



SPIE

**Connecting minds.
Advancing light.**

SPIE is the international society
for optics and photonics

SPIE objects to House subcommittee decision to end James Webb Space Telescope; urges full funding

05 August 2011

BELLINGHAM, Washington, USA -- Ending the **James Webb Space Telescope** (JWST) project would waste billions of taxpayer dollars that have already been invested, undermine American leadership and innovation in space technology, and eliminate much-needed jobs and economic growth, SPIE asserts in a letter today to the U.S. House of Representatives.

SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics, is objecting to a decision by the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice and Space to terminate the **JWST**.

Society leadership are urging that **JWST**, with more than 75% of its hardware already delivered, be fully funded and seen to its completion.

"We understand that the proposed cuts to **JWST** come as part of a larger effort by Congress to rein in federal spending," the letter, signed by Robert Lieberman, Chair of the SPIE Engineering, Science and Technology Policy Committee and a Director of the Society. "Unfortunately, NASA and other federal science agencies and programs have been unduly targeted in these cuts."

SPIE fully supports improved and informed oversight of all federal spending on science and technology and recognizes the importance of beginning to reduce the deficit, but urges appropriators to make fiscally sound choices about reductions, the letter says.

NASA's 2012 budget proposal asked Congress for \$375 million for **JWST** for the coming year -- hundreds of millions less than what the Independent Comprehensive Review Panel estimated the program would need to keep the launch from extending beyond 2015.

It takes decades for space telescope missions to be fulfilled, and due to their duration and complexity, it is imperative that NASA be provided with a stable, long-term budget to avoid inefficiencies and achieve its missions, the SPIE letter noted.

See the SPIE Newsroom article on "Lessons learned from testing the **James Webb Space Telescope** optical components" spie.org/x51592.xml

See the James Webb Space Telescope website www.jwst.nasa.gov/

SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics, was founded in 1955 to advance light-based technologies. Serving more than 180,000 constituents from 168 countries, the Society advances emerging technologies through interdisciplinary information exchange, continuing education, publications, patent precedent and career and professional growth. SPIE annually organizes and sponsors approximately 25 major technical forums, exhibitions and education programs in North America, Europe, Asia and the South Pacific. SPIE provided over \$2.3 million in support of education and outreach programs in 2010.

Media Contact:

Amy Nelson
Public Relations Manager

amy@spie.org

Tel: +1 360 685 5478

[@SPIEtweets](https://twitter.com/SPIEtweets)