttle.

What is important to note is that the space business has changed dramatically.

33 Witherspoon St. · Princeton, NJ 08542  
Phone: (609) 279-9606 · Fax: (609) 279-9607  
Email: [info@psatellite.com](mailto:info@psatellite.com) · Web: [www.psatellite.com](http://www.psatellite.com)



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Tremendous advances have been made in propulsion and other technologies. International expertise in space has grown incredibly. The European space programs are fully the equal to U.S. programs, and in many cases are more advanced. Furthermore, there are many new U.S. companies, such as Rutan Aircraft, SpaceX and SpaceDev, working on commercializing space exploration. If we rethink our approach to space exploration and commercialization to take full advantage of the DoD, NASA, commercial and international efforts we will be able to achieve more in less time and with less money.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I look forward to your administration getting to work in January.

Sincerely,

*Michael Paluszek*

Michael A. Paluszek  
President  
map@psatellite.com

cc: Rep. Rush Holt