November 7, 2017

Dear Senator,

On behalf of our millions of members, we write to urge you to oppose the nomination of Representative Jim Bridenstine (OK-01) to be Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Rep. Bridenstine lacks the historical qualifications to lead NASA, has spoken against some of its core activities, and has a voting record at odds with parts of NASA’s scientific mission.

Due to the scope and importance of the agency’s mission, nominees to lead NASA historically have come from scientific backgrounds and have not previously held elected office. Rep. Bridenstine not only lacks a scientific background, but has worked against sound science, denied the human contribution to climate change, consistently voted against environmental progress, and sought to cut climate research funding. Bridenstine also holds inconsistent views on earth science funding, a core part of NASA’s mission. Although he recently expressed support for continued earth science funding, Bridenstine earlier this year expressed an openness to “rebalance” NASA by moving earth science work to another agency. This is in line with the current Trump administration budget proposal that cuts over $100 million from earth science missions, including ending the Radiation Budget Instrument (RBI), which measures sunlight and emitted radiation; the PACE mission, which monitors clouds and interactions between the atmosphere and oceans; the OCO-3 program, which monitors atmospheric carbon levels; the CLARREO Pathfinder mission, which measures atmospheric heat; and earth-viewing instruments on the Deep Space Climate Observatory (DSCOVR) satellite.

Rep. Bridenstine’s voting record demonstrates a dangerously skewed view of science. Bridenstine has opposed numerous science-based environmental and health standards, supported weakening the ability of agencies to rely on science to inform decision-making, and supported numerous appropriations bills and budget proposals that would eviscerate basic science programs.

NASA’s mission is too important to entrust to a nominee who lacks the requisite scientific qualifications. The research produced by NASA’s earth science mission is critical to the continuance of scientific progress to understand the planet we live on, particularly as we grapple with the consequences of a changing climate. Representative Bridenstine’s record casts doubt on his ability to lead NASA in the fulfillment of the full scope of its mission. We request that you vote to oppose his nomination.
Sincerely,

350.org
Climate Hawks Vote
ClimateTruth.org
Friends of the Earth
Hip Hop Caucus
League of Conservation Voters
Natural Resources Defense Council
NextGen America
Public Citizen
Sierra Club
Students for a Just and Stable Future