

# THE WICKER REPORT

By: United States Senator Roger Wicker



## Wicker celebrates America's return to space

### Successful launch paves way for trips to the Moon, Mars and beyond

The last few months have been a trying time for our nation, but the recent launch of a new spacecraft sent a powerful ray of hope. For the first time in nearly a decade, an American-made rocket blasted off into space from U.S. soil carrying astronauts on board, marking a new chapter in human spaceflight.

The equipment that carried astronauts Douglas Hurley and Robert Behnken into space is a marvel of modern science. As the ship entered orbit, viewers were able to watch live as the Falcon 9 rocket booster descended back to Earth and landed gently on a floating pad in the ocean. The spacecraft, named Crew Dragon, then journeyed on for 19 hours to the International Space Station, where it will remain docked for up to four months.

#### Mississippi's Role in Spaceflight

The launch of Crew Dragon ushered in a new kind of spaceflight. Unlike previous programs, Crew Dragon and the Falcon 9 rocket were designed by a private company, SpaceX, whose innovations are making spaceflight cheaper and more efficient. The company aims to help humans colonize the moon and make space travel available to more people. If the current mission is any indicator, NASA's partnerships with companies like SpaceX will be the way of the future, and our state will play a major role.

The 2020s have the potential to be a groundbreaking decade for NASA. We are working to land the first woman and next man on the

## \*Letter

(Continued from page 10.) case scenario is real and your loved one has relapsed, reach out to find them help.

If you don't know where to start, give us a call we have caring staff available 24-7 to help you find a treatment center that works for you.

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Aaron Olson  
Community Relations Director  
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spacecraft called the Orion, which is now under construction and should be ready by next year. And the rockets to be used in launch are being tested at Mississippi's own Stennis Space Center. I have long supported funding in Congress to make sure these efforts advance.

#### Winning the New Space Race Creates Jobs

As chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, which oversees NASA, I have made it a priority for

the agency to stay ahead of rising space powers. Russia was once our main rival in this domain, but today China is the world's fastest growing space power. Last year, China became the first country to explore the far side of the moon and is now planning to build a moon base. China has also developed weapons capable of targeting American satellites that provide GPS services, weather forecasts, and vital communications services. Counter-

ing these threats is part of why the President recently created the Space Force as a new branch of the military.

In addition to meeting these threats, America needs to remain the focal point for jobs in space commerce. The space industry will generate an estimated \$3 trillion by 2040, as companies realize the opportunities in space for scientific discoveries and innovation. To help ensure our space economy remains unrivaled, I recently joined

several colleagues in introducing the American Space Commerce Act of 2020, which would provide incentives for space companies to keep investing in America and to launch from U.S. soil. The race for space has changed significantly since Neil Armstrong planted the American flag on the face of the moon. If anything, the stakes are now higher. I am glad America has returned to manned spaceflight at this pivotal moment in history.

## Our customers come first. Now, more than ever. New payment options for COVID-19 relief.

At Entergy Mississippi, we understand the immense impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our customers and communities. And we know that now, electricity is more important than ever. So for those struggling to make ends meet, we've developed new payment options to provide some relief during these uncertain times.

Our **Enhanced Customer Assistance Plan** provides flexible options to extend time to pay, waives late fees with payment arrangements and reimburses credit/debit card fees. Any customer that is experiencing financial hardship is eligible to take up to six months to pay their current bill and/or unpaid balances.

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