



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

---

## Opening Statement

### **Environment Subcommittee Ranking Gabe Amo (D-RI)**

Environment Subcommittee Hearing:

“A Review of the President's Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration”

April 28, 2026

Thank you, Chairman Franklin, for holding this hearing. And thank you, Dr. Jacobs, for being before our committee. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA, protects Americans’ lives, livelihoods, and property. From the forecast families check before starting their day, to the safety of our flights, to the fisheries that feed our communities, NOAA's work is woven into everyday life.

NOAA’s impact is not always visible, but it is foundational to our everyday lives.

- Its space weather forecasts help protect astronauts on missions like Artemis II.
- Its data supports insurance markets and disaster recovery.
- And in Rhode Island, NOAA’s new Marine Operations Center in Newport will support critical work while creating good-paying jobs.

Last year, Americans faced billion-dollar disasters. From devastating wildfires in California to catastrophic flooding in Vermont and powerful hurricanes along the Gulf Coast, NOAA’s data helps communities prepare, stay safe, and recover. That’s why Trump’s Fiscal Year 2027 budget is so troubling.

A \$1.6 billion cut to NOAA isn’t trimming fat. It’s cutting to the bone and striking to the core of what keeps Americans safe. It means: Less data. Less accurate forecasts. Less time to prepare. And when preparation goes down, costs for families and small businesses go up!

Let’s be clear: Trump's choices don’t happen in a vacuum. They come while he is making it harder for Americans to get ahead, driving up costs while pulling back on the very tools that help communities respond to disasters. Take the proposed elimination of the Integrated Ocean Observing System, or IOOS. As “the eyes of our ocean,” IOOS improves hurricane forecasts, supports safe navigation, and helps coastal communities prepare for flooding. Shutting it down means less precise forecasts and less time to act, especially for coastal states like my home state of Rhode Island.

At a time of rising seas and stronger storms, that's a risk we can't afford. The same goes for the proposed elimination of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, including the National Sea Grant program. For decades, Sea Grant has delivered real results to support research, train workers, and strengthen coastal economies. Last year, Rhode Island Sea Grant supported research on microplastics in Narragansett Bay, training for aquaculture businesses, and dozens of undergraduate and graduate students in their research. In 2024, the Sea Grant program turned a \$94 million federal investment into approximately \$1.5 billion in economic benefits, creating more than 2,000 new businesses and over 21,000 jobs. The elimination of NOAA's Sea Grants would strike a blow to Rhode Island's nascent Blue Economy and the thriving communities across the country that depend on these jobs and investments.

Cutting that isn't saving money; it's costing us opportunity.

Budgets are about priorities. And this one sends the wrong message: less preparedness, more risk, and higher costs for the American people. We should be investing in the tools that keep people safe, not tearing them down.

Finally, Dr. Jacobs, I want to address NOAA's lack of responsiveness. Collectively, we sent several letters last year seeking answers on the Administration's priorities and received virtually no reply. I personally sent nine letters. We received one response. Nine months later!

To put it politely, that's unacceptable. Congress cannot represent our constituents if agencies don't respond. I expect timely, transparent communication going forward. I expect honest answers to our outstanding requests without delay. Dr. Jacobs, I look forward to discussing how NOAA can meet its mission and protect the American people despite these harmful proposals and terminations.

Thank you, and I yield back.