

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1437

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) After the completion of the Private-Sector
4 Small Constellation Satellite Data Product Pilot
5 launch in 2017, the Administrator of NASA estab-
6 lished the Commercial SmallSat Data Acquisition
7 Pilot Program in 2019 to identify, evaluate, validate,
8 and acquire from commercial sources data that sup-
9 port the Earth science research and application
10 goals.

11 (4) The Administrator of NASA has—

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

17 (B) established a formal process for evalu-
18 ating and onboarding new commercial vendors
19 in such pilot program;

20 (C) increased the number of commercial
21 vendors and commercial data products available
22 through such pilot program; and

23 (D) expanded procurement arrangements
24 with commercial vendors to broaden user access

1 to provide Earth remote sensing data and im-
 2 agery to federally funded researchers.

3 (b) COMMERCIAL SATELLITE DATA ACQUISITION
 4 PROGRAM.—

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

8 **“§ 60307. Commercial Satellite Data Acquisition Pro-**
 9 **gram**

10 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall estab-
 11 lish within the Earth Science Division of the Science Mis-
 12 sion Directorate a program, to be known as the ‘Commer-
 13 cial Satellite Data Acquisition Program’, to cost-effectively
 14 acquire and disseminate commercial Earth observation
 15 data and imagery in order to complement the scientific,
 16 operational, and educational requirements of the Adminis-
 17 tration, and where appropriate, of other Federal agencies
 18 and scientific researchers.

19 “(b) DATA PUBLICATION AND ACCESSIBILITY.—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 in academic or scientific articles, papers, or
 25 other similar publications for scientific purposes; or

“(2) the publication, in academic or scientific articles, papers, or other similar publications, of information that is derived from, incorporates, or enhances the original commercial data or imagery of a vendor.

“(c) AUTHORIZATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program under this section, the Administrator may—

“(A) procure commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery from commercial vendors to advance scientific research and applications for the purpose set forth in subsection (a); and

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

“(2) ACQUISITION FROM UNITED STATES VENDORS.—The commercial Earth remote sensing data and imagery procured under this subsection shall be procured, to the maximum extent practicable, from United States vendors.

1 “(d) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the
2 date of the enactment of this section, and annually there-
3 after, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on
4 Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and
5 the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the
6 House of Representatives a report that includes the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(1)(A) In the case of the initial report, a list
9 of all vendors that are providing commercial Earth
10 remote sensing data and imagery to NASA as of the
11 date of the report.

12 “(B) For each subsequent report, a list of all
13 vendors that have provided commercial Earth remote
14 sensing data and imagery to NASA during the re-
15 porting period.

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

18 “(3) A description of the manner in which each
19 such vendor is advancing scientific research and ap-
20 plications, including priorities recommended by the
21 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and
22 Medicine decadal surveys.

23 “(4) Information specifying whether the Admin-
24 istrator has entered into an agreement with a com-
25 mercial vendor or a Federal agency that permits the

1 use of data and imagery by Federal Government em-
2 ployees, contractors, or non-Federal users.

3 “(e) DEFINITION OF UNITED STATES VENDOR.—In
4 this section, the term ‘United States vendor’ means a com-
5 mercial or nonprofit entity incorporated in the United
6 States.”.

7 (2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of con-
8 tents for chapter 603 of title 51, United States
9 Code, is amended by adding at the end the following
10 new item:

“60307. Commercial Satellite Data Acquisition Program.”.

Passed the Senate December 9, 2025.

Attest:

Secretary.

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