ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote was ordered, or on which the vote occurs under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed petition will be taken later.

WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and convene the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 353) to improve the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s weather research through a focused program of investment on affordable and attainable advances in observations, computational, and modeling capabilities to support sustained improvements in weather forecasting and predictability of high impact weather events, to expand commercial opportunities for the provision of weather data, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017.”

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

SEC. 1. Short title; table of contents.
SEC. 2. Definitions.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING IMPROVEMENT

Sec. 101. Public safety priority.
Sec. 102. Weather research and forecasting innovation.
Sec. 103. Tornado warning improvement and extension program.
Sec. 104. Hurricane forecast improvement program.
Sec. 105. Weather research and development planning.
Sec. 106. Observing system planning.
Sec. 107. Observing system simulation experiments.
Sec. 108. Annual report on computing resources prioritization.
Sec. 109. United States Weather Research program.
Sec. 110. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE II—SUBSEASONAL AND SEASONAL FORECASTING INNOVATION

Sec. 201. Improving subseasonal and seasonal forecasts.

TITLE III—WEATHER SATELLITE AND DATA INNOVATION

Sec. 301. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration satellite and data management.
Sec. 302. Commercial weather data.
Sec. 303. Unnecessary duplication.

TITLE IV—FEDERAL WEATHER COORDINATION

Sec. 401. Environmental Information Services Working Group.

Sec. 402. Interagency weather research and forecast innovation coordination.
Sec. 403. Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and National Weather Service exchange program.
Sec. 404. Visiting fellows at National Weather Service.
Sec. 405. Warning coordination meteorologists at weather forecast offices of National Weather Service.
Sec. 406. Improving National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration communication of hazardous weather and warning events.
Sec. 407. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Ready All Hazards Award Program.
Sec. 408. Department of Defense weather forecasting activities.
Sec. 409. National Weather Service; operations and workforce analysis.
Sec. 411. Weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.
Sec. 412. Weather enterprise outreach.
Sec. 413. Hurricane hunter aircraft.
Sec. 414. Study on gaps in NEXRAD coverage and recommendations to address such gaps.

TITLE V—TSUNAMI WARNING, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2017

Sec. 501. Short title.
Sec. 502. References to the Tsunami Warning and Education Act.
Sec. 503. Expansion of purposes of Tsunami Warning and Education Act.
Sec. 504. Modification of tsunami forecasting and warning program.
Sec. 505. Modification of national tsunami hazard mitigation program.
Sec. 506. Modification of tsunami research program.
Sec. 507. Global tsunami warning and mitigation network.
Sec. 508. Tsunami science and technology advisory panel.
Sec. 509. Reports.
Sec. 510. Authorization of appropriations.
Sec. 511. Outreach responsibilities.
Sec. 512. Repeal of duplicate provisions of law.

SECT. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) SEASONAL.—The term “seasonal” means the time range between 3 months and 2 years.

(2) STATE.—The term “State” means a State, territory, or possession of the United States, including a Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia.

(3) SUBSEASONAL.—The term “subseasonal” means the time range between 2 weeks and 3 months.

(4) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term “Under Secretary” means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

(5) WEATHER INDUSTRY AND WEATHER ENTERPRISE.—The terms “weather industry” and “weather enterprise” are interchangeable in this Act, and include individuals and organizations from public, private, and academic sectors that contribute to the research, development, and production of weather forecast products, and primary consumers of these weather forecast products.
SEC. 102. WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING INNOVATION.

(a) PROGRAM.—The Assistant Administrator for the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research shall develop and implement a program to develop and to establish a process to sunset outdated and expensive satellite and weather research and development capabilities for the National Weather Service and to deploy new, regional, and national cloud-resolving models; and to improve the forecasting of timing, track, intensity, and severity of high impact weather events that endanger life and property.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—The program described in subsection (a) shall focus on the following activities:

(1) Improving the fundamental understanding of weather and ocean dynamics, including cloud microphysical, precipitation, and boundary layer processes, and the use of innovative, dual-polarization, phased-array technologies;

(2) Improving the understanding of the public response to warnings and forecasts of high impact weather events that endanger life and property;

(3) Research and development, and transfer of knowledge, technologies, and applications to the National Weather Service and other appropriate agencies and entities, including the United States weather industry and academic partners, related to:

(A) advanced radar, radar networking technologies, and other ground-based technologies, including those emphasizing rapid, fine-scale sensing of the surface layer and lower troposphere, and the use of innovative, dual-polarization, phased-array technologies;

(B) advanced observing systems;

(C) high performance computing and information technology and wireless communication networks;

(D) advanced numerical weather prediction systems and forecasting tools and techniques that improve the forecasting of timing, track, intensity, and severity of high impact weather, including through:

(i) the development of more effective mesoscale models;

(ii) more effective use of existing, and the development of new, regional and national cloud-resolving models;

(iii) enhanced global weather models; and

(iv) integrated assessment models;

(E) quantitative assessment tools for measuring the impact and value of data and observing systems, including Observing System Simulation Experiments (as described in section 103), in support of a national weather research and in consultation with the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Under Secretary shall submit to Congress a description of current and planned activities under this section.

SEC. 103. TORNADO WARNING IMPROVEMENT AND EXTENSION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In general, in collaboration with the United States weather industry and academic partners, shall establish a tornado warning improvement and extension program.

(b) GOAL.—The goal of such program shall be to reduce the loss of life and economic losses from tornades through the development and extension of accurate, effective, and timely tornado predictions, forecasts, and warnings, including the prediction of tornadoes beyond 1 hour in advance.

(c) PROGRAM PLAN.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, in coordination with the Director of the National Weather Service, shall develop a program plan that details the specific research, development, and technology transfer activities, as well as corresponding resources and timelines, necessary to achieve the program goal.

(d) ANNUAL BUDGET FOR PLAN SUBMITTAL.—Following completion of the plan, the Under Secretary, with the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and in coordination with the Director of the National Weather Service, shall, not less frequently than once each year, submit to Congress a proposed budget corresponding with the activities identified in the plan.

SEC. 104. HURRICANE FORECAST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with the United States weather industry and such academic entities as the National Science Foundation, the United States weather industry, and academic partners, shall conduct a program to develop and extend hurricane forecasting capabilities to protect life and property to the maximum extent practicable;

(b) GOAL.—The goal of the project maintained under subsection (a) shall be to develop and extend hurricane forecasting capabilities to protect life and property to the maximum extent practicable;

(c) PROGRAM—Plan.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and in consultation with the Director of the National Weather Service, shall develop a plan for the project maintained under subsection (a) that details the specific research, development, and technology transfer activities, as well as corresponding resources and timelines, necessary to achieve the goal set forth in subsection (b).

SEC. 105. WEATHER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING.

Not later than the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Under Secretary shall conduct a weather research and development planning process to ensure that the National Weather Service and the Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services, shall issue a research and development and research to operations plan to restore and maintain United States leadership in numerical weather prediction and to meet the operational weather forecasting mission of the National Weather Service to achieve a weather-ready Nation;

(a) program.—The description shall include:

(1) the forecasting skill and technology goals, objectives, and performance metrics, weighted to meet the operational weather forecasting mission of the National Weather Service to achieve a weather-ready Nation;

(b) implementation.—The program shall be implemented jointly and in coordination with the Director of the National Weather Service and the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research shall collaborate with and support the non-Federal weather research community, which includes institutions of higher education, private entities, and governmental organizations, by making funds available through competitive grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements.
(2) evaluate and compare observing system design options; and
(3) assess the relative capabilities and costs of various observing systems and combinations of observing systems, providing data necessary to protect life and property.

c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Observing System Simulation Experiments—

(1) shall be conducted prior to the acquisition of major Government-owned or Government-leased operational observing systems, including polar-orbiting and geostationary satellite systems, with a lifecycle cost of more than $500,000,000; and
(2) shall be conducted prior to the purchase of any major new commercially provided data with a lifecycle cost of more than $500,000,000.

d) PRIORITY OBSERVING SYSTEM SIMULATION EXPERIMENTS.—

(1) GLOBAL NAVIGATION SATELLITE SYSTEM RADIO OCCULTATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research shall complete an Observing System Simulation Experiment to assess the value of data from Global Navigation Satellite System Radio Occultation.

(2) GEOSTATIONARY HYPERSPECTRAL SOUNDER GLOBAL OBSERVING SYSTEMS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research shall complete an Observing System Simulation Experiment to assess the value of data from a geostationary hyperspectral sounder global constellation.

e) RESULTS.—Upon completion of all Observing System Simulation Experiments, the Assistant Administrator shall make available to the public the results of the assessment of related private and public sector weather data sourcing options, including their availability, affordability, and cost-effectiveness. Such assessments shall be developed in accordance with section 59093 of title 51, United States Code.

SEC. 108. ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPUTING RESOURCES PRIORITY-RATION.

Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Under Secretary, acting through the Chief Information Officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and in coordination with the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the Director of the National Weather Service, shall prepare and make publicly available a report that explains how the Under Secretary intends—

(1) to continually support upgrades to pursue the fastest, most powerful, and cost-effective high performance computing technologies in support of high priority prediction missions;
(2) to ensure a balance between the research to operations requirements to develop the next generation of regional and global models as well as highly reliable operational models;
(3) to take advantage of advanced development concepts to, as appropriate, make next generation weather prediction models available in beta-test mode to operational forecasters, the United States weather industry, and partners in academic and Government research; and
(4) to use existing computing resources to improve advanced research and operational weather prediction.

SEC. 109. UNITED STATES WEATHER RESEARCH PROGRAM.


(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(C) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5) submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, not less frequently than once each year, a report, including—

(A) a list of ongoing research projects;

(B) project goals and a point of contact for each project;

(C) the five projects related to weather observations, short-term weather, or seasonal forecasts within Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research that are closest to operationalization;

(D) for each project referred to in subparagraph (C)—

(i) the potential benefit;

(ii) any barrier to operationalization; and

(iii) the plan for operationalization, including which line office will financially support the project and how much the line office intends to spend;

(6) establish teams with staff from the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the National Weather Service to oversee the operationalization of research products developed by the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; and

(7) develop mechanisms for research priorities of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research to be informed by the relevant line offices within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the relevant user community, and the weather enterprise; and

(8) develop an internal mechanism to track the progress of each project within the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and mechanisms to terminate a project that is not adequately progressing;

(9) develop and implement a system to track whether extramural research grant goals were accomplished;

(10) provide facilities for products developed by the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research to be tested in operational simulations, such as test beds; and

(11) encourage academic collaboration with the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the National Weather Service by facilitating visiting scholars.”;

(2) in subsection (b), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “No later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act,” and inserting “The”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(C) SUBSEASONAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘subseasonal’ means the time range between 2 weeks and 2 seasons.”

SEC. 110. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) FISCAL YEARS 2017 AND 2018.—For each of fiscal years 2017 and 2018, there are authorized to be appropriated to Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research—

(1) $111,516,000 to carry out this title, of which—

(A) $85,758,000 is authorized for weather laboratories and cooperative institutes; and

(B) $25,758,000 is authorized for weather and air chemistry research programs; and

(2) an additional amount of $20,000,000 for the joint technology transfer initiative described in section 102(b)(4).

(b) LIMITATION.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out this title and the amendments made by this title.

TITLE II—SUBSEASONAL AND SEASONAL FORECASTING INNOVATION

SEC. 201. IMPROVING SUBSEASONAL AND SEASONAL FORECASTS.

Section 1762 of the National Weather Service Act of 1965 (Public Law 99-198; 15 U.S.C. 313 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “(a)” and inserting “(a)”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “(b)” and inserting “(b)”. SEC. 202. REPORTS.

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(d) FUNCTIONS.—The Under Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Weather Service and the heads of such other programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the Under Secretary considers appropriate, shall—

(1) collect and utilize information in order to make usable, reliable, and timely foundational forecasts of subseasonal and seasonal temperature and precipitation;

(2) leverage existing research and models from the weather enterprise to improve the forecasts under paragraph (1); and

(3) determine and provide information on how the forecasted conditions under paragraph (1) may impact—

(A) the number and severity of droughts, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, heat waves, cold waves, winter storms, high impact weather, or other relevant natural disasters;

(B) snowpack; and

(C) sea ice conditions; and

(4) develop an Internet clearinghouse to provide the forecasts under paragraph (1) and the information under paragraphs (1) and (3) on both national and regional levels.

(f) COMMUNICATION.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall provide the forecasts under paragraph (1) of subsection (c) and the information on their impacts under paragraph (3) to the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security to determine the highest priority subseasonal and seasonal forecast needs to enhance national security.

(g) FORECAST COMMUNICATION COORDINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall foster effective communication, understanding, and use of the forecasts by the intended users of the information described in subsection (d). This may include assistance of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to enhance local or regional dissemination of the forecasts through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s cooperative institutes, the National Weather Service, and other public or private entities engaged in planning and preparedness, such as National Weather Service Core partners at the Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local levels of government.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—For each State that requests assistance under this subsection, the Under Secretary may—

(A) provide funds to support an individual in that State;

(B) serve as a liaison among the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, other Federal departments and agencies, the weather enterprise, the States, and relevant interests within that State; and

(i) to serve as a liaison among the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, other Federal departments and agencies, the weather enterprise, the States, and relevant interests within that State; and

(ii) to receive the forecasts and information under subsection (c) and disseminate the forecasts and information throughout the State, including to county and tribal governments; and

(B) require matching funds of at least 50 percent from the State, a university, a nongovernmental organization, a trade association, or the private sector.

(3) LIMITATION.—Assistance to an individual State under this subsection shall not exceed $100,000 in a fiscal year.

(h) COOPERATION FROM OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Each Federal department and agency that cooperates with the Under Secretary in carrying out this section.
TITLE III—WEATHER SATELLITE AND DATA INNOVATION

SEC. 301. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION SATELLITE AND DATA MANAGEMENT.

(a) SHORT-TERM MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATIONS.—

(1) MICROSATELITE CONSTELLATIONS.—In general.—The Secretary shall ensure that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration manages and operates at least nine microsatellite constellations for environmental monitoring and data collection, with launch dates extending through the year 2022. Each constellation shall provide data on marine, atmospheric, and oceanographic conditions in regions that are not adequately covered by other satellite systems or through in situ observations.

(b) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than once each year until the Under Secretary has completed and operationalized the program described in subparagraph (A) pursuant to such recommendations, the Under Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the status of the efforts of the Under Secretary to carry out such subparagraph.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, out of funds appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 302. COMMERCIAL WEATHER DATA.

(a) DATA AND HOSTED SATELLITE PAYLOADS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Commerce may enter into agreements for—

(1) the purchase of weather data through contracts with commercial providers; and

(2) the placement of weather satellite instruments on cohosted government or private payloads.

(b) STRATEGY.—In general.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and to Congress a report on the status of the efforts of the Under Secretary to carry out this section.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The strategy shall include—

(A) an analysis of financial or other benefits to the Government or the other organization.

(B) the purchase or operation of a weather satellite that will provide improved environmental observations that balance essential and nonessential, and private and nonprivate sources, and space-based and Earth-based sources.

(C) DEADLINE AND REPORT.—In carrying out the study under subparagraph (A), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall complete and transmit the findings of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to Congress no later than 2 years after the date on which the Administrator submits a report to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under paragraph (1) of such paragraph with the National Academy of Sciences on terms acceptable to the Under Secretary, the Under Secretary shall seek to enter into such an agreement with another appropriate organization that—

(i) is not part of the Federal Government;

(ii) operates as a not-for-profit entity;

(iii) has expertise and objectivity comparable to that of the National Academy of Sciences.

(B) TREATMENT.—If the Under Secretary enters into an agreement with another organization described in subparagraph (A), any reference in this subsection to the National Academy of Sciences shall be treated as a reference to the other organization.

(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, out of funds appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, such sums as may be necessary to carry out this Act.

SEC. 303. WEATHER SATELLITE AND DATA MANAGEMENT.

(a) SHORT-TERM MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATIONS.—

(1) MICROSATELITE CONSTELLATIONS.—In general.—The Secretary shall ensure that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration manages and operates at least nine microsatellite constellations for environmental monitoring and data collection, with launch dates extending through the year 2022. Each constellation shall provide data on marine, atmospheric, and oceanographic conditions in regions that are not adequately covered by other satellite systems or through in situ observations.

(b) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than once each year until the Under Secretary has completed and operationalized the program described in subparagraph (A) pursuant to such recommendations, the Under Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the status of the efforts of the Under Secretary to carry out such subparagraph.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, out of funds appropriated to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.
States weather industry and the public continue to have access to information critical to their work; and

(2) In accordance with section 5092 of title 51, United States Code, methods to address potential termination liability or cancellation costs associated with weather data or service contracts;

(3) An identification of any changes needed in the requirements development and approval processes of the Department of Commerce to facilitate effective and efficient implementation of such strategy;

(3) AUTHORITY FOR AGREEMENTS.—The Assistant Administrator for National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Services may enter into multiyear agreements necessary to carry out the strategy developed under this subsection.

(c) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) CRITERIA.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall publish data and metadata standards and specifications for space-based commercial weather data, including radio occultation data, and, as soon as possible, geostationary hyperspectral sounder data.

(2) PILOT CONTRACTS.—

(A) CONTRACTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall, through an open competition, enter into at least one pilot contract with one or more private sector entities capable of providing data that comply with standards and specifications set by the Under Secretary for providing commercial weather data in a manner that allows the Under Secretary to calibrate and evaluate the data for its use in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration meteorological models.

(B) ASSESSMENT OF DATA VIABILITY.—Not later than the date that is 3 years after the date on which a private entity enters into a contract under subparagraph (A), the Under Secretary shall assess and submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives the results of a determination of the extent to which data provided under the contract entered into under subparagraph (A) meet the criteria published under paragraph (1) and the extent to which the pilot program has demonstrated:

(i) the viability of assimilating the commercially provided data into National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration meteorological models;

(ii) whether, and by how much, the data add value to weather forecasts; and

(iii) the accuracy, quality, timeliness, validity, reliability, and the physical and information technology security, and cost-effectiveness of obtaining commercial weather data from private sector providers.

(3) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For each of fiscal years 2017 through 2020, there are authorized to be appropriated funds and employment of personnel to carry out the strategy developed under this Act.

SEC. 401. ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SERVICES WORKING GROUP.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science Advisory Board shall continue to maintain a standing working group on Environmental Information Services Working Group (in this section referred to as the “Working Group”)—

(1) to provide advice for prioritizing weather research initiatives; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to produce real improvement in weather forecasting;

(2) to provide advice on existing or emerging technologies or techniques that can be found in private industry or the research community that could be incorporated into forecasting at the National Weather Service to improve forecasting skill;

(3) to identify opportunities to improve—

(A) communications between weather forecasters, Federal, State, local, tribal, and other emergency management personnel, and the public; and

(B) communications and partnerships among the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the private and academic sectors; and

(4) to address such other matters as the Science Advisory Board requests of the Working Group.

(b) COMPOSITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Working Group shall be composed of leading experts and innovators from all relevant fields of science and engineering including atmospheric chemistry, atmospheric physics, meteorology, social science, risk communications, electrical engineering, and computer sciences. In carrying out this section, the Working Group may organize into subpanels.

(2) NUMBER.—The Working Group shall be composed of no fewer than 15 members. Nominees for the Working Group may be submitted by any of the organizations listed in clause (b)(3). The Working Group may choose a chair (or co-chairs) from among their number with approval by the Science Advisory Board.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Working Group shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a copy of such report.

SEC. 402. INTERAGENCY WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECAST INNOVATION CO-ORDINATION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall establish an Interagency Committee for Advancing Weather Services to improve coordination of relevant weather research and forecast innovation activities across the Federal Government. The Interagency Committee shall—

(1) include participation from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and its constituent agencies, the National Science Foundation, and such other agencies involved in weather forecasting research as the President determines are appropriate;

(2) identify and prioritize top forecast needs and coordinate those needs against budget requests and program initiatives across participating offices and agencies; and

(3) share information regarding operational needs and forecasting improvements across relevant agencies.

(b) FURTHER COORDINATION.—The Federal Coordinator for Meteorology shall serve as a co-chair of this panel.

(c) OFFICE OF OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH VISITING FELLOWS AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the Director of National Weather Service may establish a program to detail Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research personnel to the National Weather Service and National Weather Service personnel to the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.

(b) GOAL.—The goal of this program is to enhance forecasting innovation through regular, direct interaction between the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research’s world-class scientists and the National Weather Service’s operational staff.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The program shall allow up to 10 Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research staff and National Weather Service staff to spend up to 1 year on detail. Candidates shall be jointly selected by the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and the Director of the National Weather Service.

(d) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Under Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the House and the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on participation in such program and shall highlight any innovations that come from this interaction.

SEC. 403. OFFICE OF OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH VISITING FELLOWS AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Weather Service may establish a program to host postdoctoral fellows and academic researchers at any of the National Centers for Environmental Prediction.

(b) GOAL.—This program shall be designed to provide direct interaction between forecasters and talented academic and private sector researchers in an effort to bring innovation to forecasting tools and techniques at the National Weather Service.

(c) SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT.—Such fellows shall be competitively selected and appointed for a term not to exceed 1 year.

SEC. 404. VISITING FELLOWS AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE.

(a) DESIGNATION OF WARNING COORDINATION METEOROLOGISTS.—

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may place a warning coordination meteorologist designated under subsection (a) with a State or local emergency manager if the Director considers doing so is necessary or convenient to carry out those responsibilities.

(2) TREATMENT.—If the Director determines that the placement of a warning coordination meteorologist placed with a State or local emergency manager under paragraph (1) is near a weather forecast office of the National Weather Service, such placement shall be treated as designation of the warning coordination meteorologist at such weather forecast office for purposes of subsection (a).

SEC. 406. IMPROVING NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMUNICATION OF HAZARDOUS WEATHER AND WATER EVENTS.

(a) PURPOSE OF SYSTEM.—For purposes of the assessment required by subsection (b)(1)(A), the purpose of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration system for issuing watches and warnings regarding hazardous weather and water events shall be risk communication to the general public that informs action to prevent loss of life and property.

(b) ASSESSMENT OF SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry out the responsibilities required by this section.

(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), consistent with the analysis described in section 409, and in order to increase impact-based decision support services, each warning coordination meteorologist designated under subsection (a) shall—

(A) be responsible for providing service to the geographic area of responsibility covered by the weather forecast office at which the warning coordination meteorologist is employed to help ensure that users of products of the National Weather Service can respond effectively to improve outcomes from weather events;

(B) liaise with users of products and services of the National Weather Service, such as the public, media outlets, users in the aviation, marine, and agricultural communities, and forestry, and management interests, to evaluate the adequacy and usefulness of the products and services of the National Weather Service;

(C) collaborate with such weather forecast offices and State, local, and tribal government agencies as the Director considers appropriate in developing, proposing, and implementing plans to develop, modify, or tailor products and services of the National Weather Service to improve the usefulness of such products and services;

(D) ensure the maintenance and accuracy of severe weather call lists, appropriate office severe weather policy or procedures, and other severe weather or dissemination methodologies or strategies; and

(E) work closely with State, local, and tribal emergency management agencies and other agencies in emergency management, to ensure a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness and response effort.

(2) OTHER STAFF.—The Director may assign a responsibility set forth in paragraph (1) to such other staff as the Director considers appropriate to carry out such responsibility.

(d) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), a warning coordination meteorologist designated under subsection (a) may—

(A) work with a State agency to develop plans for promoting more effective use of products and services of the National Weather Service throughout the State;

(B) identify priority community preparedness objectives; and

(C) develop plans to meet the objectives identified under paragraph (2), and

(D) conduct severe weather event preparedness planning and citizen education efforts with and through various State, local, and tribal government agencies and other emergency management-related organizations.

(2) OTHER STAFF.—The Director may assign a responsibility set forth in paragraph (1) to such other staff as the Director considers appropriate to carry out such responsibility.

(e) PLACEMENT WITH STATE AND LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this section, the Director of the National Weather Service Agency, the Office of Personnel Management, and the Under Secretary shall coordinate and consult with agencies, departments, or offices that provide other early warning tools or warnings system for Government and emergency management-related organizations.

(f) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall, based on the assessment required by subsection (b)(1)(A), make such recommendations to Congress to improve the system as the Under Secretary considers necessary—

(A) to improve the system for issuing watches and warnings regarding hazardous weather and water events; and

(B) to support efforts to satisfy research needs to enable future improvements to such system.

(2) REQUIREMENTS REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall ensure that any recommendation that the Under Secretary considers a major change—

(A) is validated by social and behavioral science using a generalizable sample;

(B) accounts for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

(C) accounts for the differences between types of weather and water hazards;

(D) responds to the needs of Federal, State, and local government partners and media partners; and

(E) accounts for necessary changes to Federal operational watch and warning propagation and dissemination infrastructure and protocols.

(d) WATCHES AND WARNINGS DEFINED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), in this section, the terms “watch” and “warning”, with respect to a hazardous weather and water event, mean products issued by the Administration, intended for consumption by general public or general public to the potential for or presence of the event and to inform action to prevent loss of life and property.

(2) EXCLUSION.—In this section, the terms “watch” and “warning” do not include technical or specialized meteorological and hydrological forecasts, outlooks, or model guidance products.

SEC. 407. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION WEATHER READY ALL HAZARDS AWARD PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM.—The Director of the National Weather Service is authorized to establish the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Ready All Hazards Award Program. This award program shall provide annual awards to honor individuals or organizations that use or provide National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather and water products, services, or applications that enable future improvements to such system and focus on reducing the risk of public safety and health losses associated with severe weather or other hazardous conditions.

(b) GOAL.—This award program shall focus on reducing the risk of public safety and health losses associated with severe weather or other hazardous conditions.

(c) NOMINATIONS.—Nominations for this award shall be made annually by the Weather

SEC. 408. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION IMPROVING COMMUNICATION OF HAZARDOUS WEATHER AND WATER EVENTS.
SEC. 410. REPORT ON CONTRACT POSITIONS AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the use of contractors at the National Weather Service for the most recently completed fiscal year.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) the total number of full-time equivalent employees at the National Weather Service, disaggregated by each equivalent level of the General Schedule;

(2) the total number of full-time equivalent contractors at the National Weather Service, disaggregated by each equivalent level of the General Schedule that most closely approximates their duties;

(3) the total number of vacant positions at the National Weather Service on the date before the date of enactment of this Act, disaggregated by each equivalent level of the General Schedule that most closely approximates their duties; and

(4) the five most common positions filled by full-time equivalent contractors at the National Weather Service that most closely approximate the duties of such positions.

(5) Of the positions identified under paragraph (4), the percentage of full-time equivalent contractors in those positions that have held a prior position at the National Weather Service of another entity in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(6) The average full-time equivalent salary for Federal employees at the National Weather Service for each equivalent level of the General Schedule.

(7) The average salary for full-time equivalent contractors performing at each equivalent level of the General Schedule at the National Weather Service.

(8) A description of any actions taken by the Under Secretary to address the issues raised by the Inspector General of the Department of Commerce regarding the hiring of former National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employees as contractors at the National Weather Service such as the issues raised in the Investigative Report dated June 2, 2015 (OIG–12–044).

(c) ANNUAL PUBLICATION.—For each fiscal year after the fiscal year covered by the report required by subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall, not later than 180 days after the completion of the fiscal year, submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report analyzing the impacts of the proposed Air Force divestiture in the United States Weather Research and Forecasting Model, including—

(1) the impact on—

(A) the United States weather forecasting capabilities;

(B) the accuracy of regional forecasts;

(C) the civil readiness for traditional weather and extreme weather events in the United States; and

(D) the research necessary to develop the United States Weather Research and Forecasting Model; and

(2) such other analysis relating to the divestiture as the Under Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 409. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE; OPERATIONS AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS.

The Under Secretary shall contract or continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of National Weather Service operations and workforce.

SEC. 411. WEATHER IMPACTS TO COMMUNITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall conduct or continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The review required by paragraph (1) shall include research, products, and services that meet the specific needs of the urban environment, given its unique physical characteristics and forecasting challenges.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The review required by paragraph (1) shall include research, products, and services with the potential to improve modeling and forecasting capabilities, taking into account factors including varying building heights, impermeable surfaces, lack of tree canopy, traffic, pollution, and inter-building wind effects.

(c) REPORT AND ASSESSMENT.—Upon completion of the review required by subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the research, products, and services of the National Weather Service, including an assessment of such research, products, and services that is based on the review, public comment, and recent publications by the National Academy of Sciences.

SEC. 412. WEATHER ENTERPRISE OUTREACH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary may establish mechanisms for outreach to the weather enterprise—

(1) to assess the weather forecasts and forecast products provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

(2) to determine the highest priority weather forecast needs of the community described in subsection (b).

(b) OUTREACH COMMUNITY.—In conducting outreach under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall contact leading experts and innovators from relevant stakeholders, including the representatives of the following:

(1) State or local emergency management agencies.

(2) State agriculture agencies.

(3) Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 304)) and Native Hawaiian (as defined in section 607 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)).

(4) The private aerospace industry.

(5) The private space observing industry.

(6) The operational forecasting community.

(7) The academic community.

(8) Professional societies that focus on meteorology.

(9) Such other stakeholder groups as the Under Secretary considers appropriate.

(10) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(11) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(12) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(13) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(14) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(15) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(16) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(17) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(18) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(19) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(20) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(21) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

(22) The Under Secretary shall continue to partner with an external organization to conduct a baseline analysis of weather impacts to communities and infrastructure.

SEC. 413. HURRICANE HUNTER AIRCRAFT.

(a) BACKUP CAPABILITY.—The Under Secretary shall acquire backup for the capabilities of the WP–3D Orion and G–IV hurricane aircraft of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that is sufficient to prevent a single point of failure.

(b) AUTHORITY TO ENTER AGREEMENTS.—In order to carry out subsection (a), the Under Secretary may negotiate and enter into 1 or more agreements or contracts, to the extent practicable and necessary, with governmental and non-governmental entities.

(c) FUTURE TECHNOLOGY.—The Under Secretary shall continue the development of Airborne Phased Array Radar under the United States Weather Research Program.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For each of fiscal years 2017 through 2020, support for the studies and projects described in subsections (a) and (b) is authorized out of funds appropriated to the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations.

SEC. 414. STUDY ON GAPS IN NEXRAD COVERAGE AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS SUCH GAPS.

(a) STUDY ON GAPS IN NEXRAD COVERAGE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall conduct a study on the coverage of the Next Generation Weather Radar of the National Weather Service ("NEXRAD").

(2) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) identify areas in the United States where limited or no NEXRAD coverage has resulted in—

(i) instances in which no or insufficient warnings were given for hazardous weather events, including tornadoes; or

(ii) degraded forecasts for hazardous weather events that resulted in fatalities, significant injuries, and substantial property damage;

(B) for the areas identified under subparagraph (A)—

(i) identify the key weather effects for which prediction would improve with improved radar detection;

(ii) identify additional sources of observations for high impact weather that were available and operational for such areas on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, including dense networks of 2–band radars, Terminal Doppler Weather Radar (if known as "TDWR"), air surveillance radars of the Federal Aviation Administration, and cooperative network observers;

(iii) assess the feasibility and advisability of efforts to integrate and upgrade Federal radar capabilities that are not owned or controlled by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including radar capabilities of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Defense; and

(iv) assess the feasibility and advisability of integrating State-operated and other non–Federal radars into the operations of the National Weather Service;

(C) recommend options to improve hazardous weather detection and forecasting coverage; and

(D) provide the estimated cost of, and timeline for, each of the options identified under clause (a).

(b) REPORT.—Upon the completion of the study required under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report that includes the findings of the Secretary with respect to the study.
hazardous weather detection and forecasting coverage in the areas identified under subsection (a)(2)(A) by integrating additional observation solutions to the extent practicable and economically justified and necessary to protect public safety.

(c) Third-Party Consultation Regarding Recommendations to Improve Party Coordination.—The Secretary of Commerce may seek reviews by, or consult with, appropriate third parties regarding the scientific methodology relating to, and the feasibility and advisability of implementing recommendations submitted under subsection (b), including the extent to which warning and forecast services of the National Weather Service would be improved by additional observations.

TITLE V—TSUNAMI WARNING, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2017

SEC. 501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017”.

SEC. 502. REFERENCES TO THE TSUNAMI WARNING AND EDUCATION ACT.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this title an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act enacted as title VIII of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-240).

SEC. 503. EXPANSION OF PURPOSES OF TSUNAMI WARNING AND EDUCATION ACT.

Section 803 (33 U.S.C. 3203) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “research,” after “warnings;”;

(2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as follows:

“(2) to enhance and modernize the existing United States Tsunami Warning System to increase the accuracy of forecasts and warnings, to ensure full coverage of tsunami threats to the United States with a network of detection assets, and to reduce false alarms;”;

(3) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

“(3) to improve and develop standards and guidelines for mapping, modeling, and assessment efforts to improve tsunami detection, forecasting, warnings, notification, mitigation, response, outreach, and recovery;”;

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), and (6) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (8), respectively;

(5) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) to improve research efforts related to improving tsunami detection, forecasting, warnings, notification, mitigation, response, outreach, and recovery;”;

(6) in paragraph (5), as redesignated—

(A) by striking “and increase” and inserting “, increase, and develop uniform standards and guidelines for;”;

(B) by inserting “, including the warning signs of locally generated tsunami” after “approach;”;

(7) in paragraph (6), as redesignated, by striking “including the Indian Ocean; and” and inserting a semicolon; and

(8) by inserting after paragraph (6), as redesignated, the following:

“(7) to foster resilient communities in the face of tsunami and other similar coastal hazards; and”;

SEC. 504. MODIFICATION OF TSUNAMI FORECASTING AND WARNING PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 804 (33 U.S.C. 3203(b)) is amended by striking “Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico region” and inserting “Atlantic Ocean region, including the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico region.”

(b) COMPONENTS.—Subsection (b) of section 804 (33 U.S.C. 3203(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “established” and inserting “supported or maintained”;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (9) as paragraphs (8) through (10), respectively; and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (2) through (6) as paragraphs (3) through (7), respectively;

(4) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

“(2) to the degree practicable, maintain not less than 80 percent of the Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis buoy array at operational capacity to optimize data reliability;”;

(5) by amending paragraph (5), as redesignated by paragraph (3), to read as follows:

“(5) provide tsunami forecasting capability based on models and measurements, including tsunami inundation models and maps for use in increasing the preparedness of communities and safeguarding ports and harbor operations, that incorporate inputs, including—

(A) the United States and global ocean and coastal observing system;

(B) the Earth Observing System;

(C) the global seismic network;

(D) the Advanced National Seismic system;

(E) tsunami model validation using historical and paleotsunami evidence;”;

(6) by amending paragraph (7), as redesignated by paragraph (3), to read as follows:

“(7) include computer resources in the operation of the Administration, the United States Geological Survey, and the National Science Foundation under which the Director of the United States Geological Survey and the Director of the National Science Foundation shall—

(A) provide rapid and reliable seismic information to the Administrator from international and domestic seismic networks; and

(B) support seismic stations installed before the date of the enactment of the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017 to supplement coverage areas of sparse instrumentation;”;

(8) in paragraph (8), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting “, including graphical warning products,” after “warning;”;

(B) by inserting “, territories,” after “States;” and

(C) by inserting “and ‘wireless Emergency Alerts’ after “Hazardous Program;” and

(9) in paragraph (9), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting “and provide” and before “allow;”;

(B) by inserting “and commercial and Federal underwater communications cables” after “observing technologies”; and

(c) TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM.—Subsection (c) of section 804 (33 U.S.C. 3203(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(c) TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM.—The program under this section shall operate a tsunami warning system that—

(1) is capable of forecasting tsunami, including forecasting tsunami arrival time and inundation estimates, anywhere in the Pacific and Arctic Ocean regions and providing adequate warnings;

(2) is capable of forecasting and providing adequate warnings, including tsunami arrival time and inundation models, that were applicable, in areas of the Atlantic Ocean, including the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico, that are determined—

(A) to be geologically active, or to have significant potential for geological activity; and

(B) to pose significant risks of tsunami for States along the coastal areas of the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico; and

(3) supports other international tsunami forecasting and warning efforts.”.

(d) TSUNAMI WARNING CENTERS.—Subsection (d) of section 804 (33 U.S.C. 3203(d)) is amended to read as follows:

“(d) TSUNAMI WARNING CENTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall support or maintain centers to support the tsunami warning system required by subsection (c). The Centers shall include—

(A) the National Tsunami Warning Center, located in Alaska, which is primarily responsible for Alaska and the continental United States;

(B) the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, located in Hawaii, which is primarily responsible for Hawaii, the Caribbean, and other areas of the Pacific not covered by the National Center; and

(C) any additional forecast and warning centers determined by the National Weather Service to be necessary.

(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The responsibilities of the centers supported or maintained under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Continuously monitoring data from seismological, deep ocean, coastal sea level, and tidal monitoring stations and other data sources as may be developed and deployed;

(B) Evaluating earthquakes, landslides, and volcanic eruptions that have the potential to generate tsunamis;

(C) Evaluating deep ocean buoy data and tidal monitoring stations for indications of tsunami resulting from earthquakes and other seismic events;

(D) To the extent practicable, utilizing a range of models, including ensemble models, to predict tsunamis, including arrival times, flooding estimates, coastal and harbor currents, and duration.

(E) Using data from the Integrated Ocean Observing System of the Administration in coordination with regional associations to calculate new inundation estimates and periodically update existing inundation estimates.

(F) Disseminating tsunami warning bulletins to Federal, State, tribal, and local government officials and the public.

(G) Coordinating with the Federal, State, local, or tribal, and non-Federal emergency management officials for optimally disseminating tsunami warnings and forecasts; and

(H) In coordination with the Commandant of the Coast Guard and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, evaluating and recommending procedures for ports and harbors at risk of tsunami inundation, including review of readiness, response, and communication strategies, and data sharing policies to the maximum extent practicable.

(I) Making data gathering under this Act and post-warning analyses conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other Federal agencies available to the public.

(J) Integrating and modernizing the program operated under this section with advances in tsunami science to improve performance without compromising service.

(2) FAIL-SAFE WARNING CAPABILITY.—The tsunami warning centers supported or maintained under paragraph (1) shall maintain a fail-safe warning capability and perform back-up duties for each other.

(i) COORDINATION WITH NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE.—The Administrator shall coordinate with the forecast offices of the National Weather Service, the centers supported or maintained under paragraph (1), and such program offices of the Administration as the Administrator or the coordinating committee, as established in section 865(d), consider appropriate to ensure the national and local emergency management officials are able to disseminate tsunami warnings for the coastal areas they serve.

(2) LEVERAGE CONNECTIONS WITH LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS.—The Centers shall implement measures to have an effect on the day before the date of the enactment of the Tsunami Warning, Education, and...
Research Act of 2017 used by the National Weather Service on such date and newer mass communication technologies as they are developed as a part of the Weather-Ready Nation program of the Administration, or otherwise, for the purpose of timely and effective delivery of tsunami warnings.

"(f) FEDERAL COOPERATION.—Subsection (f) of section 804 (33 U.S.C. 3204(f)) is amended to read as follows:

"(f) FEDERAL COOPERATION.—When deploying and maintaining tsunami detection technologies under this section, the Administrator shall—

"(1) identify which assets of other Federal agencies are necessary to support such program; and

"(2) work with each agency identified under paragraph (1)—

"(A) to acquire the agency's assistance; and

"(B) to prioritize the necessary assets in support of the tsunami forecast and warning program.

"(g) UNNECESSARY PROVISIONS.—Section 804 (33 U.S.C. 3203) is further amended—

"(1) by striking subsection (g);

"(2) by striking subsection (i) through (k); and

"(3) by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (g).

"(h) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATIONS.—Subsection (g) of section 802 (33 U.S.C. 3202(g)), as redesignated by subsection (g)(3), is amended—

"(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and moving such subparagraphs 2 ems to the right;

"(2) by striking subsection (i) through (k); and

"(3) by redesignating paragraph (2), by striking "The Administrator" and inserting the following:

"(I) in paragraph (1), as redesignated by paragraph (3),—

"(A) the accuracy of the tsunami model used;

"(B) the specific deep ocean or other monitoring equipment that detected the incident, as well as the deep ocean or other monitoring equipment that did not detect the incident due to malfunction;

"(C) the effectiveness of the warning communication, including the dissemination of warnings with State, territorial, local, and tribal partners in the affected area under the jurisdiction of the National Weather Service; and

"(D) such other findings as the Administrator considers appropriate.

SEC. 405. MODIFICATION OF NATIONAL TSUNAMI HAZARD MITIGATION PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 805(a) (33 U.S.C. 3205(a)) is amended to read as follows:

"(a) Program.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the heads of such other agencies as the Administrator considers relevant, shall conduct a community-based tsunami hazard mitigation program to improve tsunami preparedness and resiliency of at-risk areas in the United States and the territories of the United States.

(b) NATIONAL TSUNAMI HAZARD MITIGATION PROGRAM—Section 805 (33 U.S.C. 3204) is amended by striking subsections (c) and (d) and inserting the following:

"(C) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—The program conducted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

"(1) Technical and financial assistance to coastal States, territories, tribes, and local governments to develop and implement activities under this section;

"(2) Integration of tsunami preparedness and mitigation programs into ongoing State-based hazard warning, resilience planning, and risk management activities, including pre-disaster planning, emergency response, evacuation planning, disaster recovery, hazard mitigation, and community development and redevelopment planning activities in affected areas;

"(3) Coordination with other Federal preparedness and mitigation programs to leverage Federal investment, avoid duplication, and maximize efforts;

"(4) Activities to promote the adoption of tsunami resilience, preparedness, warning, and mitigation measures by Federal, State, territorial, tribal, and local governments and non-governmental entities, including educational and risk communication programs to discourage development in high-risk areas;

"(5) Activities to support the development of regional tsunami hazard and risk assessments. Such regional risk assessments may include the following:

"(A) The development, implementation, and assessment of technical training and public education programs, including evacuation education programs that address unique characteristics of distant and near-field tsunamis.

"(B) A review of readiness, response, and risk communication strategies to improve evacuation and data sharing with the Coast Guard.

"(C) Activities to support the development of community-based outreach and education programs to encourage community readiness and resilience, including the following:

"(A) The development, implementation, and assessment of technical training and public education programs, including evacuation education programs that address unique characteristics of distant and near-field tsunamis.


"(D) Dissemination of guidelines and standards for community planning, training programs, and training tools, including—

"(I) standards for—

"(ii) inundation models; and

"(iii) effective emergency exercises; and

"(B) recommended guidance for at-risk port and harbor tsunami warning, evacuation, and response procedures in coordination with the Coast Guard and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"(E) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—In addition to activities conducted under subsection (c), the program conducted under subsection (a) may include the following:

"(1) Multidisciplinary vulnerability assessment research, education, and training to help integrate risk management and resilience objectives with community development planning and policies.

"(2) Risk management training for local officials and community organizations to enhance understanding and preparedness.

"(3) In coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, interagency, Federal, State, tribal, and territorial intergovernmental tsunami response exercise planning and implementation in high risk areas.

"(4) Development of practical applications for existing or emerging technologies, such as modeling, remote sensing, geospatial technology, engineering, and observing systems, including the
integration of tsunami sensors into Federal and commercial submarine telecommunications cables if practicable.

(5) Risk management, risk assessment, and resilience data and information services, including—

(A) access to data and products derived from observations and analyses; and

(B) development and maintenance of new integrated data products to support risk management, risk assessment, and resilience programs.

(6) Risk notification systems that coordinate with and build upon existing systems and actively engage decisionmakers, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments and agencies, business communities, nongovernmental organizations, and the media.

(e) NO PREEMPTION WITH RESPECT TO DESIGNATION OF AT-RISK AREAS.—The establishment of national standards for inundation models under this section shall not prevent States, territories, tribes, and local governments from designating additional areas as being at risk based on knowledge of local conditions.

(f) NO NEW REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this Act may be construed as establishing new regulatory authority for any Federal agency.

(c) REPORT ON ACCREDITATION OF TSUNAMIREADY PROGRAM.—Not later than 180 days after the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on which authorities and activities would be needed to have the TsunamiReady program of the National Weather Service accredited by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program.

SEC. 506. MODIFICATION OF TSUNAMI RESEARCH PROGRAM. Section 806 (33 U.S.C. 3205) is amended—

(1) in the matter before paragraph (1), by striking “The Administrator shall, in consultation with such other Federal agencies, State, tribal, and territorial governments, and academic institutions as the Administrator considers appropriate, the coordinating committee under section 806(a), and the panel under section 806(a), support or maintain”;

(2) in subsection (a), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking “and assessment for tsunami tracking and numerical forecast modeling. Such research program shall—” and inserting the following: “assessment for tsunami tracking and numerical forecast modeling, and standards development.”;

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The research program supported or maintained under subsection (a) shall—

(1) consider other appropriate and cost effective solutions to mitigate the impact of tsunami, including the improvement of near-field and distant tsunami detection and forecasting capabilities, which may include use of a new generation of the Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis and detection of tsunamis sensors into commercial and Federal telecommunications cables, and other real-time tsunami monitoring systems and supercomputer capacity of the Department of the Administration to develop a rapid tsunami forecast for all United States coastlines;”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) by striking “include” and inserting “conduct”;

(ii) by striking “and at the end;

(C) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(D) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) develop the technical basis for validation of tsunami maps, numerical tsunami models, digital elevation models, and forecasts; and”;

and

(E) in paragraph (5), as redesignated by subparagraph (C), by striking “to the scientific community” and inserting “to the public and the scientific community.”

SEC. 507. GLOBAL TSUNAMI WARNING AND MITIGATION NETWORK. Section 807 (33 U.S.C. 3206) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM.—The Administrator shall, in coordination with the Secretary of Homeland Security and in consultation with such other agencies as the Administrator considers relevant, provide technical assistance, operational support, and training to the International Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, the World Meteorological Organization of the United Nations, and such other international entities as the Administrator considers appropriate, as part of the international efforts to develop a fully functional global tsunami forecast and warning system comprised of regional tsunami warning networks.”;

(2) in subsection (b), by striking “shall” each place it appears and inserting “may”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by striking—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “establishing” and inserting “supporting”;

and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “establish” and inserting “support”; and

(ii) by striking “establishing” and inserting “supporting.”

SEC. 508. TSUNAMI SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY PANEL. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Act is further amended—

(1) by redesigning section 808 (33 U.S.C. 3207) as section 809; and

(b) by inserting after section 807 (33 U.S.C. 3206) the following:

“SEC. 808. TSUNAMI SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY PANEL.

“(a) DESIGNATION.—The Administrator shall designate an existing working group within the Science Advisory Board of the Administration to serve as the Tsunami Science and Technology Advisory Panel to provide advice to the Administrator on matters relating to tsunami science, technology, operational support, and training to the International Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, the World Meteorological Organization of the United Nations, and such other international entities as the Administrator considers appropriate, as part of the international efforts to develop a fully functional global tsunami forecast and warning system comprised of regional tsunami warning networks.”;

“(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

“(1) COMPOSITION.—The Panel shall be composed of no fewer than 7 members selected by the Administrator from among individuals from academia or State agencies who have academic or practical expertise in physical sciences, social sciences, information technology, coastal resilience, emergency management, or other disciplines as the Administrator considers appropriate.

“(2) FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.—No member of the Panel may be a Federal employee.

(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Not less frequently than once every 4 years, the Panel shall—

“(1) review the activities of the Administration, and other Federal activities as appropriate, relating to tsunami research, detection, forecasting, warning, mitigation, resiliency, and preparedness; and

“(2) submit to the Administrator and such others as the Administrator considers appropriate—

“(A) a detailed description of the progress made and activities conducted under paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 807(b) of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–479; 33 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.), as amended by this Act; and

“(B) a description of the ways that tsunami warnings and warning products issued by the Tsunami Warning and Education Act established under section 804 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3203), as amended by this Act, may be standardized and streamlined with warnings and warning products for hurricanes, coastal storms, and other coastal flooding events.

(b) REPORT ON NATIONAL EFFORTS THAT SUPPORT RAPID RESPONSE FOLLOWING NEAR-SHORE TSUNAMI EVENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall jointly, in coordination with the Director of the United States Geological Survey, Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the heads of such other Federal agencies as the Administrator considers appropriate, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the national efforts in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act that support and facilitate rapid emergency response following near-shore tsunami events to better understand domestic effects of earthquake derived tsunami on people, infrastructure, and communities in the United States.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) a description of scientific or other measurements collected on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act to quickly identify and quantify lost or degraded tsunami warning and education products for hurricanes, coastal storms, and other coastal flooding events.

(B) a description of the ways that tsunami warnings and warning products issued by the Tsunami Warning and Education Act established under section 804 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3203), as amended by this Act, may be standardized and streamlined with warnings and warning products for hurricanes, coastal storms, and other coastal flooding events.

(C) identification and evaluation of Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial, and military first responder and search and rescue operations centers and other critical response assets and infrastructure, including search and rescue aircraft; located

“(d) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not less frequently than once every 4 years, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, and to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the findings and recommendations received by the Administrator under subsection (c).

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–479; 120 Stat. 3575) is amended by striking the item relating to section 808 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 808. Tsunami Science and Technology Advisory Panel.

Sec. 809. Authorization of appropriations.”.

SEC. 509. REPORTS.

(a) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF TSUNAMI WARNING AND EDUCATION ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act enacted as title V of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–479; 33 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.), as amended by this Act.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) a detailed description of the progress made and activities conducted under sections 804(b)(5), and 806(b)(4) of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–479; 33 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.); and

(b) a description of the ways that tsunami warnings and warning products issued by the Tsunami Warning and Education Act established under section 804 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3203), as amended by this Act, may be standardized and streamlined with warnings and warning products for hurricanes, coastal storms, and other coastal flooding events.

(b) REPORT ON NATIONAL EFFORTS THAT SUPPORT RAPID RESPONSE FOLLOWING NEAR-SHORE TSUNAMI EVENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall jointly, in coordination with the Director of the United States Geological Survey, Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the heads of such other Federal agencies as the Administrator considers appropriate, submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the national efforts in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act that support and facilitate rapid emergency response following near-shore tsunami events to better understand domestic effects of earthquake derived tsunami on people, infrastructure, and communities in the United States.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) a detailed description of scientific or other measurements collected on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act to quickly identify and quantify lost or degraded tsunami warning and education products for hurricanes, coastal storms, and other coastal flooding events.

(B) a description of the ways that tsunami warnings and warning products issued by the Tsunami Warning and Education Act established under section 804 of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3203), as amended by this Act, may be standardized and streamlined with warnings and warning products for hurricanes, coastal storms, and other coastal flooding events.

(C) identification and evaluation of Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial, and military first responder and search and rescue operations centers and other critical response assets and infrastructure, including search and rescue aircraft; located
within near-shore and distant tsunami inundation areas on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(D) An evaluation of near-shore tsunami response capabilities described in subparagraph (C) in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, and how those response plans would be affected by the loss of search and rescue and weather infrastructure described in such subparagraph.

(E) A description of redevelopment plans and reports in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act for communities in areas that are at high-risk for near-shore tsunamis, as well identification of States or communities that do not have redevelopment plans.

(F) To enhance near-shore tsunami preparedness and response plans, including recommended responder exercises, pred大户 planning, and mitigation needs.

(G) Such other data and analysis information as the Administrator and the Secretary of Homeland Security consider appropriate.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—

In this subsection, the term "appropriate committees of Congress" means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 510. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 809 of the Act, as redesignated by section 801(a)(1) of this Act, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (4)(B), by striking "and" and "end;"

(2) in paragraph (5)(B), by striking the period at the end and inserting "the following:

(6) $25,800,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, of which—

(A) not less than 27 percent of the amount appropriated for each fiscal year shall be for activities conducted at the State level under the tsunami hazard mitigation program under section 805;

(B) not less than 8 percent of the amount appropriated shall be for the tsunami research program under section 807.

SEC. 511. OUTREACH RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with State and local emergency managers, shall implement formal outreach activities to improve tsunami education and awareness and foster the development of resilient communities. Outreach activities may include—

(1) the development of outreach plans to ensure the close integration of tsunami warning centers supported or maintained under section 804(d) of the Tsunami Warning and Education Act (33 U.S.C. 3201(d)), as amended by this Act, with local Weather Forecast Offices of the National Weather Service and emergency managers;

(2) working with appropriate local Weather Forecast Offices to ensure they have the technical knowledge and capability to disseminate tsunami warnings to the communities they serve; and

(3) evaluating the effectiveness of warnings and of coordination with local Weather Forecast Offices and first responders.

SEC. 512. REPEAL OF DUPLICATE PROVISIONS OF LAW.

(a) REPEAL.—The Tsunami Warning and Education Act enacted by Public Law 109–479 (33 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.) is repealed.

(b) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed to repeal, or affect in any way, the Magnussen-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (Public Law 109–479; 33 U.S.C. 3201 et seq.).

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to review the Administrator's remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas? There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 353, the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017, advances weather research and technology and will transform our Nation's weather industry.

I thank the vice chairman of the Science Committee, Mr. LUCAS, for sponsoring this legislation.

We must as Americans understand short-term weather events so that we can better protect lives and property. Severe weather routinely affects large portions of the United States. Nearly every year, we witness the devastating effects of tornadoes and intense storms across our country. This bill will ensure that Americans are more protected from severe weather because of accurate supercomputing, forecasts, and earlier warnings.

H.R. 353 directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, to prioritize its research to improve weather data, modeling, computing, forecasting, and warnings. This enables NOAA to support its core mission of protecting lives and property.

The bill strengthens NOAA's ability to study the underlying atmospheric science while simultaneously advancing innovative technologies and re-forming operations to provide better weather data models and forecasts.

Also, the legislation creates a tornado research program to develop more accurate, effective, and timely tornado forecasts. This program will increase our understanding of these deadly events and improve forecast accuracy. The Tornado Forecast Improvement Program advanced our ability to predict and forecast hurricanes.

The bill improves weather observation systems through the use of observing system simulation experiments and next generation computing and modeling capabilities. These requirements will help ensure we use the best and most appropriate technologies to protect our country from severe weather. It prompts NOAA to actively embrace new commercial and private sector weather solutions through a multiyear, commercial weather data pilot program. Further, it directs NOAA to seriously consider commercial data options rather than rely on slow, costly, and often delayed government-owned satellites.

For far too long, our government has relied on these massive multibillion-dollar government weather satellites. The government failed to consider other options that could help strengthen our weather industry. The Science Committee has jurisdiction over NOAA's satellite office and conducts ongoing oversight of the agency's satellite program. Our goal is that NOAA is in need of real reform.

Over the years, events at NOAA have revealed mismanagement, cost overruns, and launching delays of its weather satellites. This detracts from our ability to accurately predict our own weather, which places Americans in harm's way. It is also a tremendous burden to taxpayers who have to pay the massive bills for these satellites. This is a waste of resources that should be directed to homeland security.

This bill gives NOAA a new vision and allows NOAA the flexibility to buy new, affordable, and potentially better sources of data from the private sector. With more and better options, we can finally have the policy to make real improvements to our weather forecasting capabilities. This is long overdue.

The bill also creates a much-needed technology transfer fund in NOAA's research office to help push technologies into operation. This ensures that the technologies that are developed are effectively employed and do not sit idly on the lab bench.

I again thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and I thank the former Environment Subcommittee chairman, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, for their initiative on this issue. I also want to thank Senator THUNE for helping produce bipartisan and bicameral legislation that will protect all Americans from harmful weather systems. Americans from coast to coast will now be better prepared for severe weather with the passage of this bill.

Recently, we have seen the devastating effects of severe weather across our country, especially in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri, Kansas, Alabama, and Mississippi, among other States. This bill will help these residents be better prepared so that they can protect their property and their families.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 353, the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act, which also includes the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017. The Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act is a product of hard work and negotiation over the past two Congresses. I want to thank
Congressman FRANK LUCAS, Chairman LAMAR SMITH, and former Environment Subcommittee Chairs Jim BRIDENSTINE and Chris STEWART, who were great partners in getting us here today.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is responsible for important work at the cutting edge of science and public service. Weather forecasting is one of the most critical tasks for our country. At a time when budget uncertainty jeopardizes some of the most essential services NOAA provides to our Nation, it is imperative that we support legislation like H.R. 353 to give the agency the resources and flexibility needed to fulfill its mission.

The northwest Oregon communities I represent and communities across the country rely on timely and accurate weather forecasts to decide when to harvest their crops, when to go to sea to fish, how to navigate the roads safely when there is freezing rain or snow and to prepare for possible flood conditions.

The National Weather Service provides excellent forecasting products to support our economy, but with the increasing frequency and severity of severe weather events, there can be and should be improvements in our forecasting capabilities and delivery. Improvements in forecasts can provide more lead time to allow communities to prepare, especially in severe weather events. More effective communication of forecast information to the public and those in harm’s way can reduce the loss of life and property.

This bill connects the research side of NOAA—the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research—more effectively to the forecasting needs of the National Weather Service, cultivating a research-to-operations pipeline that is essential for the continued improvement of our weather forecasting enterprise. The bill contains several provisions that will improve interactions and information sharing between NOAA’s researchers and the National Weather Service. It improves communication between NOAA and the broader research and private weather communities. The bill also formally establishes the pilot program currently operating at NOAA to engage in contracts with the commercial sector for weather forecasting data.

Every dollar that is saved will not adequately serve the public’s needs unless there are effective communication systems in place. H.R. 353 directs NOAA to do more research, listen to experts, and improve its risk communication techniques.

The bill also establishes interagency coordination through the Office of Science and Technology Policy across multiple agencies outside NOAA that share responsibilities for weather research and forecast communications. This is essential, and it highlights the important role the Office of Science and Technology Policy and NOAA share to help speed the adoption of best tools and practices across the various agencies of the Federal Government.

The legislation before us today also includes the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act, legislation I have introduced over the past three Congresses. The Forecaster Protection, Education, and Research Act seeks to improve our country’s understanding of the threat posed by tsunami events by improving forecasting and notification systems, developing supportive technologies, and supporting local community preparedness and response plans. This bill helps to address the risk faced by communities on both coasts and in the Gulf of Mexico by improving our mitigation and research program and enhancing community outreach and planning.

Many, if not most, of my colleagues represent districts that have experienced some kind of natural disaster. The threat of a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami is real, given the proximity of the Cascadia Subduction Zone. West Coast Members take this threat very seriously.

I have heard from coastal communities, people who fish, the tourism and maritime industries, marine and public safety officials, small-business owners, older Americans, and students who are concerned that their communities are not prepared for a tsunami.

Student body at Seaside High School, a coastal community in my district, engaged in a year-long project to educate Oregonians about the threat a tsunami has on lives and property. Three of the four public schools in Seaside are still located inside the tsunami inundation zone. The high school students have practiced their evacuation route, and they know that, in the projected time between a major earthquake and the devastating wave of a tsunami, they couldn’t make it to higher ground. That is unacceptable.

The University of Oregon and Oregon State University are working on seismic warning systems and tsunami preparedness to help make sure that our communities are prepared and have the best research available to give the most warning time possible, and this bill compliments their work.

I am proud to have worked on this legislation which is so important to the people of northwest Oregon and all coastal communities, but I do remain very concerned that the funding level is below current spending. This cut would have serious consequences. The operation and maintenance funding for the buoy network we rely on to detect tsunami could decrease, adding hours of delay in appropriately warning coastal communities.

Tsunami warning centers in Alaska and Hawaii are likely to see a reduction in staff, resulting in gaps in coverage and creating greater risks because of time delays in sending out accurate warnings and, in some instances, not being able to provide adequate warning at all.

Tsunami are among the most deadly natural disasters. In the past two decades, tsunami have caused the deaths of roughly a quarter million people around the world. These disasters also have profound economic consequences. The 2001 tsunami in Japan caused more than a trillion dollar of economic damage.

We are fortunate, in the United States, to have been spared these catastrophes so far.

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But our coastlines, from the Gulf of Mexico to Alaska, are very susceptible to the same kind of disasters we have seen in Indonesia and in Japan. It is not a matter of if, it is a matter of when.

Tsunami program activities protect coastal Oregonians just as hurricane forecasting protects coastal Floridians, Carolinians, and others up and down the East Coast of the United States. It is important that we fund these lifesaving activities, and just as important to provide the necessary funding to support them.

I will work tirelessly with my colleagues to make sure this program receives the full funding it needs to save our communities and save lives and property.

Although there are always areas where we can do more, this underlying bill, the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act, with the tsunami bill, is a good bipartisan agreement and one that I am proud to support while continuing to ask for current levels of funding.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting “yes” on H.R. 353.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), who is the vice chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, and also the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas, Chairman SMITH, for his continued leadership on the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, and for bringing forward this important legislation. H.R. 333, the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017, prioritizes improving weather forecasting for the protection of lives and property at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This is a core program of the agency that has been in need of improved direction and investment for years.

The bill directs NOAA to develop plans to restore our country’s leadership in weather forecasting. It is no secret that many people in our weather community are distraught that our forecasting capacities have deteriorated in recent years. Some even say that America no longer has the best weather forecasts in the world. In fact, we routinely rely on forecasts of other countries to predict what will happen in this country. This
is unacceptable, but I am glad we are here today to pass legislation that will dramatically improve our weather forecasting system.

The bill before us today enhances our ability to predict severe weather by focusing on research and computing solutions on improved weather forecasting, quantitative observing data planning, next generation modeling, and an emphasis on research-to-operations technology transfer.

As a Representative from Oklahoma, I understand the need for accurate and timely weather predictions firsthand. Every year, the loss of life from deadly tornadoes in my home State are a stark reminder that we can do better to predict severe weather events and provide longer lead times to protect Americans in harm’s way.

I am proud that this legislation has a dedicated tornado warning improvement program. The goal of this program is to reduce the loss of life from tornadoes caused by severe weather. Constituents in my home State will see benefits from longer tornado warning lead times, which will save lives and better protect property.

Being better prepared for severe weather events is of the utmost important. The bill will improve our forecasting by encouraging innovations and new technologies through a joint technology transfer fund at NOAA’s Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. This transfer is essential to get new forecasting, models, and technologies out of the research side of NOAA and into the operational forecasters to better protect our country.

Furthermore, the legislation will enhance our forecasting by directing NOAA to engage new commercial data and solutions. This legislation includes a pilot project, which will provide NOAA a clear demonstration of the valuable data from commercial technologies. The private sector has the potential to aid our forecasting skill while reducing government cost with innovative solutions. In order to increase our weather skills, we must not limit ourselves by solely relying on government data.

This legislation packs in multiple efforts to protect lives and property from severe weather. There are encouraging new technologies both inside and outside of NOAA to the careful planning and prioritization of weather research, this legislation will put our country back on track to be a world leader in weather predictions.

The time has come for Americans to have the most accurate and timely weather predictions. They deserve nothing less.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), the ranking member of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 353, the Weather Research and Forecasting Improvement Act of 2017. Climate and weather are not fundamentally partisan concerns; they affect all of our constituents, regardless of their party affiliation. The bill we are considering today, which is the culmination of years of bipartisan compromise and negotiation, demonstrates what can be accomplished when we work together to address the concerns of our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, weather affects all of us each and every day. It is a constant presence in our lives. Extreme weather events, which are becoming more severe and more frequent, are damaging lives and property in my home State of Texas, across the continental U.S., and all the way to the islands of Hawaii. Sadly, the consequences of severe weather incidents have become a far more familiar occurrence and, really, too much of it for far more Americans. It should go without saying that we need to be better prepared to avoid and cope with these potentially devastating events by utilizing the very best weather forecasting and warning capabilities.

In that regard, the National Weather Service and the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, or NOAA, play a central role in protecting the lives and property of every American. H.R. 353 will help accelerate innovation that NOAA can make use of, turning cutting-edge weather research into essential weather forecasting tools and products; tools the forecasters can then use to protect American lives.

The legislation improves collaboration and cooperation within NOAA and removes barriers that prevent the weather research community, our Nation’s forecasters, and the private sector from working together. Improving these relationships will strengthen the accuracy and timing of our weather predictions and ultimately, will save lives and make our communities safer.

H.R. 353 also reauthorizes NOAA’s tsunami warning activities. Communities along our Western Coasts are particularly impacted by the threat of tsunamis. This bill reauthorizes tsunami warning and research activities at NOAA, it does so at a level far below current agency spending. Such a cut makes little sense. Even in a tough fiscal climate, we should be wary of cuts to programs that negatively affect our ability to protect American lives and property from natural disasters.

I want to applaud Environment Subcommittee Ranking Member SUZANNE SMITH for her fight to retain funding for these programs at their current level, and I hope that we can work together with our colleagues to maintain current tsunami funding when it comes time for appropriations.

Mr. Speaker, strengthening our resilience to severe weather events is both vital and necessary to strengthen our Nation’s economic security. H.R. 353 will advance our weather forecasting capabilities, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS), who is the chairman of the Environment Subcommittee.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas, Chairman SMITH, for yielding me time to speak on this important legislation.

It has become increasingly apparent with every major weather event that our forecasting services are desperately in need of a major overhaul. I am happy to support legislation that will do just that.

H.R. 353, the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act, will put our country’s weather forecasting back on track to provide citizens with life-saving predictions and warnings.

I specifically point to this bill’s innovative language on weather technology planning. H.R. 353 calls on NOAA to evaluate the combination of observing systems it needs to meet weather forecasting requirements. It also requires the agency to conduct experiments on different observing systems to evaluate their costs and benefits.

Such reforms will grant NOAA more flexibility to develop new technologies while scrapping older approaches that do not bring enough value to our forecasters. We need to be better prepared to avoid and cope with tsunamis.

This bill will help push NOAA to consider new approaches, including those from the private sector. For its part, the growing private sector has signaled it is ready and willing to work with NOAA to bring better weather forecasting to our citizens, and we should welcome this development.

I am confident that H.R. 353 will create the kind of meaningful change that we want to see at NOAA. This bill will better protect American lives and property with more accurate weather forecasting. I applaud the sponsors. I encourage all Members to support this bill.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTENGER), who is also a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his exceptional leadership on this very important legislation.

In 2012, 7-year-old Jamal Stevens was in his bed when a tornado tore through the house, tossing him onto the embankment along Interstate 486, hundreds of feet from his room.

The warning from the National Weather Service came 10 minutes later,
The time to think outside of the government-only-weather-data box is now. That is why I applaud the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, Mr. Smith, as well as my colleague from Oklahoma (Mr. Lucas) for bringing this important legislation to the fore. I look forward to its passage into law.

Ms. Bonamici. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have worked so hard on this legislation, I want to take a moment, also, to thank all of the staff in our offices and committee on both sides of the aisle who worked so hard on this legislation.

I encourage all my colleagues to support the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act, which includes the Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act. This legislation will improve weather forecasting and tsunami preparedness.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage everyone to support this bipartisan legislation, and I urge you to vote for it.

Mr. Smith of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is the culmination of hard work and negotiations that have spanned 5 years. Today, we finalize this House-initiated weather policy reform legislation that will benefit residents throughout the United States. H.R. 353 greatly improves our ability to predict short-term severe weather events, better protects lives and property, a core mission of NOAA that has needed greater attention in recent years.

Again, I want to thank Mr. Lucas and Mr. Bridenstine for their initiative on this issue. I thank the former Environment Subcommittee chairman, Representative Chris Stewart, for his years of commitment to this subject as well. I especially appreciate Ms. Bonamici and her 5 years of effort to make this a bipartisan bill. I would like to thank the Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee on Environment staff for their years of effort on this bill, especially Taylor Jordan, who worked diligently to ensure that this bill became a reality. I also recognize the minority staff who were central to the process as well.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will transform our weather forecasting ability. It ensures that we, once again, have a world-class forecasting system that will protect lives and property from the dangers of severe weather.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill and I yield back the balance of my time.

The time to break the stalemate was this past weekend. However, as elected officials, we must make it a priority to protect American lives and property to the fullest extent.

We do not know if a better weather forecasting service would have made a difference this past weekend. However, as elected officials, we must make it a priority to protect American lives and property to the fullest extent.

Francine Gotch and her 3-year-old daughter, Nevaeh Alexander, when their singlewide trailer flipped during high winds produced by a tornado.

The United States was once at the forefront of weather forecasting; however, that ability has diminished over the years with the capabilities of some other countries now paralleling or even exceeding our own.

I do not know if a better weather forecasting service would have made a difference this past weekend. However, as elected officials, we must make it a priority to protect American lives and property to the fullest extent.

We do not know if a better weather forecasting service would have made a difference this past weekend. However, as elected officials, we must make it a priority to protect American lives and property to the fullest extent.
ENCOURAGING EMPLOYEE OWNERSHIP ACT OF 2017

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 240, I call up the bill (H.R. 1343) to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to revise its rules so as to increase the threshold amount for requiring issuers to provide certain disclosures relating to compensatory benefit plans, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 240, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–11 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is read as follows:

H.R. 1343

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Encouraging Employee Ownership Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. INCREASED THRESHOLD FOR DISCLOSURES RELATING TO COMPENSATORY BENEFIT PLANS.

Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Securities and Exchange Commission shall revise section 230.701(e) of title 17, Code of Federal Regulations, so as to increase from $5,000,000 to $10,000,000 the aggregate sales price or amount of securities sold during any consecutive 12-month period in excess of which the issuer is required under such section to deliver an additional disclosure to investors. The Commission shall index for inflation such aggregate sales price or amount every 5 years to reflect the change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, rounding to the nearest $1,000,000.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and the minority leader. Mr. KILDEE is considered a member of the Committee on Financial Services.

After 1 hour of debate, it shall be in order to consider the amendment printed in House Report 115–75, if offered by the Member designated in the report, which shall be considered read, shall be separately debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas. 

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members of the House be given 15 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1343, the Encouraging Employee Ownership Act. I also want to commend the bipartisan supporters of this important bill: Mr. HULTGREN of Illinois, Mr. DELANNEY of Maryland, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. MACARTHUR of New Jersey, Ms. SINEMA of Arizona, and Mr. STIVERS of Ohio.

Their bipartisan efforts resulted in a bipartisan bill that will help small businesses, including startups, to successfully reward their hardworking employees; and, while doing so, this bill will allow small businesses to effectively deploy their capital to grow and to create jobs on Main Streets all across our country.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, that small businesses are the heart and soul of the American economy. In fact, they helped create more than 60 percent of the Nation’s new jobs over the past two decades. So if our Nation is to have a healthier and more vibrant economy, it offers more opportunity to more Americans, then we must encourage small-business growth and small-business startups, and this starts with ensuring they have access to the capital and credit they need to grow.

Yet as we have heard from countless witnesses who have appeared before the House Financial Services Committee, community banks and credit unions in particular—the primary source of our small-business loans—are simply drowning, Mr. Speaker, in a sea of complicated and costly regulations. The same occurs with the maze of burdensome securities regulations that are written with the largest public companies in mind but end up hurting smaller companies.

Although small companies are at the forefront of innovation and job creation, they often face significant obstacles in obtaining funding in our capital markets. These obstacles often result from the proportionately larger burden that securities regulations place on small companies when they seek to access capital both in the public and private markets.

These small companies also face difficult challenges on how best they can deploy their limited resources and capital—to grow and thrive or to be able to sufficiently compensate their work force, which is a critical component of their success.

Currently, the SEC allows private companies to offer their own securities to employees as part of written compensation agreements without having to comply with burdensome Federal securities registration requirements under what is called SEC rule 701. Now, unfortunately, one of the rule’s thresholds has not been adjusted in two decades. What the bipartisan supporters of this bill are proposing is simply to modernize this SEC rule with a modest increase in that threshold.

Increasing the rule 701 threshold gives private companies more flexibility to reward and retain employees and permits private companies to keep valuable, skilled employees without having to use other methods such as borrowing money or selling securities. Updating this rule can encourage more companies to offer more incentives to more employees to keep and attract talented workers.

As one witness who testified before Congress said, this bill “would support a valuable compensation practice that allows small businesses to hire the most highly skilled workers” and better enable small, emerging growth companies that are at a competitive disadvantage with bigger businesses to attract and retain employees.

Allowing employees to become owners in the company like Google and MoPub don’t want more Americans to have an opportunity to obtain an ownership stake in the places that they work? That way the workers can earn the large financial upside that comes when the company performs well, and the company benefits by being able to attract talented workers.

Unfortunately, again, Mr. Speaker, too many companies right now shy away from offering employees greater ownership opportunities because an expensive, bureaucratic, burdensome, top-down regulation in Washington has not been updated in nearly 20 years. Mr. Speaker, we can fix that today. We can fix the by passing this common-sense, bipartisan bill, the Encouraging Employee Ownership Act.

We can provide American workers with more opportunities to share in the successes and profits of companies they work for. We can help foster capital formation so more Americans can go back to work, have good careers, pay their mortgages, plan for a secure retirement, and ultimately give their families a better life.