

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

April 19 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:

I am writing this letter to offer my support for U.S. House of Representatives (H.R.) 6093, the Weather Act Reauthorization Act of 2023. I am a Chair Emeritus of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Science Advisory Board (SAB), a FACA Board, Commissioner Emeritus of the American Meteorological Society Weather, Water and Climate Enterprise, and Chair Emeritus of the Association of Public & Land Grant Universities Board on Ocean, Atmosphere and Climate. I have also given oral and written testimony regarding “weather” to the U.S. House of Representatives on seven occasions and to the U.S. Senate twice, and have had meetings with the NOAA examiner in the U.S. Office of Management & Budget on six occasions, about NOAA’s weather services. Thus, I have a comprehensively unique perspective that is representative of multiple elements of the U.S. weather enterprise.

NOAA is a singularly unique agency, tasked with critical operational weather forecasting, as its mission and responsibility, in which Americans rely on forecasts of minutes to hours, days to weeks, and beyond. The physical safety of the society of the U.S., along with the economic prosperity of the U.S., depend on the ability of the citizenry of the Nation to deal with fluctuations in the weather. The U.S. air, sea and land transportation networks, the U.S. food supply, the U.S. financial industry broadly defined and environmental security, are all critically dependent on constant monitoring, and our national safety is underpinned by accurate and timely weather information. NOAA’s importance, much like the U.S. Postal Service, as the Nation’s two operational agencies, cannot be underestimated, understated or undervalued.

The Weather Act of 2017 established programs to improve NOAA partnerships with private industry and its collaboration with academia, with U.S. state agencies, with other U.S. federal agencies, and with international partners, have experienced noteworthy success over the intervening period. For example, via its data buys from university observing networks, and with private industry, such as commercial aircraft weather data, NOAA immediately transforms these data assets into greatly improved national to regional to local weather forecasts. NOAA’s links to the Nation’s cadre of front line emergency managers are robust.

The H.R. 6093 Weather Act Reauthorization Act builds on the successes of the existing Law, and creates the enabling capacity for further improvements for collaborations with the U.S. weather enterprise, broadly defined. NOAA’s future advancements rest upon reauthorization passage. You personally, along with other H.R. Committee Members, and the extensive staff of diligent and dedicated federal employees who have enabled this Act, must be commended for your continued support of such crucially critical government responsibility on behalf of the citizenry of the U.S. NOAA must be authorized with the agency capacity to be successful. Congressional action on H.R. 6093 is imperative and will be nationally embraced.

Respectfully,
Leonard J. Pietrafesa, PhD



Professor Emeritus, North Carolina State University
Burroughs & Chapin Scholar, Coastal Carolina University

Main: 51 Sandpiper Dr.
Ocean Isle Beach, NC
Zip: 28469
910-579-8929 (H)
704-910-7047 (C)

Fellow, American Meteorology Society (AMS)
Chair Emeritus, NOAA Science Advisory Board
Commissioner Emeritus, AMS Weather, Water & Climate Enterprise
Chair Emeritus, American Geophysical Union Focus Group on Science & Society (SIPS)
Chair Emeritus, APLU (NASULGC) Board on Oceans, Atmosphere & Climate