



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

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)

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 and Ranking Member Amo for holding this important hearing on NOAA's Fiscal Year 2027 budget request. And thank you Dr. Jacobs for appearing before us today.

As Members of this Committee, we understand the importance and significance of NOAA. The agency is tasked with providing critical information for our communities to prepare, respond, and adapt to severe weather events and the changing environment while managing and protecting our nation's coastal and ocean resources.

However, it's not clear that this Administration recognizes or values the importance of NOAA. The President's Fiscal year 2027 Budget Request cuts NOAA's budget by more than 26%. Like FY 2026, the request attempts to get rid of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, terminate critical research programs, and closes cooperative institutes and research labs that support NOAA's mission.

Just last month, the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere developed a cutting-edge forecast system that will improve precipitation forecasts of atmospheric rivers in the San Francisco Bay area. Experts at the University of California San Diego and Colorado State University worked with NOAA to develop an advanced rainfall forecast system that gives emergency managers and water agencies in the Bay Area more accurate and timely warnings about potential flooding and runoff from heavy rainfall events. It has already been incorporated into the National Weather Service's toolbox. This is particularly timely given that NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, which is also slated to be cut, indicated that a super El Nino is likely to emerge this summer in the Pacific.

To further exemplify what the FY 2027 budget request is attempting to eliminate, this Administration wants to close the Atlantic Oceanographic & Meteorological Laboratory, or AOML, and the National Severe Storms Laboratory. AOML is home to the Hurricane Research Division which aids NOAA in improving the understanding and prediction of a hurricane's track, intensity, and structure. The National Severe Storms Laboratory improves the understanding and

prediction of severe weather, most notably tornadoes. This lab developed the radar the National Weather Service uses today to detect hail and tornado circulation.

These labs are among the few dozen research facilities that make up the backbone of NOAA's operations, yet this Administration wants to terminate them in the name of "eliminating funding for the globalist climate agenda." By its own admission, NOAA states these labs and cooperative institutes advance the National Weather Service's prediction capabilities and improve its ability to provide more accurate and timely warnings and forecasts for life-threatening weather events.

Cutting programs that improve hurricane and tornado forecasting is the very definition of pennywise and pound foolish.

While NOAA's labs and cooperative institutes provide the research and development of new and improved forecasting tools, it is NOAA's operational environmental satellite systems that provide the foundational data in weather and climate models. Decisions made now will affect forecasting capabilities for decades. Nevertheless, this Administration abruptly undermined a well-vetted and scientifically backed plan by cancelling contracts and changing the system infrastructure without any real analysis or assessment. Moreover, NOAA failed to inform Congress of these changes. While these decisions were made prior to your confirmation, Dr. Jacobs, I look forward to working with you to ensure there will be no further lapse in communication and better partnership moving forward.

We can see the improvements and successes of our nation's forecasting capabilities due to investments in research and technology. Dr. Jacobs, I believe you can agree that there is still more work that needs to be done. This year, we have already seen several weather disasters that have unfortunately caused the loss of life. This proposed budget will not help. We can and must do better.

With that, I yield back.