

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0520

September 9, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

Thank you for your efforts to unleash America's commercial space industry from ineffective regulations that are stifling innovation and slowing commercial space launch and reentry activities. I support your efforts to advance the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) proposed rule, "Waiver of Specified Statutory Requirements for Commercial Space Launch and Reentry Actions," and I appreciate your leadership in keeping America the preeminent leader in space.

As you know, our country is facing unprecedented competition from China, a nation that is laser-focused on surpassing our space endeavors. According to a Commercial Space Federation study, China is "posing complex risks to U.S. industry" and is "accelerating beyond America's pace in many areas."

While our space industry may be the envy of the world, the regulatory landscape is a key obstacle holding it back. For example, before a commercial space launch can take place, more than a dozen separate related assessments must be completed. The challenge is that under current law, these reviews are required regardless of whether a launch would have any real-world impact under these laws. The result is needless bureaucratic delay that stifles innovation and cedes ground to our adversaries.

That is why I appreciate your leadership in issuing this critical regulation. With the Secretary of Transportation's authority to issue space launch and reentry licenses, the proposed rule leverages authorities that Congress gave you to waive certain statutory requirements that are not necessary to protect the health and safety interests of our nation.

This is exactly why I introduced the OUTPACE in Space Act, H.R. 8198, which encourages you to utilize your statutory authorities to support high cadence space operations. With China on the prowl, threatening American leadership across the globe and in space, our nation does not have the luxury to operate as usual. I applaud your efforts to streamline regulatory barriers that are inhibiting space launch and reentry operations.

Your leadership is helping to empower the commercial space industry and keeping our nation as the world's leading spacefaring country. Please let me know how I can help advance your endeavors on this critical issue. China will not stop in their efforts to surpass our nation in space, and neither should we.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vince Fong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Vince" and the last name "Fong" clearly distinguishable.

VINCE FONG
Member of Congress