

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Designating June 30, 2026 as “Asteroid Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KELLY (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. MORAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on

RESOLUTION

Designating June 30, 2026 as “Asteroid Day”.

Whereas asteroids and other near-Earth objects could strike Earth causing damage, injury, and loss of life;

Whereas asteroids are also a valuable resource for scientific exploration, offering insights into the origins of our solar system;

Whereas Asteroid Day, observed annually on June 30, raises public awareness about asteroids, their potential impact, and the importance of planetary defense;

Whereas June 30 commemorates the 1908 Tunguska event in Siberia, the largest recorded asteroid impact in modern history, which flattened more than 2,000 square kilometers of forest;

Whereas, on February 15, 2013, the Chelyabinsk asteroid entered Earth's atmosphere undetected and exploded in a meteor air burst over central Russia, releasing as much energy as 30 atomic bombs, and injuring more than 1,500 people;

Whereas Asteroid Day was established following the Chelyabinsk incident and recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in 2016, underscoring the global significance of risks near-Earth asteroids can pose;

Whereas the Association of Space Explorers, an international organization of astronauts and cosmonauts, has raised global awareness of asteroid impact hazards through initiatives such as the International Asteroid Warning Network and the Space Missions Planning Advisory Group;

Whereas the Vera C. Rubin Observatory, funded by the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy, is conducting the Legacy Survey of Space and Time and is expected to discover millions of unknown asteroids and solar system objects, expanding humanity's catalog of near-Earth objects and planetary defense;

Whereas the emerging field of asteroid resource utilization may inspire interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics;

Whereas asteroid detection, deflection, and exploration provide real-world educational opportunities, connecting scientific principles to the challenge of protecting Earth;

Whereas citizen science programs, amateur astronomy communities, and informal science education initiatives have meaningfully contributed to asteroid discovery and monitoring, demonstrating the value of public participation in planetary defense;

Whereas public polling has found that roughly 6 in 10 Americans consider monitoring potentially hazardous asteroids to be among the highest priorities of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (referred to in this preamble as “NASA”), reflecting broad and durable public support for planetary defense investment;

Whereas the United States plays a leading role in global efforts to detect, track, and mitigate near-Earth object threats;

Whereas NASA’s Planetary Defense Coordination Office leads the United States Government’s efforts to detect, track, and coordinate domestic and international responses to potentially hazardous near-Earth objects;

Whereas NASA’s Double Asteroid Redirection Test mission demonstrated for the first time that kinetic impact can alter the trajectory of an asteroid, representing a milestone in planetary defense;

Whereas NASA’s Near-Earth Object Surveyor mission, a space-based infrared telescope currently in development, is designed to accelerate the detection and characterization of potentially hazardous asteroids and comets that come within 30,000,000 miles of Earth;

Whereas the United Nations has designated 2029 the International Year of Asteroid Awareness and Planetary Defense, timed to coincide with the close approach of asteroid Apophis;

Whereas, in April 2029, asteroid Apophis will pass within approximately 20,000 miles of Earth, closer than many operational satellites, offering a rare opportunity to study an asteroid at close range through NASA’s OSIRIS-APEX mission;

Whereas the United States, through the Asteroids 2029 U.S. Node, coordinated by the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, is playing a leading role in the International Year of Asteroid Awareness and Planetary Defense by bringing together educators, scientists, and communities across disciplines and nations to advance the shared goal of protecting Earth from asteroid impact risks;

Whereas asteroid 2024 YR4, discovered in late 2024, posed one of the highest recorded probabilities of Earth impact of any known object, prompting coordinated monitoring that ruled out any threat to Earth in early 2026, demonstrating the importance of early detection and international coordination;

Whereas continued investment in asteroid detection, planetary defense research, and public awareness remains essential to protecting life on Earth; and

Whereas the timely, accurate, and secure sharing of asteroid detection data with governments and foreign partners is essential to emergency preparedness, scientific coordination, and global stability, including the ability to identify a near-Earth object event as non-hostile and distinguish it from other potential threats: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates June 30, 2026 as “Asteroid
3 Day”;

4 (2) encourages increased public awareness
5 about the risks posed by near-Earth objects and the
6 importance of asteroid research, detection, tracking,
7 and planetary defense; and

- 1 (3) supports continued efforts to improve capa-
- 2 bilities to identify and respond to such threats.