

# *Gaiashield Group*



08/20/10

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Re: National Planetary Defense Agency

President Obama: Sir,

Since the threat of asteroid impact is one that we understand we can manage to its worst case manifestation and that it will always include the random prospect for our extinction. Then the most important thing Mankind can ever know will always be which asteroid is The Next Large Asteroid on its way to strike Earth and deflecting it will always be the most important thing Mankind can ever do. At any cost. By any means... Failure will *never* be an option.

From the current National Space Policy: “The Administrator of NASA shall: Pursue capabilities, in cooperation with other departments, agencies, and commercial partners, to detect, track, catalog, and characterize near-Earth objects to reduce the risk of harm to humans from an unexpected impact on our planet”. This only sounds good if you don't really think it through...

Detecting, tracking, cataloging and characterizing Near Earth Objects can only be constructive to reducing any “risk of harm to humans” once we have developed a standing and tested means to *'deflect these objects as they present themselves to be impending Earth impact threats'* and delegated an agency qualified to engineer and implement our response. Both, consequential products of a codified political will and National Policy determination expressing intent and responsibility. This much policy can not be left as tacit or implied and still leave us with any reasonable expectation of success.

Our growing and emergent understanding of this threat begs for a codified governmental policy and a dedicated agency and a cogent and effective strategy – a means, to defend us from the threat of asteroid impact... Now. *Before* we discover The Next Large Asteroid on its way to strike Earth and we find ourselves with only all the time *left* in the World. Then, when that day comes, not all the money in the world - not all the hubris, not all the resolve, not all the courage, not all the hope, not all the genius, not all the 11<sup>th</sup> hour road-to-hell-paving political good intentions mankind can bring to bear, altogether - will buy us more time.

In response to this threat, Title VIII SEC. 804 of the 2008 Space Act - to recommend to Congress a National Planetary Defense Agency - is presently addressed to the attention and duty of the Executive Office. Since such an agency would ultimately come under the direct command and authority of the President, and since this will quickly evolve into an international treaty issue, and given the perpetual debilitating chaotic machinations of Congress such an agency may not actually become manifest in our lifetime, this recommendation would be far more effective if delivered in the form of a National Security Directive. Responding to the perpetual prospect of our random Extinction by Asteroid Impact should warrant a National Security Directive...

Either way, clearly, NASA should be at the *tactical* core of such an Agency. However, at the *strategic* level the more qualified and experienced threat management mindset of our DoD is required. This is not about Science or Man in Space but rather Security and the Survival of Mankind. Not about our National Space Policy but rather our National Security Policy.

Setting aside DoD's two hundred year evolved security mindset, its two hundred year history of successfully defending the security and interests of this nation, their standing and suitably fungible budget (and by extension the military budgets of the world), the fact that every nation on Earth has a military which can serve as a common vehicle to build a *Global Planetary Defense Agency* and that within any such Agency of Agencies the United States should endeavor to match the influence of both Russian and Chinese national space programs which are elements of their militaries. Aside from the fact that this business will only ever be effectively managed to a desirable outcome with the surgical and expert application of nuclear explosive devices... If we recognize that sooner or later this *will* evolve to become a Global issue involving if not every nation on Earth at least those that have a developed space capability, and as such every space agency on Earth manifest in an Agency of Agencies. Then, sooner or later US Space Command (USSTRATCOM), arguably the second largest space agency on Earth, *will* have a major, if not leadership role in Planetary Defense. And in this, sooner is *always* better.

Will the United States represent its interests with two discrete space agencies demonstrating an inability to even create a single coherent National agency and effectively abandon any pretense of leadership at the Global level? Or will we merge NASA and DoD at this point and for this mission into a single national agency comprised of the mission appropriate skill sets and relevant resources inherent to both now? If a limited and ad hoc merger of these agencies will clearly be the rational and inevitable response in the end, then such a merger should be the nature of our response from the beginning. Let those best able to respond shape and determine the response and the Rules of Engagement required for a successful outcome. This is not the time or place to lead with strategic dilettantes or professional bureaucrats or political expeditors.

Consider that if for some reason we did have to choose between NASA and STRATCOM as the sole National Agency representing the United States in a Global Planetary Defense Agency: choose between the civilian/scientific and the military/security aspects of our national space capability. Given the dire nature of the mission would we not clearly be far better served with inherent capabilities DoD here? How could a National Planetary Defense Agency that did not include the expertise and strategic acuties and resources of DoD ever be wise? Doing this right will be a journey of a thousand miles. Let this first bold step be in the right direction.

The Universe is a dangerous place. It does not suffer dilettantes... or cowards, gladly.

At your disposal and convenience in this issue,

A Million Miles A Day,

R. Dale Brownfield  
Gaiashield Group

cc:

Dr John Holdren  
VP Joseph Biden  
Sec Def Robert Gates

Sec State Hillary Clinton  
Rep. Dana Rohrabacher  
Gen. Charles Bolden

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