

S 4814

ORBITS Act of 2022

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Science, Technology, Communications

Introduced: Sep 12, 2022

Current Status: Held at the desk.

Latest Action: Held at the desk. (Dec 22, 2022)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/4814>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Hickenlooper, John W. [D-CO]

Party: Democratic • **State:** CO • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Cantwell, Maria [D-WA]	D · WA		Sep 12, 2022
Sen. Lummis, Cynthia M. [R-WY]	R · WY		Sep 12, 2022
Sen. Wicker, Roger F. [R-MS]	R · MS		Sep 12, 2022

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Discharged From	Dec 22, 2022

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Science, Technology, Communications

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Orbital Sustainability Act of 2022 or the ORBITS Act of 2022

This bill directs specified agencies to take actions to remediate orbital debris (human-made space objects that are no longer in use and can harm orbiting satellites and on-orbit activities).

First, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) must

- publish and periodically update a list of orbital debris that pose the greatest immediate risk of harm to orbiting satellites and on-orbit activities,
- establish a demonstration program to foster the development of technologies to remediate the orbital debris on the list, and
- carry out other research and development activities to advance technologies for remediating orbital debris.

NASA (and other relevant agencies) may also contract for remediation services to support the commercial availability of such services.

Second, the National Space Council must update the *Orbital Debris Mitigation Standard Practices* within 90 days of the enactment of the bill and update them periodically thereafter. The updates must address matters including satellite constellations and other planned space systems, collision risks, and disposal of space systems after missions. The updates must inform (1) regulations of other agencies concerning orbital debris, and (2) bilateral and multilateral discussions with other countries concerning certain space activities.

Third, the Department of Commerce must facilitate the development of standard practices to coordinate on-orbit space traffic. Upon completion of the practices, Commerce and other federal departments must promote their adoption and use for space missions.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 22, 2022:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Dec 22, 2022:** Received in the House.
- **Dec 22, 2022:** Held at the desk.
- **Dec 21, 2022:** Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation discharged by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 21, 2022:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S9759)
- **Dec 21, 2022:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 21, 2022:** Passed Senate with an amendment by Unanimous Consent. (text of amendment in the nature of a substitute: S10024)
- **Sep 12, 2022:** Introduced in Senate
- **Sep 12, 2022:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

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