

National Space Society Commends NASA for Recommitting to a True Commercial Future in Low Earth Orbit

The NSS urges NASA to move swiftly on the CLD RFP and commit to immediately fly astronauts on commercial stations upon completion

MERRITT ISLAND, FL, UNITED STATES, June 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [National Space Society](#) (NSS) today applauded NASA's decision to withdraw its proposed "core module" concept for the Commercial LEO Destinations (CLD) program, calling it a demonstration of

exactly the kind of rigorous, evidence-based decision-making that the American space program deserves. The NSS now urges NASA to move without delay toward releasing a formal Request for Proposals for the CLD program and to make an unambiguous commitment to utilizing commercial stations as soon as the orbiting outposts are operationally ready.



“

NASA asked. Industry answered. NSS answered. And NASA listened. That is how good policy is made.”

Grant Henriksen, Chair of the NSS Policy Committee

On June 1, 2026 NASA press secretary Bethany Stevens announced that the agency was abandoning a proposal, first floated at its March “Ignition” event, to develop a government-owned core module that commercial partners could attach to as a bridge toward standalone stations. This decision came after NASA solicited industry feedback through a Request for Information and received extensive responses making the case that a sustainable commercial

market in LEO is viable.

Industry and the NSS made its case — and the numbers back it up. The NSS appears to be the only citizen space group actively involved with this issue. The organization submitted an extensive RFI response to NASA opposing the "core module" plan and making the case for why the original CLD plan will be successful, including a market analysis of the LEO economy done independently by the NSS. The NSS has been actively engaged with Congress, holding direct

conversations with Congressional offices to discuss the CLD program and its crucial role in creating a vibrant orbital economy.

“The National Space Society engaged policy makers and Congress to show the strength of embracing a fully commercial strategy,” said Dale Skran, the COO/SVP of NSS. “The importance of NASA’s decision today to embrace a true commercial future in LEO with regard to the NSS’s vision and mission cannot be overstated.”

The NSS’s arguments have been heeded, and the organization has defined a model for how government and industry should work together: the agency sets requirements, tests assumptions, invites challenges, and updates its plans when the facts warrant.

“The commercial space industry has done the hard work,” said Grant Henriksen. “Companies like Axiom, Vast, and Starlab have invested years and over a billion dollars developing real hardware. They have signed real customers. We thank NASA for its due diligence in ensuring a successful transition to commercial space stations and look forward to a time when NASA is a customer in a thriving commercial LEO marketplace.”

The clock is ticking: NASA must move now on the RFP. With the International Space Station targeted for de-orbit in the early 2030s, the window to ensure an uninterrupted American presence in low-Earth orbit is narrowing. The NSS calls on NASA and Congress to:

- Release the CLD Phase 2 Request for Proposals without further delay,
- Commit explicitly to utilizing commercial stations as soon as they achieve operational readiness,
- Ensure continuity of U.S. human presence in LEO, with no gap between ISS retirement and the activation of commercial successors.
- Fully fund CLD at levels comparable to commercial crew

“We are closer than we have ever been to a genuine commercial space economy in low-Earth orbit,” said Hoyt Davidson, NSS EVP. “NASA has made the right call. The NSS will be working to ensure a vibrant commercial future in LEO that benefits all Americans.”

About the National Space Society

The National Space Society is the preeminent non-partisan citizens’ voice on space exploration, development, and settlement, reaching millions through its membership, numerous outreach channels, and media activities. The organization was founded in 1987 via a merger of the National Space Institute and the L5 Society. To learn more about the NSS and its mission to establish humanity as a spacefaring species, visit us on the web at nss.org.

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