



National Space Society

Board of Governors

Karlton Johnson *Chair*

September 24, 2019

Hugh Downs
Chair Emeritus

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

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Dear Administrator Bridenstine,

The National Space Society congratulates you and your Science Mission team for creating a robust budget line dedicated to planetary defense, one which includes full funding for the next development phase of the NEOCam (infrared telescope) Mission under the new name NEO Surveillance Mission. As the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine recently determined, a space-based infrared telescope is the surest way to identify and characterize NEOs that can impact the Earth. To help ensure a launch date in the 2025 timeframe, we encourage you to retain as much of the Phase A NEOCam team as possible for this next phase.

As you may know, planetary defense has long been an area of concern for the National Space Society. From our February 2014 policy position paper, titled "Protecting Earth from Cosmic Impacts," to our inclusion of it in our Capitol Hill Educational activities and direct advocacy for the NEOCam mission, we believe that NASA plays the crucial role in helping to protect our Earth from potentially hazardous NEOs. As you have said, part of the reason that the dinosaurs are no longer around is they didn't have the ability to deal with asteroid impacts, while human beings do.

We look forward to working with you in the coming months and years to ensure that Earth is protected from these celestial bodies, as we secure our future in space.

Sincerely

Dale Skran
Chair of the
Executive Committee

Karlton Johnson
Chairman of the
Board of Governors

Alfred Anzaldúa
Chair of the
NSS Policy Committee
Executive Vice President