

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 721

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the inaugural launch of the Landsat series of Earth Observation satellites, a joint mission of the United States Geological Survey and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 26, 2022

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. ROUNDS)
submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the inaugural launch of the Landsat series of Earth Observation satellites, a joint mission of the United States Geological Survey and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Whereas, on July 23, 2022, the United States Geological Survey (referred to in this preamble as “USGS”) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (referred to in this preamble as “NASA”) celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of the Landsat series of Earth Observation satellites (commonly known as the “Landsat program”);

Whereas, through satellite remote sensing, which in 1972 constituted a new scientific instrument, the Landsat program introduced a powerful tool for humankind to ob-

serve the resources of Earth and the long-term changes in the condition of the land surfaces of Earth;

Whereas, as the first civilian program in the United States for the systematic observation of the land surfaces of Earth, the Landsat program has exemplified the highest ideals of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, while helping to position the United States as a global leader in the field of satellite remote sensing;

Whereas data and imagery of Earth produced by the Landsat program have been used for 50 years in the United States and around the world—

- (1) to analyze crop conditions, soil moisture, and global crop production;
- (2) to forecast the needs of the world to ensure food security;
- (3) to monitor water consumption;
- (4) to facilitate emergency responses to and post-event analyses of natural disasters, including earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, tsunamis, hurricanes, and wildfires;
- (5) to monitor forests and changing land-use patterns;
- (6) to track receding glaciers and changes in sea-ice extent; and
- (7) to survey urban growth;

Whereas data and imagery produced by the Landsat program have been applied by—

- (1) many Federal, State, and local agencies, particularly agencies within the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture; and

(2) the governing bodies of Indian Tribes and Alaska Natives to solve difficult and expensive problems for their members at minimum cost to the taxpayers of the United States;

Whereas, since 2008, calibrated on-board data and imagery produced by the Landsat program have been made globally available at no cost to the public, greatly amplifying the use of such data and imagery, expanding growing markets for commercial remote sensing data and analysis, providing the foundation for commercial innovations in land remote sensing, and serving as a trusted reference for the calibration of instruments and improvement of commercial data products;

Whereas data produced by the Landsat program has been estimated to provide billions of dollars in value to the economy of the United States each year;

Whereas 50 years of continuous Landsat observations—

(1) supply the world with impartial, fundamental evidence to support a scientific understanding of a changing global climate; and

(2) form the basis for thousands of peer-reviewed, scientific publications that have documented changes in the land surface of Earth;

Whereas data produced by the Landsat program provide an invaluable common vocabulary and a shared set of references for the state of Earth that can inform international, Federal, and local efforts to address difficult environmental and public policy issues;

Whereas USGS and NASA are currently developing mission concepts for Landsat Next, the follow-on mission to Landsat 9;

Whereas Landsat 9 and the Sustainable Land Imaging program will build on and strengthen this key resource of the United States to provide a sustainable, space-based system to extend and improve the 50-year series of science-quality, global land imaging measurements produced by the Landsat program—the longest time series of the land surface of Earth; and

Whereas, during July 2022, USGS, NASA, scientists, engineers, land managers, and the people of the United States will celebrate 50 years since the launch of the first Earth-observing satellite of the Landsat program: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) celebrates the 50th anniversary of the inau-
3 gural launch of the Landsat series of Earth Obser-
4 vation satellites (commonly known as the “Landsat
5 program”);

6 (2) recognizes the scientific, engineering, and
7 analytical expertise of the United States Geological
8 Survey (referred to in this resolution as “USGS”),
9 the National Aeronautics and Space Administration
10 (referred to in this resolution as “NASA”), and the
11 advisory Landsat Science Team;

12 (3) recognizes the important contributions that
13 data produced by the Landsat program provides to
14 decision-makers worldwide and the desire to con-
15 tinue the Landsat program into the next 50 years
16 through Landsat Next;

1 (4) designates July 23, 2022, as “Landsat 50th
2 Anniversary Day”, or “Landsaturday”; and

3 (5) respectfully requests that the Secretary of
4 the Senate transmit an enrolled copy of this resolu-
5 tion to the Director of USGS and the Administrator
6 of NASA.

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