

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 21, 2004

NSS Members Energized by World's First Private Spaceflight

Next milestone is legal: Senate must pass a fair Commercial Space Bill soon to maintain US lead in critical growth industry

Mojave, California: Following the completion of SpaceShipOne's historic spaceflight, members of the National Space Society and other supporters celebrated the first private manned vehicle to reach the threshold of space, over 62 miles or 100 kilometers high.

Following the flight, NSS Executive Director George Whitesides made the following comment:

"The door to space is finally open to the rest of us. NSS congratulates Mike Melvill, Burt Rutan, Paul Allen and the entire team who made this achievement real. They have proven that human spaceflight is no longer the realm of governments alone."

The National Space Society is committed to a future in which space is open to citizens from all walks of life. The first successful sub-orbital flight of a privately designed, built, owned and operated spacecraft is a major step in that direction.

"The next milestone must be legal. It now falls to the Senate to pass a fair Commercial Space Bill quickly. This bill, which will legalize and formalize regulation of sub-orbital spaceflight, is critical to the growth of this nascent industry."

"If we do not support American entrepreneurs with appropriate legislation soon, we will risk squandering our lead in this exciting area, as we may have already done with satellites and aircraft. That is a mistake the US cannot afford to make. The Aldridge Commission has spoken out strongly in favor of a thriving space industry in its report issued on June 16. We urge the immediate passage of a fair bill that opens this industry to all serious companies and which sets the foundation for a vibrant and growing new American industry."

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