

To: Edward J. Weiler, Associate Administrator for Science Mission  
Directorate, NASA  
Jon A. Morse, Astrophysics Division Director, NASA

Cc: Wesley T. Huntress, Carnegie Institution of Washington, NAC  
Charles F. Kennel, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, NAC  
Carl Wieman, Office of Science and Technology Policy

Dear Dr. Weiler and Dr. Morse:

As members of the U.S. dark energy community, we strongly endorse the Astro2010 Decadal Survey recommendation of a Wide Field Infrared Survey Telescope (WFIRST) as the highest priority space astrophysics initiative for the coming decade. WFIRST will make indispensable contributions to understanding the origin of the accelerating expansion of the universe, which is the most profound puzzle in contemporary cosmology and perhaps in all of contemporary physics. WFIRST will enable a science program of extraordinary reach, and it will maintain the United States' leadership in space-based exploration of the cosmos.

European interest in a dark energy space mission offers the opportunity for a coordinated program that could have substantial benefits for both communities. This opportunity should be pursued in a manner consistent with the recommendations of Astro2010: in particular, the U.S. must maintain a leading role in a mission with the powerful technical capabilities, multi-pronged science program, and modest risk and cost that made WFIRST the top priority of the Decadal Survey.

We are pleased that NASA, through its call for members of a WFIRST science definition team, is proceeding rapidly to realize the WFIRST mission. The Decadal Survey represents the consensus view of the astronomical community, after a challenging process of making hard choices and prioritizing. This was the most careful analysis of technical risk and cost ever done for a Decadal Survey. The Survey report has been fully and enthusiastically endorsed by the American Astronomical Society. We strongly encourage you to implement WFIRST as an important national scientific priority for this decade.

Sincerely,  
Charles Baltay, Yale University  
Rachel Bean, Cornell University  
Charles L. Bennett, Johns Hopkins University  
Gary M. Bernstein, University of Pennsylvania

Susana Deustua, Space Telescope Science Institute  
Daniel J. Eisenstein, Harvard University  
Alexei V. Filippenko, University of California, Berkeley  
Karl Gebhardt, University of Texas  
Christopher M. Hirata, California Institute of Technology  
Dragan Huterer, University of Michigan  
Robert P. Kirshner, Harvard University  
Tod R. Lauer, National Optical Astronomy Observatory  
Eric V. Linder, University of California, Berkeley  
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Gary J. Melnick, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics  
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Joel Primack, University of California, Santa Cruz  
Adam G. Riess, Johns Hopkins University  
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David H. Weinberg, Ohio State University  
Edward L. Wright, University of California, Los Angeles