

May 19, 2020

The Honorable Karen Dunn Kelley
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Ms. Kelley:

I am writing to request the participation and support of the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) in the initiation of an industrial base survey of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and U.S. civil space supply chain network. NASA and BIS have a longstanding record of partnering to evaluate the health and competitiveness of the space industrial base, including Human Spaceflight (2009), the “Deep Dive” (2011), and Rocket Propulsion (2014), among other initiatives.

The purpose of this comprehensive, multi-year survey would be to inform NASA and the civil space community of the factors influencing the U.S. space sector’s performance. Specifically, BIS would assess the supply chain impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, mergers and acquisitions (M&A), artificial intelligence and other Research Development Technology and Engineering advances, foreign sourcing and dependencies, reshoring, additive manufacturing, workforce/STEM practices, new entrants, cyber security, Federal acquisition reforms, readiness/surge mandates, and other driving forces.

In order to conduct the data collection and related activities, NASA is prepared to enter into an interagency agreement with BIS and provide both technical support and funding to support the project’s implementation. Various Department of Commerce entities, including NOAA’s Office of Space Commerce, have also agreed to participate in the BIS-led study. Understanding your funding constraints, NASA requests your help in providing a share of the funding required for this effort.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to the opportunity to work with BIS on this initiative. The successful execution of NASA’s various mission components, from human spaceflight to deep space robotic spacecraft, demands a robust, viable U.S. space industrial base. Should you have any questions or need to follow up on this action, please contact Patrick Besha, Senior Policy Advisor, at (202) 358-2636 or Patrick.Besha@nasa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Morhard', written over a horizontal line.

James W. Morhard
Deputy Administrator