



U.S. Department of
Transportation

News:

Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

Contact: Mari Maseng
Tel.: (202) 426-4570

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
ELV EXECUTIVE ORDER CEREMONY
THE WHITE HOUSE
FEBRUARY 24, 1984

Today we embark on a new chapter in the age of space, moving from scientific exploration to commercial application. To mark that event the President is signing an executive order giving the Department of Transportation primary responsibility for commercial operations of expendable launch vehicles.

As the President said in his State of the Union message, space affords us a new opportunity to "create sunrise industries, build prosperity and make life better here on earth." In addition to its scientific and defense purposes, space has enormous commercial possibilities as well. Our goal is to encourage and assist the development of those possibilities.

Previous generations visited space only by telescope or through the fantasies of science fiction. But our generation has sent men to the moon, explored the planets and launched hundreds of satellites into earth orbit. Space systems now bring us the Olympics from Europe, weather patterns from around the world and newscasts -- live and in color -- from world capitals.

The President is looking to us, in the Department of Transportation, to assure that private industry has access to space. Our job is to act as the focal point within the government, providing one stop service for the industry. We are fully prepared to carry out that responsibility.

We can be proud of our nation's outstanding achievements in space, which could not have been achieved without a committed partnership of Congress and the Executive Branch. I am delighted that a number of those leaders are with us today.

- more -

Congressman Volkmer, heading the House Subcommittee on Space Science and Applications, along with his associates on that subcommittee, Mr. Lowery, Mr. Chandler, and Mr. Mineta, all have shown real leadership and vision in space policy.

Mr. Akaka has emphasized the importance of a healthy private sector launch capability.

As Chairman of the House Task Force on High Technology Initiatives, Congressman Zschau has joined with many of his colleagues to encourage the most effective use of our space and ELV resources. We will continue to work closely with both the House and Senate in creating a climate promoting the application of space technology by the private sector.

Jim Beggs, NASA Administrator, represents the proud tradition of America on the cutting edge of research and development in the space frontier. I am eager to share with him in encouraging what President Reagan has called this country's greatest asset, the vitality of the free enterprise system.

Since being designated as lead agency for ELVs, we have enjoyed the enthusiastic cooperation of the other Federal agencies involved in making the President's policy a success. The Commerce Department will be a particularly close partner in promoting the growth of this industry.

Because of the importance of this mission, I have established the Office of Commercial Space Transportation within the Office of the Secretary. That office will be headed by Jenna Dorn, who is here this morning. She is well qualified for this post by her outstanding work in both the Executive and Legislative branches of government. In addition, I intend to appoint an advisory committee, composed of industry members, to make sure their concerns are addressed in a responsive, responsible and creative way.

We want to encourage industry to commit private funds and investment capital in commercial space ventures. We want the world to know that America's commercial space industry is open for business.

According to some projections, as many commercial communication satellites will be launched over the next three years as have been launched to date.

To maintain our leadership in space, we must continue NASA's further use of the shuttle while encouraging a private sector commercial space industry. That industry will help the United States maintain and expand an industrial base built around privately-owned and operated launch vehicles, attuned to the latest in high technology. It will bolster our domestic economy and sharpen our competitive edge abroad.

Today President Reagan is signing the executive order establishing the Department of Transportation's role in the emergence of America's commercial space industry. I welcome this new mission for our Department. In adding space transportation to the Department's responsibilities, we are assuring the commercial ELV industry's opportunity to establish itself in a free competitive market. The potentials for progress there are as limitless as space itself.

Mr. President, as we have met with representatives from industry, professional associations and other government agencies, it is obvious that there is tremendous support for your program and a solid commitment to make commercialization of ELVs a great success.

This is evidenced today by the attendance of all of these important guests and the many telegrams we have received. I would like to present them to you to demonstrate the enthusiastic support your policies have generated.

- ##### -