

## Senate Adds \$200 Million to NASA Request for Earmarks and Pluto Mission

(This analysis is part of a series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates on the FY 2003 congressional appropriations process. This analysis includes information on R&D in Senate-approved FY 2003 appropriations for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The complete series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates, including continually updated analyses of R&D by agency in FY 2003 appropriations, is available on the AAAS R&D Web Site (<http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd>) in the "FY 2003 R&D" or the "What's New" sections.)

On July 25, as part of a rush to draft all 13 FY 2003 appropriations bills before a month-long August recess, the Senate Appropriations Committee drafted an FY 2003 VA-HUD appropriations bill (S. 2797) that would provide a substantial increase for R&D in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The Senate would provide NASA with a total budget of \$15.2 billion in FY 2003, \$298 million or 2.0 percent more than FY 2002. This would exceed the Administration's request of \$15.0 billion. **In the Senate plan, NASA's R&D funding would rise 6.3 percent for a total of \$11.8 billion, including a 12.4 percent boost in the key Science, Aeronautics and Technology (SAT) account to \$9.0 billion** (see Table). The Senate would go along with NASA's request to shift money from the International Space Station project to NASA's other R&D programs, and would add \$126 million in congressionally designated projects and \$105 million for a Pluto mission.

The Senate FY 2003 VA-HUD bill would provide \$91 billion for discretionary programs. The bill funds science agencies including NASA, the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and non-R&D programs for veterans and housing. The President requested \$93 billion for the bill's programs, but the Senate would rearrange priorities to give NASA \$200 million more than requested and would fund some priorities out of emergency funds which do not count against the bill's total. The House is not expected to draft its version of the bill until September or later.

Two-thirds of the NASA budget, which excludes the Space Shuttle program and its associated costs, is classified as R&D. **NASA's R&D would total \$10.8 billion in the Senate plan, a substantial \$639 million or 6.3 percent above FY 2002, and \$200 million above the request.** Because the Space Shuttle program and other non-R&D programs would decline, the total NASA budget of \$15.2 billion would show a smaller increase (up 2.0 percent).

The troubled **International Space Station** is now projected to run \$4.8 billion over budget, and the Senate language accompanying the VA-HUD bill continues to express dismay over NASA's management of Station costs. Just to fit into the expanded cost, the Station itself has been downsized to a new 'core complete' configuration that will allow for only three astronauts at a time. The Senate would go along with NASA's proposal to cut the Space Station budget by \$230 million or 13.3 percent over FY 2002, for a total of \$1.5 billion instead of current-year funding of \$1.7 billion.

The **Science, Aeronautics, and Technology (SAT)** account, which funds nearly all of NASA's R&D not related to the Space Station, would receive \$9.0 billion, 12.4 percent or \$997 million above the FY 2002 funding level. This substantial increase would go primarily to the Space Science and the Aero-Space Technology Programs.

Within SAT, **Space Science** would receive \$3.5 billion, a 21.8 percent or \$625 million increase. NASA had requested most of the increase, but the Senate would provide most of the request and then add some more funds. The largest addition to the request would be **\$105 million for the Pluto-Kuiper Belt (PKB)** mission, to be used to develop a spacecraft for a scheduled launch date of 2006 to Pluto. The FY 2003 request had proposed to eliminate this mission and reorganize outer-planet exploration into a New Frontiers program of competitively selected, cost-limited missions. The Senate bill would reject the proposed

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elimination and would make the PKB mission the first mission in New Horizons. The Senate bill instructs NASA to continue making requests for PKB in future budgets. Among the adjustments to the request are a \$13 million reduction in proposed new funding for nuclear technology programs, but that would still leave \$113 million in FY 2003 for initiatives to explore nuclear propulsion technologies for future missions.

The **Aero-Space Technology** program would rise 12.2 percent or \$307 million in the Senate plan to \$2.8 billion, nearly the same as the request. The Advanced Space Transportation program would receive \$849 million, \$30 million less than the request but nearly 50 percent above the FY 2002 funding level. Much of the increase would be due to a boost from \$467 million in FY 2002 to \$729 million in FY 2003 for the Space Launch Initiative, which funds research and development efforts for reusable launch vehicle technology, toward the long-term goal of developing a replacement for the Space Shuttle. Most other programs in this account would receive the requested amounts, which would result in mostly declines in NASA investments in aviation and commercial technology programs.

The **Academic Programs** appropriation of \$203 million would be \$25 million less than the FY 2002 funding level, but \$59 million above the request because of 33 congressionally designated projects totaling \$53.4 million, many of them funded in FY 2002 but deleted in the FY 2003 request. Although all programs in this account are classified as R&D, the congressionally designated projects include funds for a rooftop observatory, a planetarium, science museums, and education centers. In addition to these earmarks, there are earmarks in the other SAT accounts, for a total of \$126 million in congressionally designated projects.

The Senate VA-HUD did not see floor debate and approval before a month-long August congressional recess, so full Senate consideration has been delayed until September. The House will not draft its version of the bill until September, at the earliest, and possibly not until October.

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**Table. National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Senate Appropriations Committee Action on R&D in the FY 2003 Budget  
(budget authority in millions of dollars)**

	FY 2002 Estimate	FY 2003 Request	Action by Senate				
			FY 2003 Senate	Chg. from Request Amount	Percent	Chg. from FY 2002 Amount	Percent
Summary of R&D by Appropriation:							
1. Human Space Flight (HSF)							
Space Station *	1,722	1,492	<b>1,492</b>	0	0.0%	-230	-13.3%
Other	526	386	<b>386</b>	0	0.0%	-140	-26.6%
Total R&D HSF	2,248	1,878	<b>1,878</b>	0	0.0%	-370	-16.4%
2. Science, Aeronautics and Technology (SAT)							
Space Science	2,867	3,414	<b>3,492</b>	78	2.3%	625	21.8%
Biological & Physical Research *	820	842	<b>853</b>	11	1.3%	33	4.0%
Earth Science	1,626	1,628	<b>1,682</b>	54	3.3%	57	3.5%
Aero-Space Technology	2,508	2,816	<b>2,815</b>	-1	0.0%	307	12.2%
Academic Programs	227	144	<b>203</b>	59	40.9%	-25	-10.9%
Total SAT	8,048	8,845	<b>9,045</b>	200	2.3%	997	12.4%
Less Non-R&D in SAT	-136	-125	<b>-125</b>	0	0.0%	12	-8.6%
<b>Total NASA R&amp;D</b>	10,159	10,598	<b>10,798</b>	200	1.9%	639	6.3%
NASA Non-R&D Activities:							
Space Shuttle (in HSF)	3,273	3,208	<b>3,208</b>	0	0.0%	-65	-2.0%
Other Non-R&D in HSF	1,309	1,045	<b>1,045</b>	0	0.0%	-265	-20.2%
Non-R&D in SAT	136	125	<b>125</b>	0	0.0%	-12	-8.6%
Inspector General	24	25	<b>25</b>	0	0.0%	1	3.8%
Total NASA Non-R&D Activities	4,742	4,402	<b>4,402</b>	0	0.0%	-340	-7.2%
<b>TOTAL NASA Budget</b>	14,902	15,000	<b>15,200</b>	200	1.3%	298	2.0%

AAAS estimates based on FY 2003 appropriations bills. Includes conduct of R&D and R&D facilities.

FY 2002 and FY 2003 request figures based on OMB R&D data and supplemental agency budget data.

Figures are rounded to the nearest million. Changes calculated from unrounded figures.

All figures adjusted to exclude President's proposal to fully fund federal retiree costs, and therefore differ slightly from figures presented in *AAAS Report XXVII*.

\* Formerly Life and Microgravity Sciences and Applications. Includes Space Station research formerly funded in HSF.

**August 6, 2002 - Senate Appropriations Committee-approved funding levels.**

**These funding levels may be amended or rejected on the Senate floor.**