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U.S. Senator John Sununu to Attend NASA Briefing at UNH's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space

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WHAT: U.S. Senator John Sununu will attend a NASA briefing at the University of New Hampshire's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS) to hear from scientists at the EOS Space Science Center about UNH's prominent historical and continuing role in NASA space science missions. A tour of space science facilities, including flight instrument assembly and space environment testing facilities, will be held. Instrumentation, such as the two ion mass spectrometers being built for the Solar-Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO) mission, will be highlighted.

WHEN: 2:30 – 3:30 p.m., Thursday, May 5, 2005.

WHERE: Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS), Morse Hall, Durham campus. Parking will be available behind Morse Hall, 39 College Road.

BACKGROUND: Senator Sununu, in his role as a member of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, has oversight responsibility for NASA. UNH scientists will provide details about past, present, and future NASA-funded work at the university, UNH's renowned standing in the national and international space science community, the educational value provided to students involved in research, development, and data analysis on the many NASA-related projects carried out at UNH, and the economic value that NASA projects bring to New Hampshire. For over 40 years, UNH has been involved in mission design, advanced instrument construction, and data analysis for more than 30 NASA space and Earth science missions. Over the years, UNH has consistently been ranked among the top U.S. schools in NASA funding.

Among the missions on which UNH has had a key role are the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory – one of NASA's "great observatories," the solar orbiting probe Ulysses, the four Cluster satellites that provide a three-dimensional picture of the Earth's magnetic shield, and the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO). Current missions include STEREO, scheduled for launch next year, and the Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX), which has a 2008 launch date and will study the edges of our solar system.

Editors: Media will have access to the briefing participants only during the tour of the Space Science Center from roughly 3 -3:30. UNH scientists involved in current and

upcoming NASA missions will be on hand after the tour to answer questions.

A photo is available for download at: http://www.unh.edu/news/img/popecki-sm.jpg
Caption: STEREO-PLASTIC Co-investigator Mark Popecki tests Flight Model #2 in the vacuum chamber at UNH's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space.