

One Small Step to Protect Human Heritage in Space Act

Overview

This bill directs any Federal agency that issues licenses for lunar activities to add a requirement that the applicant must agree to abide by NASA's published recommendations for preserving the Apollo 11 site and similar human heritage sites on the Moon. It also includes a sense of Congress that an international agreement should be made to protect these sites.

Human Heritage in Space

July 20, 2019 will mark the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing. On this day in 1969 Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first humans to set foot on a celestial body off the Earth. The landing of Apollo 11 and humanity's first off-world footprints are achievements unparalleled in history—the landing site is of outstanding historical, archaeological, anthropologic, scientific, and engineering value to humanity.

As more nations and commercial enterprises acquire the ability to land on the Moon it is necessary to assure the recognition and protection of the Apollo landing sites. **These sites do not currently have any legal recognition or protection from intentional or inadvertent disturbance.**

Licensing Requirement

In 2011 NASA published voluntary guidelines entitled "Recommendations to Space-Faring Entities: How to Protect and Preserve the Historic and Scientific Value of U.S. Government Lunar Artifacts." The One Small Step Act directs any Federal agency that issues licenses to conduct activities in outer space (DoT, DoC, and FCC issue the majority of licenses) to add a requirement to all lunar activity licensing applications that the applicant must agree to abide by the NASA Preservation Recommendations (or subsequent updates from NASA) and authorizes fines of any licensee who breaks the license terms. The bill allows for legitimate exemptions (with consultation from NASA) from this requirement and also calls for an international treaty consistent with this bill.

