April 18, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, S-221
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

I write you today to express my deep concerns about the nominee to lead the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Representative Jim Bridenstine (R-OK). I urge you to vote against his confirmation.

Others have raised concerns about Representative Bridenstine’s qualifications to lead the agency.1 Criticisms include that he is too partisan for the position and has virtually no management experience involving a large organization and is therefore unfit to lead NASA with its budget of $18.5 billion, over 18,000 federal workers, and over 60,000 contractor employees.

Our concerns however, stem from an investigation and review of public records that we conducted. Those records show that, prior to his time in Congress, Representative Bridenstine led a nonprofit he directed into massive financial losses.2 Some of the losses involved the use of the nonprofit’s resources to benefit a company that he simultaneously co-owned, a questionable arrangement that raises concerns about his commitment to responsible and ethical spending—a quality that is essential to government service at this level.

Founded in 1981, the Project On Government Oversight (POGO) is a nonpartisan independent watchdog that champions good government reforms. POGO’s investigations into corruption, misconduct, and conflicts of interest achieve a more effective, accountable, open, and ethical federal government. We are growing increasingly concerned that executive branch officials are flouting the ethics laws meant to protect the interests of the American taxpayers.3 It is through this lens that we urge you to vote against Representative Bridenstine’s confirmation.

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If you or your staff would like to discuss our concerns further, please contact POGO’s Director of Public Policy, Liz Hempowicz, at ehempowicz@pogo.org or (202) 347-1122.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Danielle Brian
Executive Director

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate

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