



August 31, 2026

Administrator Jared Isaacman
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
300 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20546

RE: Establishing the United States Space Academy on Florida's Space Coast

Dear NASA Administrator Isaacman:

On behalf of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) of Florida's Space Coast, I am writing to express our strong support for establishing **the United States Space Academy on Florida's Space Coast**.

President Donald J. Trump's August 28 Executive Order establishing the Presidential Commission on the United States Space Academy represents a crucial step toward preparing America to lead across the space domain. The United States Space Academy should inspire the next generation to reach farther, think bigger, and dedicate themselves to a mission greater than themselves. These principles are deeply embedded in the ethos and work ethic of the Space Coast, where generations of Americans have turned bold ideas into historic achievements. **There is no better place to launch this mission than Florida's Space Coast.**

The case for the Space Coast is grounded in its history and the extraordinary capabilities that exist there today. Its combination of world-class space infrastructure, operational military and civil space capabilities, a dynamic commercial space industry, leading research universities, and a highly skilled workforce create an environment unlike any other in the nation. Together, these assets provide the foundation for an Academy that can educate, inspire, and prepare the next generation of leaders for America's future in space.

1. Unparalleled Assets

Florida's Space Coast offers assets that no other community can replicate. The region has an unparalleled concentration of civil, commercial, military, research, and educational space assets within a single and interconnected ecosystem. At the center of this ecosystem is NASA's Kennedy Space Center (KSC), the world's preeminent launch complex for government and commercial space access. Today, Kennedy Space Center is a premier multi-user spaceport with about 100 private-sector partners and nearly 250 active partnership agreements, supporting a workforce of more than 10,000 people.

Just south of KSC, Cape Canaveral Space Force Station and nearby Patrick Space Force Base anchor a critical component of the nation's space defense infrastructure. Patrick Space Force Base is home to Space Launch Delta 45, Space Launch Delta 10, and the headquarters of the U.S. Space Force's Space Training and Readiness Command, or STARCOM. Delta 45 provides assured

space launch, range, and combat capabilities for the nation, while Delta 10 leads wargaming, field experimentation, concept evaluation, and doctrine development. STARCOM prepares military and civilian Guardians through education, training, doctrine, and testing. Together, these missions create an unparalleled opportunity for the newly established Space Academy to connect academic education with the operational requirements of the nation's rapidly evolving space warfighting enterprise.

2. Living Laboratory

Florida's Space Coast has become a living laboratory where civil, commercial, and defense space converge, creating an extraordinary level of activity and innovation. In 2025, the Space Coast recorded 109 launches, carrying more than 2,100 payloads and more than three million pounds into space. At KSC and Cape Canaveral, students and faculty do not simply study the space industry in a classroom. They learn in an environment where rockets and spacecraft are manufactured and processed, payloads are integrated and refurbished, missions are launched, and new technologies are developed and tested every day.

NASA's Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral support major human spaceflight, science, exploration, and commercial programs while hosting companies such as SpaceX, Blue Origin, Relativity Space, United Launch Alliance, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Airbus, and many other suppliers. To develop the engineers, scientists, technicians, operators, entrepreneurs, civil servants, and warfighters needed for America's next era in space, the United States Space Academy should be immersed in the very environment where that future is being built. This is precisely the type of dynamic ecosystem in which an institution dedicated to space leadership, innovation, and national service can thrive.

3. Space Research and Education Ecosystem

Florida has already established a national model for bringing together its leading universities around space research. The Florida University Space Research Consortium, designated by Space Florida as the state's official space research entity, was created to facilitate NASA research partnerships with Florida universities and KSC. Its participating institutions include the University of Florida, University of Central Florida, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Florida Tech, Florida State University, Florida A&M University, the University of South Florida, and Florida International University.

The Space Coast offers an extraordinary platform for hands-on education and applied research. The region offers direct access to the International Space Station National Laboratory and the growing low Earth orbit economy. The ISS National Laboratory provides commercial, academic, and government users with access to a functioning research platform in space, while NASA is actively working to transition toward a commercial low Earth orbit ecosystem. This creates opportunities for Space Academy students and faculty to participate in research that moves from the classroom and laboratory to flight and, ultimately, to commercial application.

Most importantly, establishing the Academy on Florida's Space Coast would create a powerful nexus between education, government, industry, and national security. Students could learn from NASA scientists and engineers, Space Force Guardians, astronauts, commercial space operators, researchers, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders. They could participate in internships, apprenticeships, cooperative education, applied research, mission support, technology demonstrations, and other experiential learning opportunities. They would have the opportunity to see firsthand how a spacecraft moves from concept to manufacturing, processing, launch, operation, and eventual return and refurbishment.

For generations, Florida's Space Coast has been where Americans have turned bold ideas into extraordinary achievements. From Apollo and the Space Shuttle to Commercial Crew, Artemis, reusable rockets, and the rapidly expanding commercial space economy, the Space Coast has repeatedly demonstrated what is possible when government, industry, academia, and human ingenuity come together. Today, we have an opportunity to build an institution that will prepare the leaders who will shape the next chapter of America's leadership in space. These leaders will also help define the next chapter of humanity's exploration beyond Earth.

The EDC of Florida's Space Coast respectfully urges you and the Presidential Commission to select Florida's Space Coast as the permanent home of the United States Space Academy. We stand ready to work with NASA, our congressional delegation, the State of Florida, Space Florida, the state's universities, local governments, and our business community to help make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynda Weatherman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Lynda Weatherman
President & CEO

CC:

- Senator Rick Scott, Florida
- Senator Ashley Moody, Florida
- Representative Mike Haridopolos, Florida's 8th Congressional District
- Brian Hughes, Director, Kennedy Space Center
- Brevard County Board of County Commissioners
- J. Alex Kelly, Florida Secretary of Commerce
- Commissioner Dr. Henry Mack, Florida Department of Education
- Robert Long, Space Florida's President & CEO
- EDC Officers