

SPACE BASED SOLAR POWER: DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT

IN THE SECTION OF OUR 2008 AGENDA ON SPACE BASED SOLAR POWER, PROSPACE ASKS YOU TO JOIN IN SENDING A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LETTER IS TO URGE IMMEDIATE ACTION ON THE NEXT STEP IDENTIFIED IN THE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SBSP STUDY GROUP REPORT RELEASED LAST FALL BY THE NATIONAL SECURITY SPACE OFFICE (NSSO).

A draft letter appears below.

A text file of this letter and the complete NSSO report on SBSP is available on our website at: www.prospace.org

TO: Mr. John Young, Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics

CC: Mr. Gary Payton, Deputy Undersecretary for Space
Mr. Joseph Rouge, Director, National Security Space Office

Last fall, the Department's National Security Space Office (NSSO) released a study on "Space-Based Solar Power As an Opportunity for Strategic Security." That Report concluded that Space-Based Solar Power (SBSP) presents a strategic opportunity that could significantly advance U.S. security and energy independence, enhance the U.S. space industrial base and create jobs and therefore merits serious further attention by the U.S. government.

First, we commend the NSSO for its innovative approach to conduct this study. Using a unique collaborative process, the study team gathered and integrated input from more than 170 experts across many disciplines. We agree with the study's premise that the "magnitude of the looming energy and environmental problems is significant enough to warrant consideration of all options, to include ... Space-Based Solar Power".

Second, we agree with the study's fundamental conclusions, and urge you to immediately carry out the SBSP Report's specific recommendation to "conduct a survey of state of the art component technologies, identify major types of satellite designs that are feasible to build using known technology, and generate a roadmap to inform further decisions". The SBSP roadmap should clearly define the most important actions and decisions — in technology development, policy, legal, organizational structure, environmental research, and economic incentives — between now and a notional orbital demonstration in 2020.

Since, as the Report points out, the Defense Department has taken the lead in developing many (if not most) of the technologies necessary to enable cost-effective SBSP, and thanks to the NSSO's leadership, we believe it is appropriate for DOD to fund and lead this next-level study. We request that you immediately conducting a follow-on study using the NSSO SBSP Report as a point of departure, and report your findings back to [the members and appropriate committees] by September 30, 2008.

Since other federal departments, such as DOE, NSF, NASA, DOC, EPA and others, may eventually assume leadership roles in the development of SBSP we would request you to include them in this next study phase.

Signed,