NATIONAL SECURITY SPACE ASSOCIATION

October 1, 2026

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: U.S. Space Superiority and Warfighter Risk Under Continuing Resolutions

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

The National Security Space Association (NSSA) writes to underscore the national security stakes of FY2027 Space Force funding – namely, U.S. space superiority and the protection of the Joint Force. Additional delays in fielding new capabilities would leave U.S. forces operating longer without the critical warning, protection, and resilience those capabilities would provide. The concern is not simply a slower acquisition process. It is a slower response to rapidly accelerating military threats and greater risk to U.S. forces and interests.

Chief of Space Operations Gen. Douglas Schiess made that connection directly on September 15 when he noted that a significant percentage of planned Space Force efforts cannot proceed without a new spending bill or a Congressional exception. Although many programs can continue from the prior year, he warned that "the threat is not slowing down."[1] Hence, a lengthy CR or a significantly reduced budget for the USSF (compared to the total requested through both the Base Budget and the proposed Reconciliation package) would delay progress in key USSF programs and operations.

The FY2027 request would increase the Space Force's total budget, including base and reconciliation funding, from $31.6 billion in FY2026 to approximately $71 billion. The Base Budget alone would more than double (see Attachment A). A Continuing Resolution can keep existing programs operating while limiting new starts and production increases.[2] Continuing last year's activity is not the same as delivering the larger, more capable force envisioned in the FY2027 request and required to address increasingly urgent threats.

For example, the FY2027 budget request shows what this expansion is intended to deliver to the warfighter:

Detection, warning and tracking of missile threats. The FY2027 request more than doubles discretionary funding for low- and medium-Earth-orbit missile warning and tracking, from $2.37 billion to $4.98 billion, supporting hypersonic and ballistic missile tracking and satellite production for FY2029 launches. A separate $196.2 million Resilient Ground Architecture new start would strengthen the processing and communications needed to deliver missile warnings despite jamming or cyberattack.

[1] Breaking Defense, "Budget impasse imperils 1 in 10 Space Force programs, new chief says," September 15, 2026.
[2] U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Defense Budget: DOD Has Adopted Practices to Manage within the Constraints of Continuing Resolutions*, GAO-21-541, September 13, 2021, pp. 9, 13–14.

Delays or reduced funding could postpone both improved detection and the resilient ground capabilities needed to provide that timely warning to the forces under threat.[3] We have clearly seen the critical importance of timely and effective missile detection, warning and tracking in the Middle East.

Protecting U.S. space systems and countering adversary use of space. Counterspace Systems procurement would increase from $2 million to $459 million, supporting Meadowlands fielding and a new Bounty Hunter–Secondary system. These capabilities disrupt adversary satellite communications and locate interference affecting U.S. systems. Separately, the $481 million Defensive Cyberspace Operations–Space request would extend protection to 60 additional mission-area locations and accelerate deployment of much-needed space vehicle cyber defenses. Delayed fielding could leave U.S. forces waiting longer for both additional defenses and capabilities to counter adversary space-enabled operations.[4]

Preserving survivable communications for nuclear command and control. The request includes $139.7 million for an Evolved Strategic SATCOM advance-procurement new start, purchasing long-lead components for satellites that will provide secure, jam-resistant communications for national leaders and strategic forces. The justification identifies these purchases as necessary to maintain the FY2032 operational schedule. Delaying those orders could postpone the increasingly important communications resilience the system is intended to provide in a future conflict.[5]

These are only a few illustrative examples from the broader Space Force budget request. Other programs with substantial planned funding increases are also vulnerable to Continuing Resolution constraints that could delay development and fielding of capabilities needed for U.S. space superiority and support to the Joint Force.

These risks do not necessarily end when the Continuing Resolution expires. GAO's 2026 review found that CRs delayed contract awards, deliveries, and fielding in selected defense programs. Restoring funding later does not automatically restore the original schedule. When delivery slips, the period without the planned capability can extend beyond the duration of the CR itself.[6]

For these reasons, NSSA recommends that your committees provide U.S. Space Force leaders with maximum budgetary flexibility. Anomalies, reprogramming, and other mechanisms available can help fund and field these capabilities on operationally relevant timelines. Budget delays do not slow the threat. They slow America's response, risking U.S. space superiority and leaving American forces exposed longer to the threats these investments are intended to counter.

Sincerely,

Steven D. Jacques
President
National Security Space Association

[3] Department of the Air Force, *FY2027 RDT&E, Space Force*, April 2026, exhibits R-2/R-2A, PEs 1206446SF, 1206447SF, 1206440SF, and 1208053SF.

[4] Department of the Air Force, *FY2027 Procurement, Space Force*, April 2026, P-1 line 5, CTRSPC (Counterspace Systems); Department of the Air Force, *FY2027 RDT&E, Space Force*, April 2026, exhibits R-2/R-2A, PE 1203040SF (DCO-Space).

[5] Department of the Air Force, *FY2027 Procurement, Space Force*, April 2026, P-1 line 7 and exhibit P-10, ESS000 (Evolved Strategic SATCOM advance procurement, Space Vehicles 3 and 4).

[6] U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Defense Budget: Effects of Continuing Resolutions on Selected Activities and Programs Critical to DOD's National Security Mission*, GAO-26-107065, January 21, 2026 (revised February 4, 2026), pp. 10, 30.

Attachment A — U.S. Space Force Budget Summary

U.S. SPACE FORCE SUMMARY

	FY26 Enacted			FY27 Request		
	Disc*	Mand**	Total	Disc*	Mand**	Total
USSF Total ($B)	25.7	5.9	31.6	59.0	12.1	71.1
U.S. Space Force	25.7	5.9	31.6	59.0	12.1	71.1

	FY26 Enacted			FY27 Request		
	Disc*	Mand**	Total	Disc*	Mand**	Total
By Approp. ($B)	25.7	5.9	31.6	59.0	12.1	71.1
RDT&E	14.7	5.5	20.3	38.4	2.3	40.7
Procurement	4.0	0.3	4.3	9.6	9.4	19.1
O&M	5.6	0.0	5.6	9.1	0.4	9.5
MILPERS	1.4	0.0	1.4	1.8	0.0	1.8

	FY26 Enacted			FY27 Request		
	Disc*	Mand**	Total	Disc*	Mand**	Total
Core Functions ($B)	25.7	5.9	31.6	59.0	12.1	71.1
Global Mission Ops.	13.2	0.6	13.8	19.8	10.9	30.7
Space Control	4.0	4.4	8.3	21.6	0.0	21.6
Enterprise Functions	5.4	0.6	6.1	10.5	0.4	11.0
Space Access	3.2	0.2	3.4	7.0	0.8	7.8

Notes:
*Disc= Discretionary "Base"
**Mand= Mandatory "Recon"
Numbers may not add due to rounding

Source: Department of the Air Force, *Budget Overview, Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27 PB Rollout Pocket Guide)*, 2026, p. 1, "U.S. Space Force Summary."