

# Trump asks SpaceX to 'go get' two stranded ISS astronauts. They're not stranded

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SpaceX founder Elon Musk [announced plans](#) to bring home two NASA astronauts who arrived at the International Space Station [on Boeing's Starliner](#) capsule "as soon as possible," at the request of President Trump. Musk, the head of President Trump's Department of Government Efficiency, has [played a crucial role](#) in Trump's re-election campaign and [the early days](#) of the President's second term in office.

"I have just asked Elon Musk and SpaceX to "go get" the 2 brave astronauts who have been virtually abandoned in space by the Biden Administration," Trump wrote [on Truth Social](#). "Good luck Elon!!!"

The astronauts Musk and Trump are presumably referencing are NASA's Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams. NASA has long said the crew isn't "stranded" and a plan to return them safely to Earth has been [in place for months](#). In fact, NASA astronauts always train for lengthy missions and medical experts have kept a watchful eye on the health of the two during their extended stay.

The astronauts arrived at the International Space Station on Boeing's Starliner spacecraft after [launching from Florida's Cape Canaveral](#) in June 2024. The test flight was supposed to last only eight days. But engineers at NASA and Boeing [uncovered issues](#) with the spacecraft's propulsion system, and [decided to return](#) the vehicle back to Earth without a crew. The two have remained at the station ever since.

Wilmore and Williams are slated to fly home on [SpaceX's Crew-9 capsule](#), which is currently docked to the ISS. It was sent up with only two crewmembers — a move to make room for Wilmore and Williams to return in the capsule with them next month.

But NASA recently [announced a delay](#) in Crew-10, which would bring Crew-9's replacement to the station, to late March. NASA flies a new crew to the ISS before returning the previous one, maintaining adequate staffing at the station.

Crew-10 will utilize a brand new Dragon capsule for the mission, and SpaceX's efforts to prep the spacecraft for the mission have caused a delay in getting the vehicle to Florida's Space Coast ahead of the launch.

"NASA and SpaceX are expeditiously working to safely return the agency's SpaceX Crew-9 astronauts Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore as soon as

practical, while also preparing for the launch of Crew-10 to complete a handover between expeditions," Cheryl Warner, a NASA spokeswoman said on Wednesday, although there were no additional details on how that plan may change after the comments by Musk and Trump

NASA could return Wilmore and Williams at any time, as their capsule is safe to come home now — but doing so would leave the station understaffed and jeopardize the science and maintenance being performed aboard the station.

SpaceX has already been awarded contracts for upcoming astronaut missions on the schedule. It's unclear if NASA would have to pay Musk's company for an additional flight to return the crew early.

Retrieved February 5, 2025, from [Trump asks SpaceX to 'go get' two stranded ISS astronauts : NPR](#)

## **Stranded NASA astronauts say being stuck in space is just part of the job**

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The NASA astronauts who were left stranded on the International Space Station because of technical issues with their spacecraft are keeping in good spirits — even planning to vote in November — the pair revealed in a space to Earth call with the media on Friday.

“We are pushing the edges of the envelope in everything that we do. And it is not easy,” mission commander Butch Wilmore said. “It's not an easy thing to do, but that's not why we do it. Maybe we do it because it's hard.” Suni Williams, the mission's pilot, and Wilmore were scheduled to spend just over a week aboard the ISS [when they launched](#) into the cosmos on June 5.

Retrieved February 5, 2025, from [Stranded NASA astronauts plan to vote from space : NPR](#)