

SpaceX Claims it Can't Test Fire Rocket Due to Government Shutdown Despite Billions in Taxpayer Funding

 California-based SpaceX confirmed its CEO Elon Musk was being serious when he tweeted his plans to send his own car into space

AFP

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Despite receiving billions of dollars in government funding, Elon Musk's SpaceX is unable to perform a rocket test fire due to lack of

government assistance since the recent shutdown.

Engadget [reports](#) that SpaceX, the space exploration company founded by Tesla CEO Elon Musk, has been unable to perform the static fire test of their new Falcon Heavy rocket due to lack of ground support from the U.S. Air Force's 45th Space Wing and NASA following the recent government shutdown. The static fire test of the Falcon Heavy rocket would have consisted of firing all 27 of the rocket's engines as it is held down on a launch pad. This test is necessary to ensure all engines are operational before an actual rocket takeoff test which was set to happen at the end of January.

A SpaceX spokesperson told Engadget in a statement:

We remain hopeful that the Congress will quickly resolve their differences and put our partners in the Air Force and NASA back to doing their important work as soon as possible. This shutdown impacts SpaceX's Falcon Heavy demonstration, which is critical for future NSS missions. It also impacts critical missions for our customers, including important international allies scheduled to launch shortly from Cape Canaveral and Vandenberg Air Force Base, as well as upcoming missions this spring to resupply the International Space Station.

Despite being a private company, SpaceX requires government assistance for nearly all of their rocket test launches and static fires. Three of Elon Musk's companies, Tesla Motors, SolarCity, and SpaceX, have also received [approximately](#) \$4.9 billion in funding from the U.S. government. The Los Angeles Times [reported](#) on SpaceX's funding saying "On a smaller scale, SpaceX, Musk's rocket company, cut a deal for about \$20 million in economic development subsidies from Texas to construct a launch facility there. (Separate from incentives, SpaceX has won more than \$5.5 billion in government contracts from NASA and the U.S. Air Force.)"

SpaceX had planned to continue the test fire despite the government shutdown but found themselves unable to operate without the assistance of the U.S. Air Force's 45th Space Wing. SpaceX told Engadget that all launch operations will be delayed until the civilian employees of the 45th Space Wing return to work.

Update — Citizens for the Republic, a PAC started by Ronald Reagan which is running an initiative called "Stop Elon from Failing Again" provided this comment to Breitbart Tech:

"Elon Musk is a phony and a fake. He is stealing billions from taxpayers because he gets good press from his fellow Millennials and because of his Washington lobbyists. Despite billions in profits, Musk is leaning so heavily on government subsidies and support that he can't even test an engine without the taxpayer holding their hand. This is a lose-lose situation. We can't continue to waste large amounts of taxpayer money on Elon Musk's failed schemes. There needs to be a congressional investigation of Elon's Musk's continued waste and continued failures."

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