

## Jim Bridenstine nominated to NASA Administrator

September 2, 2017

Continuing to fill key administration positions, President Donald Trump announced his intent to nominate Representative Jim Bridenstine (R-OK-1) to serve as the next Administrator for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). If confirmed by the Senate, Bridenstine would be the first NASA Administrator to be appointed with a professional background in politics, rather than a science and engineering background.

A former military pilot serving his third term in Congress, Representative Bridenstine is well-known for a range of civil, commercial and military space issues. He is currently on the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and sits on the Subcommittees on Energy and Space. In April 2016, Representative Bridenstine introduced the American Space Renaissance Act (H.R.4945), a wide-reaching reform bill that would change how the Department of Defense (DOD) and NASA approach space acquisitions and operations. Although the bill itself did not pass, ten of its provisions were bundled into other legislation that did pass. Representative Bridenstine was also involved in creating the commercial weather data pilot programs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Department of Defense (DOD).

Bridenstine's nomination was sent to the Senate along with 45 other nominations on September 5, and it has since garnered mixed responses. The Chairman of Commercial Spaceflight Federation and the CEO of the Space Foundation have both praised the choice of Bridenstine. In contrast, Florida Senators Marco Rubio (R) and Bill Nelson (D) were both reticent about the nomination of a NASA Administrator with deep political affiliations, although neither Senators have committed to voting against Bridenstine.

*Sources: Space Policy Online, U.S. House of Representatives, White House Press Office*

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