



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON **SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)

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Full Committee Markup of:

H.R. 5089, Weather Act Reauthorization Act of 2025

September 10, 2025

Thank you, Chairman Babin, and thank you to my fellow bill sponsor, former Chairman Frank Lucas.

Today, the Committee is considering H.R. 5089, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act of 2025. This reauthorization includes 18 component bills, led by both Democrats and Republicans, all in service of sustaining and bolstering the lifesaving work of the National Weather Service. Last Congress, we passed the Weather Act out of the House. Unfortunately, despite bicameral negotiations, the Senate failed to act. I say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and in both chambers, the time is now to finish the job and pass this bill into law.

Back in 2017, during the first Trump administration, the Science Committee came together on a bipartisan basis to develop and enact the first comprehensive weather policy legislation in more than two decades. That legislation helped accelerate innovation in weather forecasting tools and products and strengthen collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders in the weather enterprise. The legislation before us today continues to advance policies to strengthen the weather enterprise and ensure that NOAA has the tools, the capabilities, and the workforce to continue to save lives and protect property as climate change drives more frequent and more severe extreme weather events.

Every one of the many important provisions in this legislation was developed thoughtfully, with input and feedback from NOAA and external stakeholders. I will highlight a few, and I know many of our colleagues will have the opportunity to call attention to other important parts of this legislation.

Democrats and Republicans are all in agreement that federally funded research is integral to accurate weather forecasting and effective public safety measures. One effectuates the other. The Weather Reauthorization Act strengthens research, observations, forecasting, and public communications related to extreme weather events, including hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, coastal flooding, and storm surge. Also on this list are atmospheric rivers, which have hit California in unprecedented numbers and intensity over recent years. They dump trillions of gallons of water and have tragically resulted in dozens of deaths. H.R. 5089 requires the establishment of an Atmospheric Rivers Forecast Improvement program to focus on this growing threat to life and property in the West.

H.R.5089 will also help drive critical innovations; it will support the development of novel sensor technologies on diverse observation platforms, expand computational resources to aid forecasters, and strengthen sub-seasonal to seasonal forecasting capabilities.

As experts have repeatedly confirmed to this Committee, our most significant limitation in forecasting accuracy today is data assimilation. Importantly, this legislation will increase NOAA's investment in data assimilation through the creation of a program to test, advance, and implement data assimilation methods.

As part of this program, NOAA will direct the creation of a new university-based data assimilation consortium to address critical research challenges and foster a data assimilation workforce.

Finally, this bill finds the right balance in expanding NOAA's partnership with the growing commercial weather sector while maintaining a backbone of publicly owned observational capabilities and a capable workforce necessary to avoid any disruption in NOAA's forecasting capabilities.

The National Weather Service's mission is the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy through forecasts and warnings. This bill supports that mission. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that all of the activities authorized in H.R. 5089 are funded and implemented as Congress intended in the coming years.

I want to thank former Chairman Lucas and Chairman Babin for their continued partnership in carrying out the important work of this Committee, as reflected in this good bipartisan legislation, and thank the committee staff on both sides of the aisle for their years of hard work and collaboration. I yield back.