

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 6, 2015

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda
Acting Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Acting Ranking Member Honda,

As fellow Representatives from Gulf Coast states, we want to thank you for supporting the Fiscal Year 2016 President's budget request for the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS). This funding is needed to ensure a more accurate weather forecasting system that is critical to our ability to better prepare for potentially devastating weather events that are all too common in the Gulf Coast region.

We are also writing to you to solicit your support for FY16 funding of the essential Polar Follow On (PFO) portion of the JPSS program. The FY16 President's budget request for PFO was \$380 million, and the Senate Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee passed their version of the FY16 CJS Appropriations bill with funding set at \$135 million. However, your mark contained no funding for PFO in FY16, and we are deeply concerned that this will result in the assumption of serious capability and cost risk to the JPSS mission.

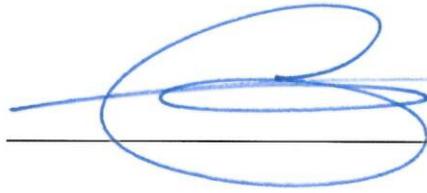
There are no satellites funded in the JPSS constellation following JPSS 2, and manufacturing needs to commence now to address this important concern. Funding for PFO in FY16 will result in the lowest possible cost as it will allow for the start of a cost-effective instrument block buy and the continuity of critical engineering and production teams. In addition, funding in FY16 is indispensable to eliminating the risk of a potential gap in polar satellite weather forecasting coverage. Most importantly for the Gulf Coast region, PFO funding in FY16 will eliminate the potential for reduced accuracy in our weather forecasting capability. There is simply no suitable alternative to JPSS weather data.

The Gulf Coast states will continue to be among the primary beneficiaries of PFO funding and the JPSS system. JPSS employs unique capabilities to accurately track powerful weather systems such as hurricanes and large weather systems that may lead to tornados and floods. These forecasts provide the much needed notice for our communities to prepare for these events. In addition, the data derived from the JPSS satellites will also help in disaster recovery efforts as it will allow for precious resources to be more efficiently directed to affected areas. As you know, all of these weather events have particularly devastating effects on the region. The Gulf Coast has seen a disproportionate amount of death and destruction from massive weather events over the last several years, and we urgently need the JPSS system to remain on track by funding PFO in FY16.

As fellow representatives from Gulf Coast states, we strongly urge that you allow for funding of PFO in FY16 as the appropriations process moves forward. Additionally, we respectfully request that PFO be addressed as part of the Continuing Resolution since contracting and work need to commence early in the next fiscal year, for all of the reasons stated above.

Respectfully,

Mo Brooks



C.W. Boastay



Patrick Murphy



Randy K. Weber

