

Space: An Essential Frontier for Our Nation's Future*

David A. Kring
Universities Space Research Association

Our nation's technological leadership in the world, driven in part by an investment in space exploration during the Apollo era, is the foundation for America's high quality of life. We have squandered that leadership over the past two decades and now watch other countries mount significant space mission activities. As I write this, three other countries have spacecraft in orbit around the Moon, while we struggle to launch our own. We need to invest in NASA's Constellation Program and precursor robotic exploration of the Moon to re-invigorate the technological engine of the nation. If we do not do so, we will lose the economic advantages that provide for our quality of life.

*Submitted in response to a request from the Space Studies Board of The National Academies, 24 January 2009