

Published on *American Geosciences Institute* (<https://www.americangeosciences.org>)

Home > House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Space Subcommittee holds hearing on President's FY 2016 NASA budget

House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Space Subcommittee holds hearing on President's FY 2016 NASA budget

April 16, 2015

On April 16, the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Space Subcommittee held a hearing on the President's fiscal year (FY) 2016 budget for NASA. Witness Charles Bolden, NASA Administrator, testified about NASA's current missions, the Asteroid Redirect Mission (ARM), the Commercial Crew Program, and NASA's satellites.

Representative Steve Palazzo (R-MS) and Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX) expressed concern over increases to the Earth sciences budget. NASA Earth sciences currently operates 30 Earth focused satellites including Soil Moisture Active Passive (SMAP), Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (Suomi NPP), and Landsat 8. Rep. Palazzo argued that the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) should take care of their own satellites and operate on a system like the one used to create the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) with reimbursable coordination funded outside of NASA. Bolden responded that NASA is not diverting money away from other programs for these satellites, but is instead covering an important, diverse portfolio.

Representatives asked questions about the status and purpose of missions highlighted by NASA as steps to Mars. Administrator Bolden testified that the Asteroid Redirect Mission (ARM) supports the Mars mission by testing a solar electric propulsion system necessary for long distance human space travel and by providing a testing ground for low gravity operations. In addition, until the Commercial Crew Program is fully viable, NASA will continue to rely on the Russian Space Program for transport to and from the International Space Station (ISS).
