

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING

Subcommittee on Energy and Environment NOAA's FY 2009 Budget Proposal and GAO Report on Aviation Weather Services February 26, 2008

Statement of Subcommittee on Energy & Environment Ranking Member Bob Inglis (SC-4)

Good afternoon. Thank you, Chairman Lampson, for holding this hearing about the President's Fiscal Year 2009 request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The accomplishments that you highlighted in your testimony, Admiral Lautenbacher, are proof that the money Congress spends on science is money well spent, and often its effects go far beyond the laboratory. You won't often hear a conservative happy about spending more money, but it's good to see that the NOAA FY2009 budget proposal is just as aggressive, if not more so, than last year, and rightfully so. We need to continue to make sure that NOAA has the resources necessary to continue providing the best services possible in hurricane forecasting, climate modeling, coastal research, critical satellite technology, and many other areas that benefit our country and the world.

I also look forward to hearing from our second panel witnesses from GAO, the National Weather Service (NWS) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). I was an original requester on the GAO report on Aviation Weather, because I am concerned about the on-going issues between these two agencies.

Weather has a significant impact on the National Aviation System and there have been numerous studies that document the cost of weather delays to the airline industry and to the economy at large. The GAO report and Assistant Administrator Hayes' testimony offer encouraging signs that progress is already underway in achieving agreement between the FAA and NWS on much-needed performance measures. Mr. Hayes, I'm especially interested to know whether or not the NWS is prepared to meet the Federal Aviation Administration's recently proposed requirements by the May 2008 deadline, or if you feel more time is necessary.

I thank our witnesses for being here today and I yield back the balance of my time.