

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 2600

AN ACT

To require the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to establish a program to identify, evaluate, acquire, and disseminate commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery in order to satisfy the scientific, operational, and educational requirements of the Administration, 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 “Accessing Satellite Ca-
5 pabilities to Enable New Discoveries Act” or the “AS-
6 CEND Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. COMMERCIAL SATELLITE DATA.**

8 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
9 ings:

10 (1) Section 60501 of title 51, United States
11 Code, states that the goal for the Earth Science pro-
12 gram of the National Aeronautics and Space Admin-
13 istration (referred to in this section as “NASA”)
14 shall be to pursue a program of Earth observations,
15 research, and applications activities to better under-
16 stand the Earth, how it supports life, and how
17 human activities affect its ability to do so in the fu-
18 ture.

19 (2) Section 50115 of title 51, United States
20 Code, states that the Administrator of NASA shall,
21 to the extent possible and while satisfying the sci-
22 entific or educational requirements of NASA, and
23 where appropriate, of other Federal agencies and
24 scientific researchers, acquire, where cost effective,
25 space-based and airborne commercial Earth remote

1 sensing data, services, distribution, and applications
2 from a commercial provider.

3 (3) The Administrator of NASA established the
4 Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition Pilot Pro-
5 gram in 2019 to identify, validate, and acquire from
6 commercial sources data that support the Earth
7 science research and application goals.

8 (4) The Administrator of NASA has—

9 (A) determined that the pilot program de-
10 scribed in paragraph (3) has been a success, as
11 described in the final evaluation entitled “Com-
12 mercial SmallSat Data Acquisition Program
13 Pilot Evaluation Report” issued in 2020;

14 (B) established a formal process for evalu-
15 ating and onboarding new commercial vendors
16 in such pilot program;

17 (C) increased the number of commercial
18 vendors and commercial data products available
19 through such pilot program; and

20 (D) expanded procurement arrangements
21 with commercial vendors to broaden user access
22 to provide commercial Earth remote sensing
23 data and imagery to federally funded research-
24 ers.

1 (b) COMMERCIAL SATELLITE DATA ACQUISITION
2 PROGRAM.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 603 of title 51,
4 United States Code, is amended by adding at the
5 end the following:

6 “§ 60307. **Commercial satellite data acquisition pro-**
7 **gram**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall estab-
9 lish within the Earth Science Division of the Science Mis-
10 sion Directorate a program to acquire and disseminate
11 cost-effective and appropriate commercial Earth remote
12 sensing data and imagery in order to satisfy the scientific,
13 operational, and educational requirements of the Adminis-
14 tration, and where appropriate, of other Federal agencies
15 and scientific researchers to augment or complement the
16 suite of Earth observations acquired by the Administra-
17 tion, other United States Government agencies, and inter-
18 national partners.

19 “(b) DATA PUBLICATION AND TRANSPARENCY.—The
20 terms and conditions of commercial Earth remote sensing
21 data and imagery acquisitions under the program de-
22 scribed in subsection (a) shall not prevent—

23 “(1) the publication of commercial data or im-
24 agery for scientific purposes; or

1 “(2) the publication of information that is de-
2 rived from, incorporates, or enhances the original
3 commercial data or imagery of a vendor.

4 “(c) AUTHORIZATION.—In carrying out the program
5 under this section, the Administrator may—

6 “(1) procure commercial Earth remote sensing
7 data and imagery from commercial vendors to ad-
8 vance scientific research and applications in accord-
9 ance with subsection (a); and

10 “(2) establish or modify end-use license terms
11 and conditions to allow for the widest-possible use of
12 procured commercial Earth remote sensing data and
13 imagery by individuals other than NASA-funded
14 users, consistent with the goals of the program.

15 “(d) UNITED STATES VENDORS.—Commercial Earth
16 remote sensing data and imagery referred to in sub-
17 sections (a) and (c) shall, to the maximum extent prac-
18 ticable, be procured from United States vendors.

19 “(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the
20 date of the enactment of this section and annually there-
21 after, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on
22 Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and
23 the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the
24 House of Representatives a report that includes the fol-
25 lowing information regarding the agreements, vendors, li-

1 cense terms, and uses of commercial Earth remote sensing
2 data and imagery under this section:

3 “(1)(A) In the case of the initial report, a list
4 of all agreements that are providing commercial
5 Earth remote sensing data and imagery to NASA as
6 of the date of the report.

7 “(B) For each subsequent report, a list of all
8 agreements that have provided commercial Earth re-
9 mote sensing data and imagery to NASA during the
10 reporting period.

11 “(2) A description of the end-use license terms
12 and conditions for each such vendor.

13 “(3) A description of the manner in which each
14 such agreement is advancing scientific research and
15 applications, including priorities recommended by
16 the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering,
17 and Medicine decadal surveys.

18 “(4) Information specifying whether the Admin-
19 istrator has entered into an agreement with a com-
20 mercial vendor or a Federal agency that permits the
21 use of data and imagery by Federal Government em-
22 ployees, contractors, or non-Federal users.”.

23 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of con-
24 tents for chapter 603 of title 51, United States

- 1 Code, is amended by adding at the end the following
- 2 new item:

“60307. Commercial satellite data acquisition program.”.

Passed the House of Representatives February 23,
2026.

Attest:

Clerk.

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