21 May 2008

The Honorable Bart Gordon  The Honorable Ralph Hall
Chairman      Ranking Member
House Science and Technology Committee       House Science and Technology Committee
U.S. House of Representatives        U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515               Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman and Mr. Hall:

On behalf of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers-USA (IEEE-USA) I would like to urge the House Science and Technology Committee to act promptly to pass the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008 (H.R. 6063.) The Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics approved H.R. 6063 for full committee consideration by voice vote on May 20, 2008.

IEEE-USA is very pleased to see Congress’ renewed commitment to aeronautics research in Title III of the legislation with $853.4 million in funding for the Aeronautics Research and Development Mission Directorate (ARMD) for FY2009. We support Title III’s focus on aviation safety, environment impact mitigation, and weather research among other vital issues. In recent years the IEEE-USA has expressed concerns that reducing federal funding for aviation R&D will jeopardize the nation’s leadership in providing the technologies needed to develop the next generation aircraft, improve aviation safety and security, and attract the next generation of aviation scientists and engineers.

Over the past decade, funding for aeronautics research and development in the United States has fallen precipitously. This has resulted in serious deficiencies in our aviation systems including reduced safety and degraded efficiency, leading to major congestion and delays, and damage to the environment. H.R. 6063 will go a long way towards alleviating these shortcomings. The IEEE-USA urges your support of this urgently needed legislation. IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of more than 215,000 engineers, scientists and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. IEEE-USA is part of the IEEE, the world's largest technical professional society with 370,000 members in 160 countries. See http://www.ieeeusa.org. For more information, please contact Bill Williams at (202) 530-8331, or at Bill.Williams@ieee.org.

Sincerely,

Russell J. Lefevre, Ph.D.
President, IEEE-USA

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