

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1496

To upgrade the communications service used by the National Weather Service,
and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 9, 2023

Mr. FEENSTRA (for himself, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. MILLER of Ohio, Mrs. HINSON, Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. JACKSON of North Carolina, Ms. ROSS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. SORESENSEN, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Mrs. FOUSHEE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To upgrade the communications service used by the National
Weather Service, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Weather
5 Service Communications Improvement Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Weather Research
8 and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8541

1 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following
2 new section:

3 **“SEC. 415. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COMMUNICA-**
4 **TIONS.**

5 “(a) SYSTEM UPGRADE.—The Director of the Na-
6 tional Weather Service shall improve the instant mes-
7 saging service used by National Weather Service personnel
8 by implementing a commercial off-the-shelf communica-
9 tions solution hosted on the public cloud to serve as a re-
10 placement for the communications system in use as of the
11 date of the enactment of this section (commonly referred
12 to as ‘NWSChat’). Such communications solution shall
13 satisfy requirements set forth by the Director to best ac-
14 commodate future growth and perform successfully with
15 increased numbers of users.

16 “(b) FUNDING.—From amounts made available for
17 Operations, Research, and Facilities, the Director of the
18 National Weather Service shall allocate up to \$3,000,000
19 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2027 to carry out
20 subsection (a).

21 “(c) LIMITATION ON FUNDING.—Amounts made
22 available to carry out subsection (a) shall be derived from
23 amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to the
24 National Weather Service.”.

1 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
2 in section 1(b) of the Weather Research and Forecasting
3 Innovation Act of 2017 is amended by inserting after the
4 item relating to section 414 the following new item:

“Sec. 415. National Weather Service communications.”.

