

June 21, 2011

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall
Chairman
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member

Dear Chairman Hall and Representative Johnson:

Basic weather and climate information is of critical importance to American business – for local growth and global competitive advantage – we therefore respectfully request that you support NOAA’s efforts to create a line office for Climate Service.

Potential changes in precipitation (including drought in the Southwest), river flooding and runoff, sea-level rise, severe storms, storm surges, and other factors directly influence operational and investment decisions in many economic sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, retail, insurance, transportation and energy.

Long-range forecasts and other outlooks provide information about the likelihood and magnitude of these changes beyond the typical two-week weather forecast and are essential to identifying and reducing many types of short- and long-term financial risks borne by commercial interests. For example, managing risk related to storm surge in our U.S. coastal areas (which have an estimated insured value of \$9 trillion) depends upon anticipating how sea-level rise and coastal storm patterns may change through time.

A growing awareness among U.S. businesses that customers, supply chains, infrastructure and operations may be adversely affected by changes in the climate is creating a demand for commercial climate services. The burgeoning U.S. climate service industry (currently estimated to exceed \$4 billion in annual revenue) is, however, dependent on credible and accessible information about the physical climate system. By creating a line office within NOAA that is dedicated to providing basic climate-related information, these newly emerging commercial providers and their growing customer bases will benefit by having a single access point for vetted information collected or developed by a wide variety of NOAA programs.

We applaud the Committee’s continued support of climate change R&D at NOAA and all of the other agencies that comprise the U.S. Global Change Research Program. A key next step in transforming the advances in our understanding of climate into the actionable information that decision-makers need is the creation of a single point of access for basic climate information. We therefore respectfully request that you support NOAA efforts to establish a line office for Climate Service.

Sincerely,

AccuWeather
Alliance for Earth Observations
American Geophysical Union
American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA)
American Weather and Climate Industry Association (AWICA)
Asheville Buncombe Sustainability Initiatives, Inc.
Atmospheric and Environmental Research (AER)
Biltmore Farms, LLC
The Campaign for Environmental Literacy
Centers for Environment and Climate Interactions (CECI)
Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC)
CMG, Inc.
The Elumenati
GeoEye Foundation
I.M. Systems Group
National Weather Service Employees Organization
The Planetary Society
Raytheon Intelligence and Information Systems
Reinsurance Association of America
UNC-Asheville's National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC)
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR)
WeatherBank, Inc.
ZedX, Inc.

Cc: The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
The Honorable Chaka Fattah