

Coupling, Energetics, and Dynamics of Atmospheric Regions

September 24, 2025

Dr. Joe Westlake

Director, Heliophysics Division

NASA Headquarters

Subject: Urgent Request to Sustain TIMED Operations

Dear Director Westlake,

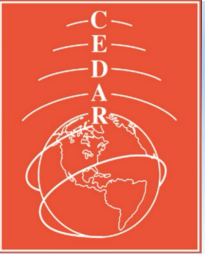
On behalf of the Coupling, Energetics, and Dynamics of Atmospheric Regions (CEDAR) community, I am writing to express our deep concern regarding the planned termination of the TIMED mission in the President's Budget Request. For over two decades, TIMED has provided the backbone of satellite observational data for the mesosphere and lower thermosphere through its suite of instruments: SABER, GUVI, TIDI, and SEE. These datasets are foundational—not only for heliophysics but also for atmospheric and space weather research across disciplines.

The TIMED datasets are unmatched in scope and impact. They have underpinned thousands of peer-reviewed studies, trained two generations of scientists, and supported NASA's mission to advance both fundamental science and applied forecasting. The primary mission cost the nation over \$250M in the early 2000s and it is not a prudent use of taxpayers' dollars to discontinue a mission that is generating valuable science at minimal operational expense. Continued support, even at modest levels, will ensure that the U.S. maintains leadership in understanding a key geospace region and avoids creating an irreparable observational gap.

The simple fact is this: without TIMED, the community loses its only continuous, global view of the mesosphere and lower thermosphere. We will be flying blind in a critical region of geospace that connects terrestrial weather with space weather in the near-Earth space environment and at a time when the number of LEO and VLEO satellites is increasing exponentially. Such a loss would have profound implications for numerical model development and validation, for the prediction of space weather effects on technology and society, and for increased understanding of the drivers of variability in the middle and upper atmosphere.

We fully recognize the difficult budgetary environment and the constraints posed by the President's Budget Request and the possibility of a Continuing Resolution that reflects those funding levels. Nevertheless, we urge you to consider the irreversible impact on science of deorbiting or terminating a healthy satellite and instrument suite that is still operating with excellent performance. Even a minimal level of funding, sufficient to sustain basic operations, would preserve the nation's ability to continue receiving critical data should resources become available in the future. With an operating budget of around \$2M/year, discontinuing the mission is not cost-effective especially considering that if GDC and/or DYNAMIC eventually are funded to fly, or an ITM MidEx is selected in the next round, it will be about 10 years before NASA ITM data become available.

We respectfully but urgently ask NASA to preserve the TIMED mission in the hope that either a public/private partnership can be developed to continue operations or the current, draconian cuts are ameliorated allowing for continued data collection. The scientific, societal,



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and strategic costs of losing this mission far outweigh the modest investment needed to maintain it.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering the voice of the CEDAR community in this decision.

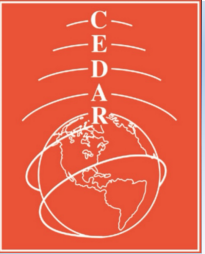
Sincerely,

V. Lynn Harvey

Chair, CEDAR Science Steering Committee (CSSC)

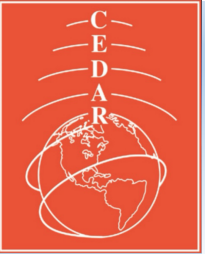
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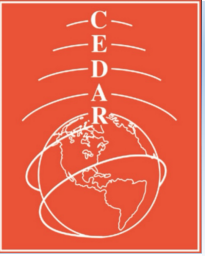
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