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EOSAT Commends Rep. Brown for Energizing Landsat 7 Legislative Process

LANHAM, Maryland, 26 November 1991 — Dr. Arturo Silvestrini, President of the Earth Observation Satellite Co. (EOSAT), today praised Rep. George E. Brown, Jr., (D-CA) and his committee staff for bringing important issues associated with the Landsat program to the top of the national space policy agenda.

On October 23, Rep. Brown, Chairman of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee, introduced The National Land Remote Sensing Act of 1991 (H.R. 3614) which would amend the 1984 law that commercialized Landsat. The bill would establish an expedited procurement process to begin construction of Landsat 7 and new data distribution policies for researchers involved in the global change research effort. Landsat program oversight would shift from NOAA to a NASA-DoD joint program office.

“Chairman Brown’s continued support of the Landsat program has been crucial in achieving U.S. leadership in land remote sensing, and his most recent bill has energized the legislative process to bring about a timely resolution of the Landsat 7 issue,” Silvestrini said.

Speaking at a full-committee hearing on H.R. 3614, Silvestrini added, “We are eager to work with this committee, the administration and other organizations to ensure that such a settlement of the Landsat issue will guarantee the continuous flow of Landsat data through the turn of the century and the maintenance of international agreements.”

Silvestrini pledged EOSAT’s continued assistance to Congress and the Administration in fine tuning the legislation to maintain the commercial nature of the Landsat program.

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"In preparing this legislation, Representative Brown and his staff have demonstrated a keen awareness that the future of America's land remote sensing program must be guided by current circumstances rather than those that prevailed in the early 1980s," Silvestrini said.

"EOSAT shares the view of H.R. 3614 that the Landsat program can provide critical inputs to the global change research community through NASA and be responsive to the needs of DoD, while serving the growing commercial market for Landsat data."

"I strongly believe that this is the last opportunity to initiate the final action which can ensure the continuity of the Landsat data stream, and most importantly, the continuity of America's technological superiority in land remote sensing," said Silvestrini.

The Committee also received testimony from Adm. Richard Truly, NASA Administrator; Duane Andrews, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence; Lawrie Jordan, President of ERDAS Inc.; William Bishop, Vice President for Research at the Desert Research Institute, University of Nevada; Kass Green, President of Pacific Meridian Resources; Fred Henderson, President of The Geosat Committee; and, Molly Macauley, Resources for the Future.

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