

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
Hearing on An Overview of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Budget
Request for Fiscal Year 2015**

Chairman Smith: Thank you Chairman Schweikert, and thank you Administrator Sullivan for being with us here today. Let me congratulate you on being named one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people of 2014.

Our Committee oversees NOAA's more than five billion dollar budget. NOAA is responsible for critical science activities related to oceans, weather and climate.

Today we are here to discuss the President's FY15 budget request for NOAA of \$5.5 billion, a 3.3 percent increase over 2014 levels. While I support many of these areas of research and forecasting, other parts of the President's FY15 budget request are harder to justify.

For example, the Administration's request substantially increases funding for climate research and for some non-critical climate satellite activities. In comparison, funding for the National Weather Service and weather forecasting research is essentially flat.

Almost \$190 million is requested for climate research, more than twice the amount dedicated to weather research. There are 13 other agencies that are involved in climate change research, and according to the Congressional Research Service, they have spent \$77 billion between 2008 and 2013.

For example, in addition to NOAA, NASA, the Department of Energy, and the National Science Foundation also carry out climate change modeling.

Unfortunately, NOAA's models do not match up with observed changes and have not predicted regional climate changes. And NOAA's website, Climate.Gov, includes non-peer reviewed materials promoting climate alarmism for children.

These misguided priorities are troubling. Instead of hyping climate alarmism, NOAA should focus its efforts on other areas such as improving weather forecasting.

America's leadership has slipped in severe weather forecasting. European weather models routinely predict America's weather better than we can.

I am also concerned that NOAA's satellite division now comprises over 40 percent of the total budget request for the agency, at over \$2 billion. In 2008, the satellite budget came in under a billion dollars and was roughly one-quarter of NOAA's overall spending. The budget for this office has ballooned dramatically over the last decade.

For instance, the Joint Polar Satellite System program has been plagued with runaway costs and mismanagement, which raises questions about future funding for the project and its expected launch dates.

Even NOAA's own optimistic schedule would still leave us with a gap for critical weather data in the middle part of this decade.

Meanwhile the chronic cost over-runs of NOAA's satellites have forced significant reductions in funding for important activities in areas such as oceans, fisheries, and weather.

NOAA is a mission-oriented agency, and this Committee supports these core priorities. We face fiscal constraints that force us to make difficult choices about our science and technology resources.

Rather than devoting limited dollars to duplicative and alarmist climate change activities, NOAA should focus on research and forecasting capabilities that protect lives and property.

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