

107TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4613

To authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to establish an awards program in honor of Charles “Pete” Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 25, 2002

Mr. ROHRBACHER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration

A BILL

To authorize the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to establish an awards program in honor of Charles “Pete” Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Charles ‘Pete’ Conrad
5 Astronomy Awards Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PETE CONRAD ASTRONOMY AWARD PROGRAM.**

2 (a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Board of Regents
3 of the Smithsonian Institution is authorized to establish
4 the Charles “Pete” Conrad Astronomy Awards Program
5 to be administered by the Minor Planet Center of the
6 Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

7 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the program author-
8 ized by subsection (a) shall be to award outstanding ama-
9 teur astronomers who make asteroid discoveries and to
10 augment asteroid discovery efforts by the Government.

11 (c) AWARD CATEGORIES.—The award program au-
12 thorized under subsection (a) shall consist of 3 categories
13 of awards as follows:

14 (1) FIRST CATEGORY.—An award in the first
15 category shall be presented annually to the amateur
16 astronomer who, using amateur equipment only, dis-
17 covers the largest absolute magnitude new asteroid
18 having a near-Earth orbit during the preceding cal-
19 endar year.

20 (2) SECOND CATEGORY.—An award in the sec-
21 ond category shall be presented annually to an ama-
22 teur astronomer for pre-discovery and recovery ef-
23 forts, including—

24 (A) the discovery of asteroids by an ama-
25 teur as a result of information produced by pro-
26 fessional telescopes or as a result of the ama-

1 teur’s use of time on professional equipment;
2 and

3 (B) efforts to locate newly discovered as-
4 teroids using old images and already discovered
5 near-Earth orbit asteroids that have been
6 “lost”.

7 (3) THIRD CATEGORY.—An award in the third
8 category shall be presented annually to the amateur
9 astronomer, or professional not funded for optical
10 astronomy, who provides the greatest service to up-
11 date the minor planet catalogue. Eligible discoveries
12 may be made by visual, photographic, or electronic
13 means.

14 (d) GUIDELINES FOR AWARDING PRIZES.—General
15 guidelines for the awarding of prizes are as follows:

16 (1) Prizes shall be awarded to the person or
17 group with the greatest contributions as determined
18 by the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian As-
19 trophysical Center for the second and third cat-
20 egories.

21 (2) The award in the first category shall not be
22 presented for years in which there are no eligible as-
23 teroid discoveries.

24 (3) All awards are reserved for United States
25 citizens.

1 (4) The decision of the Minor Planet Center in
2 presenting the awards is final.

3 (e) ELIGIBILITY.—Individuals are eligible to apply
4 for the awards authorized under this section if the fol-
5 lowing conditions are satisfied:

6 (1) All applicants must demonstrate that they
7 are not funded to use professional telescopes or ob-
8 servations and are acting solely in an amateur ca-
9 pacity.

10 (2) Government and professional astronomers
11 associated with the near-Earth orbit asteroid
12 project, as well as members of their immediate fami-
13 lies, are not eligible for the awards.

14 (f) REGULATIONS.—The Minor Planet Center of the
15 Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory may prescribe
16 such regulations as may be necessary to implement the
17 program authorized by this section.

18 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
19 are authorized to be appropriated to the Board of Regents
20 of the Smithsonian Institution \$10,000 for each of fiscal
21 year 2003 and 2004 to carry out this Act.

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