

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 10, 2007

Michael Griffin
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
300 E St., SW
Washington, DC 20024-3202

Dear Administrator Griffin:

We are writing to request your support for continued funding for thermal infrared (TIR) capabilities in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Landsat Program. Since 1972, the TIR capabilities of the existing Landsat satellites have provided critical information to federal and state agencies, scientists, water resource managers and commercial entities who deal with water-related issues. This has enabled scientists to evaluate the dynamic changes caused by both natural processes and human practices, including drought. It is increasingly critical that we provide the resources necessary to gather the data required to make sound decisions related to our present and future water use.

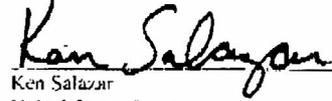
The TIR data provided by Landsat 5 and Landsat 7 has been critical to informing wide-ranging water management decisions across the country. The data is used to generate critical information for water resource and infrastructure projects, evaluate seasonal surface and ground water use, plan water budgets, manage irrigation practices, administer water rights, oversee compliance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conservation-related contracts, study impacts related to converting agricultural lands to urban uses, evaluate water needs of fish and wildlife including endangered species, and ensure water is used in compliance with state and federal law, interstate compacts, and international treaties. All of these applications are critical to future water management in the United States, and all require the high resolution thermal imagery that only the Landsat Data Continuity Mission (LDCM) will afford. The entire nation benefits by having this important tool available for the long-term.

While NASA is scheduled to deploy Landsat 8 in 2011, work is beginning now to complete the preliminary design review and award contracts for building the spacecraft. Unfortunately, the President's FY2008 request for funding for NASA's LDCM did not include funding for a thermal infrared sensor on Landsat 8.

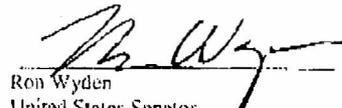
We urge you to take immediate action to provide for the continued funding for the thermal infrared (TIR) capabilities in the NASA Landsat Program, and to inform our

offices of NASA's actions taken to ensure these capabilities. We cannot afford to lose this tool, and the critical information it provides for water resource and infrastructure planning.

Sincerely,

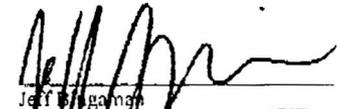

Ken Salazar
United States Senator


Mike Crapo
United States Senator

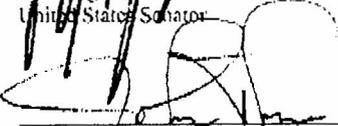

Ron Wyden
United States Senator


Max Baucus
United States Senator


Tim Johnson
United States Senator


Jeff Bingaman
United States Senator


Pat Roberts
United States Senator


John Thune
United States Senator