Public Law 100-657
100th Congress

An Act

Nov. 15, 1988
[H.R. 4399]

To facilitate commercial access to space, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Commercial Space Launch Act Amendments of 1988.
49 USC app. 2601 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Commercial Space Launch Act Amendments of 1988".

49 USC app. 2601 note.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) a United States commercial space launch industry is an essential component of national efforts to assure access to space for Government and commercial users;

(2) the Federal Government should encourage, facilitate, and promote the use of the United States commercial space launch industry in order to continue United States aerospace preeminence;

(3) the United States commercial space launch industry must be competitive in the international marketplace;

(4) Federal Government policies should recognize the responsibility of the United States under international treaty for activities conducted by United States citizens in space; and

(5) the United States must maintain a competitive edge in international commercial space transportation by ensuring continued research in launch vehicle component technology and development.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2603) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (10) by striking "and" at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (11) as paragraph (12); and

(3) by inserting immediately after paragraph (10) the following new paragraph:

"(11) 'third party' means any person or entity other than—

"(A) the United States, its agencies, or its contractors or subcontractors involved in launch services;

"(B) the licensee or transferee;

"(C) the licensee's or transferee's contractors, subcontractors, or customers involved in launch services; or

"(D) any such customer's contractors or subcontractors involved in launch services; and".

SEC. 4. PRIVATE ACQUISITION OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY AND SERVICES.

(a) Section 15(a) of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2614(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following: "In taking such actions, the Secretary shall consider the commercial

availability, on reasonable terms and conditions, of substantially equivalent launch property or launch services from a domestic source.".

(b) Section 15(b)(1) of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2614(b)(1) is amended by adding at the end the following: "For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'direct costs' means the actual costs that can be unambiguously associated with a commercial launch effort, and would not be borne by the United States Government in the absence of a commercial launch effort.".

(c) Section 15 of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2614) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) The head of any Federal agency or department may collect payment for activities involved in the production of a launch vehicle or its payload for launch if such activities were agreed to by the owners or manufacturers of such launch vehicle or payload.".

SEC. 5. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS OF LICENSEE.

(a) Section 16 of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2615) is amended to read as follows:

"LIABILITY INSURANCE

"SEC. 16. (a)(1)(A) Each license issued or transferred under this Act shall require the licensee or transferee— Claims.

"(i) to obtain liability insurance; or

"(ii) to demonstrate financial responsibility,

in an amount sufficient to compensate the maximum probable loss (as determined by the Secretary, after consultation with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the heads of other appropriate agencies) from claims by a third party for death, bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property resulting from activities carried out under the license in connection with any particular launch. In no event shall a licensee or transferee be required to obtain insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility under this subparagraph, with respect to the aggregate of such claims arising out of any particular launch, in an amount which exceeds (I) $500,000,000 or (II) the maximum liability insurance available on the world market at a reasonable cost, if such insurance is less than the amount in subclause (I).

"(B) Each license issued or transferred under this Act shall require the licensee or transferee—

"(i) to obtain liability insurance; or

"(ii) to demonstrate financial responsibility,

in an amount sufficient to compensate the maximum probable loss (as determined by the Secretary, after consultation with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the heads of other appropriate agencies) from claims against any person by the United States for loss of or damage to property of the United States resulting from activities carried out under the license in connection with any particular launch. In no event shall a licensee or transferee be required to obtain insurance or demonstrate financial responsibility under this subparagraph, with respect to the aggregate of such claims arising out of any particular launch, in an amount which exceeds (I) $100,000,000 or (II) the maximum liability

insurance available on the world market at a reasonable cost, if such insurance is less than the amount in subclause (I).

"(C) Each license issued or transferred under this Act shall require the licensee or transferee to enter into reciprocal waivers of claims with its contractors, subcontractors, and customers, and the contractors and subcontractors of such customers, involved in launch services, under which each party to each such waiver agrees to be responsible for any property damage or loss it sustains or for any personal injury to, death of, or property damage or loss sustained by its own employees resulting from activities carried out under the license.

"(D) The Secretary, on behalf of the United States, its agencies involved in launch services, and contractors and subcontractors involved in launch services, shall enter into reciprocal waivers of claims with the licensee or transferee, its contractors, subcontractors, and customers, and the contractors and subcontractors of such customers, involved in launch services, under which each party to each such waiver agrees to be responsible for any property damage or loss it sustains or for any personal injury to, death of, or property damage or loss sustained by its own employees resulting from activities carried out under the license. Any such waiver shall apply only to the extent that claims exceed the amount of insurance or demonstration of financial responsibility required under subparagraph (B). After consultation with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Secretary of the Air Force, the Secretary may also waive, on behalf of the United States and any Federal agency, the right to recover any damages for loss of or damage to property of the United States to the extent insurance is not available by reason of policy exclusions which are determined by the Secretary to be usual for the type of insurance involved.

"(2) Any insurance policy obtained, or demonstration of financial responsibility made, pursuant to a requirement described in paragraph (1) shall protect the United States, its agencies, personnel, contractors, and subcontractors, and all contractors, subcontractors, and customers of the licensee or transferee, and all contractors and subcontractors of such customers, involved in providing the launch services, to the extent of their potential liabilities, at no cost to the United States.

"(3) The Secretary shall determine the maximum probable loss under paragraph (1) (A) and (B) associated with activities under a license, within 90 days after a licensee or transferee has required such a determination and has submitted all information the Secretary requires to make such a determination. The Secretary shall amend such determination as warranted by new information.

Reports. Within 12 months after the date of enactment of the Commercial Space Launch Act Amendments of 1988, and within each 12-month period thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the current determinations with respect to all issued licenses and the reasons for those determinations.

Reports. "(4) Within 6 months after the date of enactment of the Commercial Space Launch Act Amendments of 1988, and within each 12-month period thereafter, the Secretary shall review the amounts specified in paragraph (1) (A)(I) and (B)(I), and shall submit a report to the Congress which, if appropriate, contains a proposed adjustment to such amounts to conform with altered liability expectations

and availability of insurance on the world market. Such proposed adjustment shall take effect 30 days after the submission of such report.

"(b)(1) To the extent provided in advance in appropriations Acts or to the extent there is enacted additional legislative authority to provide for the payment of claims as submitted in the compensation plan outlined in paragraph (4), the Secretary shall provide for the payment by the United States of successful claims (including reasonable expenses of litigation or settlement) of a third party against the licensee or transferee, or its contractors, subcontractors, or customers, or the contractors or subcontractors of such customers, resulting from activities carried out pursuant to a license issued or transferred under this Act for death, bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property resulting from activities carried out under the license, but only to the extent that the aggregate of such successful claims arising out of any particular launch—

"(A) is in excess of the amount of insurance or demonstration of financial responsibilities required under subsection (a)(1)(A); and

"(B) is not in excess of the level that is $1,500,000,000 (plus any additional sums necessary to reflect inflation occurring after January 1, 1989) above such amount.

The Secretary shall not provide for payment of any part of such claim for which the death, bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property has resulted from willful misconduct by the licensee or transferee. To the extent insurance required pursuant to subsection (a)(1)(A) is not available to cover any such successful third party liability claim by reason of insurance policy exclusions determined by the Secretary to be usual for the type of insurance involved, the Secretary may provide for the payment of such excluded claims without regard to the limitation expressed in subparagraph (A).

"(2) The payment of claims under paragraph (1) shall be subject to—

"(A) notice to the United States of any claim, or suit associated with such claim, against a party described in paragraph (1) for death, bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property;

"(B) participation or assistance in the defense by the United States, at its election, of that claim or suit; and

"(C) approval by the Secretary of that portion of any settlement which is to be paid out of appropriated funds of the United States.

"(3) The Secretary may withhold payment under paragraph (1) if the Secretary certifies that the amount is not just and reasonable, except that the amount of any claim determined by the final judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction shall be deemed by the Secretary to be just and reasonable.

"(4)(A) If as a result of activities carried out under a license issued or transferred under this Act the aggregate of the claims arising out of a particular launch are likely to exceed the amount of insurance or demonstration of financial responsibility required under the license, the Secretary shall (i) make a survey of the causes and extent of damage and (ii) expeditiously submit to the Congress a report setting forth the results of such survey. Reports.

"(B) Not later than 90 days after any determination by a court indicating that the liability for the aggregate of claims arising out of a particular launch under such a license may exceed the amount of insurance or demonstration of financial responsibility required President of U.S.

under the license, the President, on the recommendation of the Secretary, shall submit to the Congress a compensation plan or plans that (i) outlines the aggregate dollar value of such claims; (ii) recommends sources of funding to pay for these claims; and (iii) includes any legislative language required to implement the compensation plan or plans if additional legislative authority is required. No compensation plan for a single event or incident may exceed the aggregate of $1,500,000,000.

"(C) Any compensation plan transmitted to the Congress pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall bear an identification number and shall be transmitted to both Houses of Congress on the same day and to each House while it is in session.

"(D)(i) The provisions of this subparagraph shall apply with respect to consideration in the Senate of any such compensation plan and to Senate action on such compensation plan.

"(ii) Any such compensation plan that requires additional appropriations or additional legislative authority must be considered by the Senate pursuant to this subparagraph within 60 calendar days of continuous session of Congress after the date on which such plan is transmitted to the Congress.

"(iii) For the purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'resolution' means only a joint resolution of Congress the matter after the resolving clause of which is as follows: 'That the approves the compensation plan numbered submitted to the Congress on , 19 .', the first blank space therein being filled with the name of the resolving House and the other blank spaces being appropriately filled; but does not include a resolution which includes more than one compensation plan.

"(iv) A resolution once introduced with respect to a compensation plan shall immediately be referred to a committee (and all resolutions with respect to the same compensation plan shall be referred to the same committee) by the President of the Senate.

"(v)(I) If the committee of the Senate to which a resolution with respect to a compensation plan has been referred has not reported it at the end of 20 calendar days after its referral, it shall be in order to move either to discharge the committee from further consideration of such resolution or to discharge the committee from further consideration with respect to such compensation plan which has been referred to the committee.

"(II) A motion to discharge may be made only by an individual favoring the resolution, shall be highly privileged (except that it may not be made after the committee has reported a resolution with respect to the same compensation plan), and debate thereon shall be limited to not more than one hour, to be divided equally between those favoring and those opposing the resolution. An amendment to the motion shall not be in order, and it shall not be in order to move to reconsider the vote by which the motion was agreed to or disagreed to.

"(III) If the motion to discharge is agreed to or disagreed to, the motion may not be renewed, nor may another motion to discharge the committee be made with respect to any other resolution with respect to the same compensation plan.

"(vi)(I) When the committee has reported, or has been discharged from further consideration of, a resolution, it shall be at any time thereafter in order (even though a previous motion to the same effect has been disagreed to) to move to proceed to the consideration of the resolution. The motion shall be highly privileged and shall not

be debatable. An amendment to the motion shall not be in order, and it shall not be in order to move to reconsider the vote by which the motion was agreed to or disagreed to.

"(II) Debate on the resolution referred to in subclause (I) of this clause shall be limited to not more than 10 hours, which shall be divided equally between those favoring and those opposing such resolution. A motion further to limit debate shall not be debatable. An amendment to, or motion to recommit, the resolution shall not be in order, and it shall not be in order to move to reconsider the vote by which such resolution was agreed to or disagreed to.

"(vii)(I) Motions to postpone, made with respect to the discharge from committee, or the consideration of a resolution or motions to proceed to the consideration of other business, shall be decided without debate.

"(II) Appeals from the decision of the Chair relating to the application of the rules of the Senate to the procedures relating to resolution shall be decided without debate.

"(5) The provisions of paragraphs (1) through (4) shall apply only to each license issued or transferred under this Act for which a complete and valid application has been received by the Secretary prior to the date that is 5 years following the date of enactment of the Commercial Space Launch Act Amendments of 1988.

"(c) The head of any Federal agency or department shall collect insurance proceeds or any other payment owed for the loss of or damage to Government property under its jurisdiction or control resulting from activities carried out under a license issued or transferred under this Act. Such proceeds or other payment shall be credited to the current applicable appropriations, funds, or accounts of that agency or department.".

(b) Section 15(c) of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2614(c)) is amended to read as follows:

"(c) Consistent with the requirements of this Act, the Secretary shall establish requirements for proof of financial responsibility and such other assurances as may be necessary to protect the United States and its agencies and personnel from liability, death, bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property as a result of a launch or operation of a launch site involving Government facilities or personnel. The Secretary may not under this subsection relieve the United States of liability for death, bodily injury, or loss of or damage to property resulting from the willful misconduct of the United States or its agents.".

SEC. 6. UNITED STATES LAUNCH INCENTIVES FOR CERTAIN SATELLITES. 49 USC app. 2615 note.

(a) The requirements of subsection (a)(1)(B) of section 16 of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2615), as amended by this Act, shall not apply to eligible satellites.

(b) To the extent approved in appropriations Acts, the United States shall not require payment for the provision of launch services in connection with the commercial launch of an eligible satellite.

(c) For purposes of this section, the term "eligible satellite" means a satellite that—

(1) was under construction on August 15, 1986;

(2) was the subject of a launch services agreement or contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which as of August 15, 1986, was in effect and not yet carried out; and

(3) is licensed for launch under the Commercial Space Launch Act.

SEC. 7. PREEMPTION OF SCHEDULED LAUNCHES.

Section 15(b) of the Commercial Space Launch Act (49 U.S.C. App. 2614(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(4)(A) The Secretary, with the cooperation of the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall take steps to ensure that the launches of payloads with respect to which a launch date commitment from the United States has been obtained for a launch licensed under this Act are not preempted from access to United States launch sites or launch property, except in cases of imperative national need. Any determination of imperative national need shall be made by the Secretary of Defense or the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in consultation with the Secretary, and shall not be delegated. A licensee or transferee preempted from access to a launch site or launch property shall not be required to pay to the United States any amount for launch services solely attributable to the scheduled launch prevented by such preemption.

Reports. "(B) The Secretary of Defense or the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in cooperation with the Secretary, as the case may be, shall report to the Congress within 7 days after any determination of imperative national need under subparagraph (A), including an explanation of the circumstances justifying such determination and a schedule for ensuring the prompt launching of a preempted payload."

SEC. 8. STUDY OF PROCESS FOR SCHEDULING LAUNCHES.

The Secretary of Transportation, in cooperation with the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and in consultation with representatives of the space launch and satellite industry, shall study ways and means of scheduling Government and commercial payloads on commercial launch vehicles at Government launch sites in a manner which—

(1) makes the best practicable use of the launch property of the United States; and

(2) assures that the launch property of the United States that is available for commercial use will be available on a commercially reasonable basis,

consistent with the objectives of the Commercial Space Launch Act.

Reports. The Secretary shall report the results of such study to the Congress within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 9. COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH SERVICE COMPETITION.

It is the sense of the Congress that the United States should explore ways and means of developing a dialogue with appropriate foreign government representatives to seek the development of guidelines for access to launch services by satellite builders and users in a manner that assures the conduct of reasonable and fair international competition in commercial space activities.

SEC. 10. LAUNCH VEHICLE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall, in consultation with representatives of the space launch and satellite industry, design a program for the support of research into launch systems component technologies, for the purpose of developing higher performance and lower cost United States launch vehicle technologies and systems available for the launch of commercial and Government spacecraft into orbit. The Administrator shall submit a report outlining such program to the Congress within 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

Reports.

SEC. 11. APPLICABILITY TO LICENSES.

49 USC app. 2603 note.

This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall apply to all licenses issued under the Commercial Space Launch Act before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act.

Approved November 15, 1988.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 4399:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 100-639 (Comm. on Science, Space, and Technology).
SENATE REPORTS: No. 100-593 (Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 134 (1988):
May 24, considered and passed House.
Oct. 14, considered and passed Senate, amended.
Oct. 21, House concurred in Senate amendment.