

April 27, 2024

The Honorable Frank Lucas, Chairman
The Honorable Zoe Lofgren, Ranking
Member Committee on Science, Space, and
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Lofgren:

This letter is to offer my strong support for U.S. House of Representatives (H.R.) 6093, the Weather Act Reauthorization of 2023.

I have been fortunate to have had a career in the Environmental and Earth Sciences that has spanned almost 50 years – 34 years with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS); 10 years with The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in Geneva, Switzerland, and 5 years with the World Geospatial Industry Council (WGIC). In each of these organizations, collaboration with governments, industry, and not-for-profit institutions was essential. In this regard, H.R. 6093 not only builds on the existing Law, but creates the capacity, and I would argue, mandate, for enhanced collaboration across the public and private sectors.

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and specifically, the National Weather Service, was, and still is, the face of the United States to WMO – the international organization responsible for coordinating weather services around the world. The U.S., in general, and NOAA specifically is also held up as a beacon for broad, open data sharing, and easy access to environmental and weather data. The leadership that is exerted globally, in this regard, cannot be over-stated. It is essential that H.R. 6093 be reauthorized to ensure the continuity of U.S. leadership in this domain.

Reauthorization would also enhance those parts of the weather enterprise where U.S. leadership needs to be strengthened. To illustrate this point, let's look at the predictions associated with tracking hurricanes. I live in Florida, and am often frustrated when the local television stations cite predictions from the 'European' model, as compared to the U.S. model, and while I am a strong and vocal supporter of international collaboration, these messages – subliminal or overt – undermine citizen support for an essential government function – the protection of lives and property of its citizens. I fully realize that some forecasting models perform better under certain circumstances (in time and in space) than others, the fact remains, however, that with reauthorization of this Act, and with appropriate resources, the U.S., with NOAA's leadership is entirely capable of generating hurricane predictions that can be the preferred forecast of local television stations – even here in Florida.

With sincere appreciation for your support and leadership of this essential piece of legislation.

Best Regards.



Barbara J. Ryan
(Retired)