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119TH CONGRESS }
1st Session

SENATE

{ REPORT
119-62

COMPREHENSIVE NASA REPORTING ACT OF
2025

R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

ON

S. 1081



SEPTEMBER 8, 2025.—Ordered to be printed

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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COMPREHENSIVE NASA REPORTING ACT OF 2025

SEPTEMBER 8, 2025.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. CRUZ, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
Transportation, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1081]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, to which was referred the bill (S. 1081) to require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to submit certain reports to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of S. 1081 is to require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to submit certain reports to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

BACKGROUND AND NEEDS

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives have jurisdiction over national and civil space policy, including NASA, and as such require information from multiple sources to develop policy. The goal of S. 1081 is to ensure that NASA's authorizing committees remain informed about the agency's spending plans and reprogramming requests. Appropriators regularly apply conditions on the use of appropriated

funds—e.g., “no more than 20 percent of funds may be obligated or expended until the Administrator submits to the Appropriations Committees a spend plan detailing how the agency plans to procure XYZ asset”¹—reflecting broader policy considerations. Similarly, an agency’s reprogramming of money from one budget line to another, which requires approval from the appropriations committees, inevitably involves evaluating policy priorities. An agency’s direction or redirection of spending is highly relevant to its authorizing committees’ work, which define the agency’s policy objectives.² Therefore, it is appropriate to keep these authorizing committees informed about such choices.

Similarly, international agreements and nonbinding instruments with foreign entities to which NASA is a party or implementing agency should be submitted to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives once they are delivered to Congress. These arrangements have policy implications and are within these committees’ purview.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

S. 1081 would require the Administrator of NASA to submit certain reports to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives not later than 10 days after delivery to any other committee or office.

If the United States becomes a signatory to an international agreement or nonbinding instrument concerning activities in outer space involving NASA, S. 1081 would also require the Administrator to submit a report containing a copy of such agreement or instrument to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives not later than 15 days after the date on which the United States becomes a signatory.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 1081, the Comprehensive NASA Reporting Act of 2025, was introduced on March 14, 2025, by Senator Cruz (for himself and Senator Duckworth) and was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate. On April 30, 2025, the Committee met in open Executive Session and, by voice vote, ordered S. 1081 to be reported favorably with an amendment.

118th Congress

Similar reporting language was included in H.R. 8958, NASA Reauthorization Act of 2024, introduced on July 9, 2024, by Representative Lucas (for himself and Representatives Lofgren, Babin, and Sorensen) and was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives. On July 10, 2024, that Committee met in open Executive Session and, by

¹James V. Saturno and Megan S. Lynch, “The Appropriations Process: A Brief Overview,” Congressional Research Service, May 17, 2023, <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R47106>.

²James V. Saturno, “Authorizations and the Appropriations Process,” Congressional Research Service, May 16, 2023, <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R46497>.

a vote of 38–0, ordered H.R. 8958 to be reported favorably with an amendment (in the nature of a substitute). H.R. 8958 passed the House under suspension of the rules by a recorded vote of 366–21 and 1 present on September 23, 2024.

A similar bill with identical reporting language, S. 5600, NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2024, was introduced on December 18, 2024, by Senator Cantwell (for herself and Senators Cruz, Sinema, Schmitt, Luján, and Wicker) and was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

ESTIMATED COSTS

In accordance with paragraph 11(a) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee provides the following cost estimate, prepared by the Congressional Budget Office:

At a Glance			
NASA Legislation			
As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on April 30, 2025			
On April 30, 2025, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation ordered 17 bills to be reported. This document provides estimates for the 3 of those bills that would affect the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).			
CBO estimates that S. 606 would increase spending subject to appropriation by \$18 million over the 2025-2030 period. S. 1081 and S. 1437 would each increase spending subject to appropriation by less than \$500,000 over the 2025-2030 period, CBO estimates.			
None of the bills would increase direct spending or revenues; thus, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.			
CBO estimates that none of the bills would increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036.			
None of the bills contain intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.			
Bill	Net Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit Over the 2025-2035 Period (Millions of Dollars)	Changes in Spending Subject to Appropriation Over the 2025-2030 Period (Outlays, Millions of Dollars)	Mandate Effects?
S. 606	0	18	No
S. 1081	0	*	No
S. 1437	0	*	No
* = between zero and \$500,000.			

Summary of legislation: On April 30, 2025, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation ordered 17 bills to be reported. This document provides estimates for 3 of those bills, specified below:

- S. 606 would allow the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to enter into an agreement to reimburse the Town of Chincoteague, Virginia, for relocating wells for drinking water from NASA-administered property to the town.
- S. 1081 would expand NASA's requirements for reporting to the Congress.
- S. 1437 would require NASA to establish a program to collect and disseminate remote-sensing data and to report to the Congress on that program.

Estimated Federal cost: The costs of the legislation fall within budget function 250 (general science, space, and technology).

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that each bill will be enacted near the end of fiscal year 2025 and that the estimated amounts will be available each year. This cost estimate does not include any effects of interactions among the bills. If all three bills were combined and enacted as a single piece of legislation, the effects could be different from the sum of the separate estimates, although CBO expects that any differences would be small.

S. 606, the Contaminated Wells Relocation Act, would authorize the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to enter into an agreement with the Town of Chincoteague, Virginia, to reimburse the costs of removing and relocating three wells for drinking water that are currently located on property administered by NASA. The bill would require NASA to submit the agreement to the Congress within 18 months of enactment. Using information from the agency on the historical cost for similar activities and adjusting for inflation, CBO estimates that the agreement would cost \$18 million over the 2025–2030 period. Any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

S. 1081, the Comprehensive NASA Reporting Act of 2025, would require the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to provide the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with copies of any final reports or notifications that it submits to any other Congressional committee or office within 10 days of the original submission. The bill also would require NASA to provide to the Congress a copy of any international agreement involving outer space activities within 15 days of the United States becoming a signatory to that agreement. Based on the cost of similar activities, CBO estimates that implementing the bill's reporting requirements would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2025–2030 period. Any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

S. 1437, the ASCEND Act, would codify the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition pilot program, which identifies commercial sources for acquiring remote-sensing data and imagery of the Earth. Data collected would be disseminated internally, to other federal agencies, and to researchers. The bill would require NASA to report to the Congress within 180 days of enactment and annually thereafter on all agreements established under the program. Based on the cost of similar activities, CBO estimates that implementing the bill's reporting requirements would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2025–2030 period. Any related spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. None of the bills would affect direct spending or revenues; thus, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

Increase in long-term net direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting S. 606, S. 1081, and S. 1437 would not increase net direct spending or deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2036.

Mandates: None of the bills contain intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

Estimate prepared by: Federal costs: Willow Latham-Proença; Mandates: Brandon Lever.

Estimate reviewed by: Ann E. Futrell, Chief, Natural and Physical Resources Cost Estimates Unit; Kathleen FitzGerald, Chief, Public and Private Mandates Unit; H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

Estimate approved by: Phillip L. Swagel, Director, Congressional Budget Office.

REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT

In accordance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee provides the following evaluation of the regulatory impact of the legislation, as reported:

Number of Persons Covered

S. 1081 would not create any new programs or impose any new regulatory requirements and would not subject any individuals or businesses to new regulations.

Economic Impact

S. 1081 is not expected to have an adverse impact on the Nation's economy.

Privacy

S. 1081 would not impact the personal privacy of individuals.

Paperwork

The Committee does not anticipate any measurable paperwork burdens. S. 1081 would require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to submit certain reports that have already been drafted to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING

In compliance with paragraph 4(b) of rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee provides that no provisions contained in the bill, as reported, meet the definition of congressionally directed spending items under the rule.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title.

This section would provide that the bill may be cited as the "Comprehensive NASA Reporting Act of 2025".

Section 2. Definitions.

This section would define the terms used in the bill: "Administrator" and "NASA".

Section 2. Reports to Congress.

This section would require NASA to submit any final report or notification required by law that is provided to Congress to be provided to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives not later than 10 days after its delivery to any other committee or office. It would require any nonpublic reports, including privileged reports and reprogramming requests, to be treated as confidential committee documents.

This section would further require the NASA Administrator to submit any international agreement or nonbinding instrument concerning activities in outer space involving NASA, to which the United States is a signatory, to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives no later than 15 days after the signing date.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee states that the bill as reported would make no change to existing law.

