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July 21, 2009

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued interest in receiving information from Sen. Sherrod Brown.

This week marks the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission to land on the moon. To commemorate this historic event, Sen. Brown delivered a speech on the U.S. Senate floor applauding the space program, the Apollo 11 crew, and Ohio-native astronauts Neil Armstrong and John Glenn.



Sen. Brown announced his cosponsorship of a bill that would authorize President Obama to award Congressional gold medals to Neil A. Armstrong, the first human to walk on the moon; Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin Jr., the pilot of the lunar module and second person to walk on the moon; Michael Collins, the pilot of their Apollo 11 mission's command module; and, the first American to orbit the Earth, John Herschel Glenn.

The full text of Sen. Brown's speech is included below.

"I rise today, Mr. President, to celebrate and honor the historic events that took place on this date 40 years ago. On this day in 1969, Ohio native, Neil Armstrong became the first human-being to step foot on the moon. For us old enough to remember that day, it was the day when the stuff of dreams became a reality. While it is still a source of inspiration for people today, the times in which the landing took place are often forgotten.

"The United States and the Soviet Union were in the middle of the Space Race, but the

moon landing was about so much more than who could get to the moon first. It was the height of a progressive era in our nation's history – an era that saw the establishment of Medicare and Medicaid, saw the Civil Rights Act signed into law, saw the creation of Head Start, began the environmental movement in our time, all within about a five-year period during that progressive era. It was a time of turmoil, too, for America. We were a nation at war. We bore witness to the assassinations, only a year before, of Dr. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy.

"When America needed a hero, it found them in the crew of the Apollo spacecraft. We moved forward in the most American way, working to achieve what others said could not be done.

"I was 16 years old when Neil Armstrong took that historic first step. He is from Ohio. He's from a town in the western part of my state, a town just shy of 10,000 people, about a two-hour drive from where I grew up.

"I remember those days. When I was 16 – we had a black and white television – and my brother convinced my parents to go get a color TV to watch the moon landing. I think my brother knew – I'm not sure of this – but I think my brother knew that it would be broadcast in black and white. My brother convinced my parents get that color TV, which we enjoyed to watch Cleveland Indians baseball games and other things after that.

"Nonetheless, as I'm sure almost anybody of almost any age remembers, after watching that moon landing late at night on that July night, going outside and looking up at the moon and being private with our thoughts, wondering about these two Americans walking on the moon; wondering about the other American in the space capsule, not at that time able to walk on the moon as he was staying in the space capsule. And I remember too, seven years before Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, like most Americans, I watched John Glenn, the New Concorde, Ohio astronaut, become the first astronaut to orbit the Earth. Today, like then, NASA continues to capture our nation's imagination.

"While Neil Armstrong will forever be remembered as the Christopher Columbus for our time – he dedicated himself to landing on the moon – it was more than Neil Armstrong. It was more than his crew mates, Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin. It was more than the hundreds of men and women at mission control. From what is the NASA Research Center in Cleveland to the hundreds of scientists and researchers around the nation, the moon landing was about American know-how. The Apollo moon landing was about American collaborative success.

"As we look back, we see a different country in a different time, but with many of the same challenges as we struggle to pull ourselves out of the current economic downturn. We had a look at what role the government should play in space exploration. We must remember the billions of dollars of economic benefit that NASA has brought and is still bringing our nation. The myth that the federal government is incapable of doing great things is shattered when one thinks of achievements like the moon landing, not to mention Medicare and Social Security and all that we talked about.

"From the six Apollo landings to Skylab to the cooperation of the Soviet Union to the Hubble Telescope, NASA has touched and improved nearly every aspect of our way of life. Those who believe that government should sit on the sidelines need not look back 40 years, but can look at everything NASA has done, and what it continues to do today.

"Today, NASA, in many ways, is more important than ever. As we work toward a carbon-free economy, we forget that NASA was building the first large-scale windmills in the 1970's. Much of the early work – the early wind turbine technology development, was done at Plum Brook in Northern Ohio, near Sandusky, Ohio.

"The United States is in a sprint to lead the world in clean energy. NASA's alternative fuel research laboratory, its solar powered aircraft path finder, plus its solar space program are just three of the many NASA clean energy programs. We can create a carbon-free world,

and NASA can lead the way like it has in aeronautics and space flight.

"We must never forget the men and women at NASA and their work to put Apollo 11 on the moon. I'm proud to co-sponsor the bill that will give Congressional medals to Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, the second person to walk in the moon, Michael Collins, the pilot of the Apollo 11 Commission Air Module, and the first American to orbit the earth, John Glenn. The bill sponsor is Senator Nelson of Florida, an American hero in his own right, who has a long history of service to our nation and to NASA.

Today is a celebration of NASA, the Apollo mission, and a celebration of our country and humankind's ability to do great things. It is a celebration of reaching for the stars in every way."

For more information on Sen. Brown's work to promote NASA's innovation and position Ohio and our nation as a clean energy leader, please visit <http://brown.senate.gov/> or feel free to call his office at 202-224-2315.



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