Welcome Endeavour!

It is a special day for all of us at the Johnson Space Center.

Endeavour's flyover of the city and its stopover here are a tribute to this community.

This is a great way to recognize, honor and thank the thousands of individuals – from space shuttle and JSC employees to the people within Houston and our many surrounding communities whose support was key to the space shuttles’ remarkable accomplishments during their unmatched three decades of service.

Just last week NASA recognized the 50th anniversary of Pres. Kennedy’s speech at Rice University where he called for the best and brightest to reach for the moon and forged the future of human space flight, Johnson Space Center and Houston.

We didn't stop at the moon. We built a space shuttle.
We built the International Space Station.

And, at this very moment, JSC is preparing to flight test the Orion spacecraft, designed to carry crew beyond Earth's orbit -- to an asteroid, or even Mars.

All fantastic vehicles.

The Space Shuttle was a workhorse that could launch, retrieve or repair satellites and build a space station.

It enabled us to achieve incredible accomplishments in space while opening the final frontier to women, minorities and schoolteachers.

Space Shuttle and Space Station.

Two engineering marvels.

It is easy to see the passion of those who devoted their energies to their success.

I see that same energy and commitment today at the Johnson Space Center.

NASA is ushering in an extraordinary chapter
in our nation’s story of exploration and

Johnson Space Center is again at the heart of that vision.

JSC is focused on the next great mission: deep space, a place no human has ventured.

As commercial partners work with NASA to take cargo and crew to the

Space Station, JSC is concentrating on the challenges of deep space travel.

And there are many.

Almost everything we’ve learned as we explore beyond Earth, as we send humans on long missions and take care of them, is applicable to us here on Earth.

Today’s medical offices, emergency rooms and intensive care units are filled with machines born of necessity during space travel, or were developed with contributions from research in space.

We even have better golf clubs, athletic shoes, swimsuits and cycling helmets thanks to NASA.
But that’s another story.

You are here today to witness the final ferry flight for the Space Shuttle program.

The modified 747 Shuttle Carrier Aircraft you see is carrying Endeavour to its new home at the California Science Center in Los Angeles.

Endeavour flew 25 missions, spent nearly 300 days in space and traveled more than 120 million miles.

Each of you who worked on this program, who supported this program, who had a family member or friend you encouraged, should feel very proud.

There’s a reason the first word heard from space is “Houston.”

That reason is you.

Thank you.