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The Space Economy in Figures (3)

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MEASURING THE IMPACTS OF GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN SPACE INFRASTRUCTURE
DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

This paper summarizes the methodology and findings of a 2010 study to estimate the economic impacts of NASA investment in commercial development. The intention of the study was to provide a credible, rigorous assessment of proposed NASA policies for lawmakers, media, and the general public. The study was performed with the cooperation of an industry organization that represents a particular class of space companies. Several forward projections were developed through coordination with industry members through this organization. These served as the basis for our impact projections and geographic distribution analysis. This paper includes a discussion of impact multipliers used in the industry for these types of assessments, their relative strengths and weaknesses, and their potential analytic flaws. Since there is no established, dedicated model for measuring the impacts of space activity, existing tools were modified to ensure rigor in the study. The results of this study are an important input into discussions of the ramifications of NASA policies on economic activity and employment in many communities in the United States.