



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

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)
Subcommittee on Environment Hearing

Reauthorizing the Weather Act: Users of Weather Data and Areas for Improvement by Sector

June 6, 2023

Good morning. Thank you to Chairman Miller and Ranking Member Ross for holding this 2nd in a series of hearings exploring issues for reauthorization of the National Weather Act. Today's hearing features users of NOAA's weather and climate data with expertise relevant to a range of sectors, from agriculture- to water management- to transportation.

Of particular interest to my district- and especially the rural parts of my district- is the subseasonal to seasonal forecasting that enables communities, water resource managers, and farmers to plan ahead. As Ms. Jones notes in her testimony, the West is increasingly experiencing climate change driven extremes, from severe drought to catastrophic flooding. In addition to taking aggressive steps to mitigate climate change, we must also take all necessary steps to adapt to the changing climate. That starts with having the data and models required to understand how the changing climate is affecting weather patterns beyond the next few days. At stake are both lives and livelihoods. I look forward to hearing the expert panel's recommendations for improving subseasonal to seasonal forecasting.

While agriculture is particularly important to my district, there isn't a sector of our economy that doesn't use the National Weather Service's data and data products. The National Weather Service is extremely well regarded, and for good reason. However, that does not mean there is no room for improvement. In addition to learning more about subseasonal to seasonal forecasting, I'm interested in all recommendations from this panel for improving the National Weather Service's data, models, and communication.

Given the witnesses before us, this hearing is also a good opportunity to discuss Federal climate services and how they can be strengthened to support states, farmers, fishers, business owners, infrastructure owners, city planners, and individuals in preparing for a changing climate in their region. Even as climate change is accelerating beyond the predictions of just a few years ago, we still have a long way to go to build a robust national climate service. While multiple agencies have a role in contributing to a national climate service, in whatever form that may take, NOAA's role is central.

Fortunately, we have an Administration that is making this a priority. This past March the Biden Administration released a Federal Framework and National Action Plan for Climate Services. While I hope this Committee holds hearings specifically on a national climate service in the coming months, today's hearing can also help inform us how NOAA's current climate services are being utilized, and of the unmet needs for climate services across sectors.

Thank you to the expert panel for being here this morning. I look forward to your testimony and the discussion. I yield back.