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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To establish the United States Space Academy as a service academy of the United States, to require that the Academy be located in the State of Florida, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. DONALDS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish the United States Space Academy as a service academy of the United States, to require that the Academy be located in the State of Florida, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Securing The Advance-
5 ment of Rising Spacefarers Act of 2026” or the “STARS
6 Act of 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) Space is a vital domain for the national se-
4 curity, economic competitiveness, and technological
5 leadership of the United States, and the Nation's
6 continued dominance in space depends on a pipeline
7 of highly trained astronauts, engineers, operators,
8 and civil servants.

9 (2) On August 28, 2026, the President signed
10 an executive order establishing the Presidential
11 Commission on the United States Space Academy,
12 directing that Commission to recommend a govern-
13 ance framework, curriculum, and site-selection proc-
14 ess for a proposed NASA-led Federal service acad-
15 emy dedicated to space.

16 (3) Recent executive actions, including the es-
17 tablishment of the Presidential Commission on the
18 United States Space Academy, reflect a renewed na-
19 tional commitment to expanding the pipeline of
20 American space talent and reasserting American
21 leadership in the space domain amid growing stra-
22 tegic competition, including from the People's Re-
23 public of China.

24 (4) The State of Florida is home to the John
25 F. Kennedy Space Center, the single most active
26 human spaceflight launch complex in the world, and

1 to Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, from which
2 the majority of the Nation's orbital launches are
3 conducted.

4 (5) Florida hosts Patrick Space Force Base and
5 Space Launch Delta 45, giving the State an un-
6 matched concentration of active-duty Space Force
7 personnel, launch range safety infrastructure, and
8 operational expertise directly relevant to the mission
9 of the Space Academy.

10 (6) Florida's "Space Coast" region supports
11 one of the largest concentrations of commercial
12 space companies in the United States, including na-
13 tional security launch providers, satellite manufac-
14 turers, and in-space logistics firms, creating an un-
15 paralleled ecosystem of industry partners, internship
16 opportunities, and post-graduate employment path-
17 ways for Academy cadets.

18 (7) Florida's institutions of higher education,
19 including Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, the
20 University of Central Florida, and the Florida Insti-
21 tute of Technology, already offer nationally recog-
22 nized aerospace engineering and space operations
23 programs, and are positioned to support and com-
24 plement the academic mission of the Academy.

1 (8) Space Florida, the State’s spaceport author-
2 ity and aerospace economic development agency, has
3 decades of experience coordinating range operations,
4 workforce development, and infrastructure invest-
5 ment in direct support of NASA, the Space Force,
6 and the commercial launch industry.

7 (9) Florida’s climate permits a high annual
8 number of flyable launch days, and the State’s
9 coastal geography provides safe overwater trajec-
10 tories for launch and reentry operations, both of
11 which are operationally significant for a service
12 academy whose cadets will train alongside active
13 launch operations.

14 (10) Locating the Space Academy in Florida
15 would allow cadets to train in direct proximity to
16 operational launch, range, and Space Force facili-
17 ties, providing a level of real-world immersion un-
18 available at any other location in the United States.

19 (11) It is in the national interest to establish
20 the Space Academy without delay and to resolve the
21 question of its permanent location in a manner that
22 maximizes its operational integration with existing
23 space launch, range, and military infrastructure.

24 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

25 In this Act:

1 (1) ACADEMY.—The term “Academy” means
2 the United States Space Academy established under
3 section 4.

4 (2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-
5 trator” means the Administrator of the National
6 Aeronautics and Space Administration.

7 (3) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
8 means the Presidential Commission on the United
9 States Space Academy established by Executive
10 Order of August 28, 2026.

11 **SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITED STATES SPACE**
12 **ACADEMY.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is established, as an acad-
14 emy of the United States within the National Aeronautics
15 and Space Administration, the United States Space Acad-
16 emy, which shall provide undergraduate technical edu-
17 cation, leadership development, and commissioning or
18 civil-service preparation pathways for future leaders of the
19 space domain.

20 (b) RELATIONSHIP TO COMMISSION.—The Adminis-
21 trator shall, in developing the governance, curriculum, and
22 implementation plan for the Academy, consider the rec-
23 ommendations of the Commission, except that no rec-
24 ommendation of the Commission may supersede the site-
25 selection requirement of section 5.

1 **SEC. 5. LOCATION OF THE ACADEMY.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The permanent campus of the
3 Academy shall be located within the State of Florida.

4 (b) SITE SELECTION CRITERIA.—In selecting the
5 specific site within the State of Florida, the Administrator
6 shall give priority to sites that—

7 (1) are in reasonable proximity to, or have or
8 plan to have reasonable access to, the Kennedy
9 Space Center and Cape Canaveral Space Force Sta-
10 tion;

11 (2) currently allow for, or plan for, direct aca-
12 demic and operational partnership with Space
13 Launch Delta 45 and Patrick Space Force Base;

14 (3) can accommodate the future growth of the
15 Academy's cadet corps, faculty, and supporting in-
16 frastructure; and

17 (4) leverage existing Federal, State, or univer-
18 sity-owned land to minimize acquisition costs within
19 the State of Florida.

20 (c) COORDINATION WITH STATE OF FLORIDA.—The
21 Administrator shall consult with the Governor of Florida
22 in carrying out this section.

23 **SEC. 6. IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORT.**

24 Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment
25 of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Com-
26 mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the

1 Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Tech-
2 nology of the House of Representatives a report that in-
3 cludes—

4 (1) a proposed final site for the Academy within
5 the State of Florida;

6 (2) a proposed academic and leadership cur-
7 riculum;

8 (3) proposed service obligations for graduates;

9 (4) an estimated construction and operational
10 budget; and

11 (5) an implementation timeline.

12 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

13 There is authorized to be appropriated to the Admin-
14 istrator such sums as may be necessary to carry out this
15 Act, including for site acquisition, design, and construc-
16 tion of the Academy's permanent campus.

17 **SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

18 This Act shall take effect on the date of enactment
19 of this Act.