

Return-to-moon plan gets boost on Capitol Hill

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(AP) -- NASA's weakened return-to-the-moon program has gotten a lift on Capitol Hill. The head of a special expert panel conceded to Congress on Tuesday that the moon program could work if given enough money. That would mean another \$3 billion a year for the program proposed by President George W. Bush.

The plan has been under question because of that panel's dim look at NASA's future and concerns about support from the new administration.

But congressmen from both parties came to the plan's defense. They even attacked the special panel for referring to the moon plan in the past tense at one point.

House Space Subcommittee chair Gabrielle Giffords says there needs to be a compelling reason to scrap a plan that has already cost \$7 billion.

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