

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 15, 2019

The Honorable James F. Bridenstine
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
300 E. St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20546

Dear Administrator Bridenstine,

We are writing to you today in light of a recent report that this Friday, August 16, 2019, you plan to announce that the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama will manage the development of the lunar lander for the *Artemis* program and oversee the commercial development of two of the three elements, the Transfer Element and Descent Element, of that lander. According to that same report the Johnson Space Center, in Houston, Texas, will oversee the commercial development of only one of three elements, the Ascent Element. This is very troubling if accurate.

While the Marshall Space Flight Center specializes in rocketry and spacecraft propulsion, and is undoubtedly the leader in these areas, it is the Johnson Space Center, which has been, and continues to be, ground zero for human space exploration. We are deeply concerned that NASA is not only disregarding this history but that splitting up the work on the lander between two different geographic locations is an unnecessary and a counterproductive departure from the unquestionable success of the previous lunar lander program. The integration of development responsibilities into one center—ideally the center with the longest history and deepest institutional knowledge of human space exploration—would be the most cost-efficient, streamlined, and effective approach, and is the approach that NASA should pursue.

As you may recall, on August 28, 2018, we sent you a letter articulating the reasons why the Johnson Space Center would be the most appropriate home for the lunar lander program. In that letter, we highlighted the Johnson Space Center's storied history as the lead center for human spaceflight and deep experience with human space exploration, and expressed our strong desire that it be selected as the NASA Center responsible for establishing and leading the lunar lander program. While much has changed in the intervening year, our feelings on this matter have not.

The Johnson Space Center has served as NASA's lead center for human spaceflight for more than half a century. It is home to our nation's astronaut corps, the International Space Station mission operations, and the Orion crew, and the men and women working there possess both the institutional knowledge and technical expertise needed to manage all facets of the successful development of a lunar lander for the *Artemis* program. "Houston" was one of the first words ever uttered on the Moon, and Houston, the city that last sent man to the Moon, should be where the lander that will once again send Americans to the lunar surface is developed.

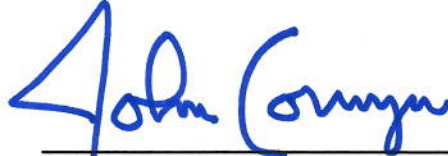
Accordingly, we request that you reconsider this decision, and hold off on any formal announcements until we receive a briefing on this matter that includes the timeline, projected cost, and rationale for this decision.

Please contact Duncan Rankin at 202-224-5922, Andrew Cooper at 202-224-2934, and Steve Janushkowsky at 202-225-1555 with any questions regarding this request. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Brian Babin
Member of Congress