

# APS Board decries Hubble demise resulting from President's budget

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President Bush's proposed budget includes no funding for a service mission to the Hubble Space Telescope, guaranteeing that the instrument will cease operations sometime before the end of 2007. The \$93 million NASA would provide for Hubble in Fiscal Year 2006 dedicates \$18 million to collecting the last of the failing instrument's data and \$75 million to preparing the satellite for deorbiting.

The Executive Board of the American Physical Society (APS) believes that servicing the Hubble should be one of NASA's highest priorities and concurs with the National Research Council's (NRC) Committee on the Assessment of Options for Extending the Life of the Hubble Space Telescope that Hubble is "the most powerful optical astronomical facility in history," that "has clearly been one of NASA's most noticed science projects, garnering sustained public attention over its entire lifetime." In accord with a recent American Astronomical Society statement, the APS Board believes that Hubble's scientific potential is as promising as the remarkable past record it has achieved. It further believes that this potential provides a compelling, persuasive reason for adding money to the NASA science program to carry out the necessary servicing mission, without which, according to the NRC report, Hubble will cease science operations in mid to late 2007.

In an APS report release in November 2004, the APS Panel on Public Affairs expressed its concern that funding of the President's Moon-Mars manned flight initiative could jeopardize proven science mission such as Hubble, stating:

“The technical hurdles facing the Moon-Mars initiative are formidable, and the program’s overall costs are still unknown. Further, the rapid pace currently envisioned for this program may require a wide redistribution of the science and technology budgets that could significantly alter the broad scientific priorities carefully defined for NASA and the other federal agencies. Launching such a massive program without broad consultation and a clear idea of its scope and budget may hurt rather than enhance, as intended, the scientific standing of the U.S. and the training of its scientists and engineers.”

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