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### **A Space Program Worthy of a Great Nation**

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Americas civil space program is in many respects at a crossroads. The initial competitive force driving that program was the Soviet space effort. Today, in contrast, Russia provides the only means America will have to put astronauts in space for the next half-dozen years. The competition within the U.S. between robotic discovery and human exploration continues as does the practice of setting goals substantially greater than the means available to achieve them. And the “size-scale” continues to collapse, as the study of the largest things of which we know is found to have more and more in common with the study of the smallest things of which we know. Several major independent studies have been conducted over the years seeking to point the way forward. It was the authors privilege to participate in two of these reviews sponsored by the White House, including the most recent one. In this presentation the results of that work will be summarized and alternative futures of the U.S. space program will be postulated.