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Senator Obama Provides TRUE Vision for NASA IFPTE President Says Obama NASA Plan a “shot in the arm” for Workers

WASHINGTON, DC – In a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D, NV) and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D, CA), International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) President Gregory Junemann applauded Illinois Senator, and Presidential Candidate, Barack Obama for calling on Congress to take immediate steps toward revitalizing the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

In addition to the letter, Junemann also provided the following response:

“IFPTE applauds Senator Obama for taking this clear position aimed at reinvigorating NASA’s vulnerable human spaceflight program, while also protecting its vital aeronautics and science research and development programs. In particular, Senator Obama’s appeal for immediate additional funding in FY09 to perform an extra Shuttle flight supported overwhelmingly in Congress will be a huge shot in the arm for NASA’s workforce.

“Senator Obama’s proposed forward path is key for several reasons. First, it will begin the process of bringing back a truly healthy NASA that not only can continue to explore space, but also can continue to perform the cutting edge, world-class aeronautics and science research and development the Agency is renowned for. Second, Senator Obama is asking Congress to put its money where its mouth is. NASA’s Authorizers have asked for an additional Shuttle flight and Senator Obama, to his credit, is leading the way in ensuring that the necessary funding is actually provided to fulfill that new requirement. Third, Senator Obama is showing the nation, and the tens of thousands of workers at NASA, both Civil Servants and contractors alike, that in an Obama Administration, our space program is not going to be an unfunded mandate to bolster political grandstanding, but rather will be a true beacon of U.S. ingenuity and technical accomplishment, a space program second to none.”

Senator Obama’s proposal, which can be found at, http://obama.senate.gov/press/080922-obama_calls_on_37/, calls for:

- *An extension of NASA's waiver of the (Iran-North Korea-Syria Non-proliferation Act) so we keep that option open for allowing U.S. astronauts to utilize the ISS beyond 2011.*
- *No further action by NASA that would make it more difficult or expensive to fly the Shuttle beyond 2010.*
- *Additional funding in FY2009 above that contemplated in the pending appropriations bills to support the single extra Shuttle flight already approved overwhelmingly by both House and Senate authorizers earlier this year.*

IFPTE is NASA’s largest Civil Servant union. Full text of the Junemann letter can be found at www.ifpte.org.

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