

**REMARKS FOR ADMINISTRATOR BOLDEN**

***"CELEBRATING JOHN GLENN'S LEGACY"***

**CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY**

**March 2, 2012**

Thank you, everyone, for your moving remarks. SEN Glenn, you inspire deep respect, admiration and affection in so many people. I think even those who don't know you have a sense of the steady, confident presence you have been from the earliest days of the space program.

NASA, and this country, will be forever grateful to you for your courage and the milestones you helped us achieve.

To those of you who were not walking the planet at the time SEN Glenn first flew to space, before hundreds of people had orbited our planet; before we'd landed on the moon and lived aboard the International Space Station for more than 11 years as we have now done; what John Glenn did was amazing.

First accomplishments always are, but SEN Glenn not only undertook this dangerous mission, he personified America's dreams.

It's been my pleasure to be at a couple of celebrations of SEN Glenn's career and accomplishments recently, and each time the positive energy he brought to the room lit it up.

That energy was something we could see even in the grainy television coverage that we sometimes got back in the 1960s.

We knew he was going to succeed and carry our banner to new heights and help us to reach our highest potential.

A couple of months ago, I had the pleasure of speaking about SEN John Glenn and the Apollo 11 crew at a ceremony in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, where they were awarded the high honor of the Congressional Gold Medal. Some real heavy hitters told us just how much SEN Glenn and all of the other space pioneers had moved them and helped shape their lives.

SEN Glenn's legacy is one of risk and accomplishment, of history created, and duty to country carried out under great pressure, with the whole world watching.

SEN Glenn, I can only aspire to a portion of your esteem as an astronaut, a Marine, and a statesman. Truly those of us who followed you into space are standing on your shoulders, and will be for generations to come as we travel to new destinations and try even harder things. It's a future that you helped make possible.

John Glenn flew for the first time in space 24 years before I did and then again four years after my last flight. All I can say is "Wow!"

In addition to SEN Glenn's historic first space flight, we are also grateful to him for his second space flight aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery and the research he helped us carry out on that mission.

I was in high school when John Glenn became the first American to orbit Earth. At the time, while I was caught up in the national excitement about that, I was focused more on my path ahead to the U.S. Naval Academy. Becoming a Marine like him was the farthest thing from my mind then. He is, after all, a distinguished veteran aviator of both World War II and the Korean War. Like becoming a Marine, flying was something I thought I would never do.

Looking back, however, I can see how his example -- of a military man who trained intensively to serve his country, then took the skills he'd gained and translated them into accomplishments far beyond what he could have anticipated in his career -- eventually influenced me as I followed his path into the Marine Corps and eventually to space and public service.

I don't plan to follow him into political life, but there, too, he excelled, and served his country in another venue, becoming the chief author of the 1978 Nonproliferation Act, the chairman of the Senate Government Affairs Committee and a member of the Foreign Relations and Armed Services committees and the Special Committee on Aging.

In the same spirit of innovation of the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo Programs, NASA now moves out on an exciting path forward where we will develop the capabilities to take humans to even more destinations in the solar system - where commercial companies will expand access to that rarefied area where those pioneering astronauts first ventured for America, and NASA can focus on those bigger, harder destinations as well as the science to peer beyond our solar system.

Today's space program is vital and alive. It is full of men and women who are passionately dedicated to space and keeping America the leader in its exploration and expanding John's legacy.

They're here in Ohio and across the nation and, yes, around the world, working on a global space exploration enterprise that John Glenn and his colleagues helped to make possible.

Now let's hear from the man himself. Please welcome Senator John Glenn - Officer of Marines, husband, father, statesman, true gentleman - the first American to orbit Earth. SEN Glenn...