

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Laura Grimm
Acting Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick and Acting Administrator Grimm,

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) performs essential services to protect the lives, livelihoods, and property of the American people. We write with alarm over the reported proposal to decimate NOAA's budget, close the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), shutter weather and climate labs, and shift core government functions to the private sector. In the words of a former director of NOAA's OAR whose career spanned multiple administrations, these cuts would "take us back to the 1950s in terms of our scientific footing and the American people" if enacted.¹

We fear these proposed cuts are a continued march towards achieving the eventual break up of NOAA outlined in Project 2025. Slashing NOAA's budget by 27 percent would prevent the agency from fulfilling its mission to understand and predict changes in the environment, transparently share that information with the public, and conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems.² Additionally, we are dismayed by the proposals to eliminate NOAA's Cooperative Institutes that contribute to climate and weather research. These essential institutions are geographically located from Hawaii to Maine and Washington to Florida.

The proposed closure of OAR and weather and climate labs would deny Americans the vital weather data they need to protect their lives and property, especially during natural disasters. In 2024 alone, 27 natural disasters spanning tropical cyclones, flooding, tornadoes, wildfires, and more each had damage that exceeded a billion dollars, and altogether, they created \$182 billion in damage to homes and small businesses in communities across our country. These extreme weather events caused an estimated 568 fatalities.³ Without NOAA research, severe weather alerts may be late or never issued, which could lead to an unimaginably higher fatality rate and costs to rebuild for federal, state, and local governments. Additionally, plans to end funding for the Sea Grant program would undermine ongoing critical research that furthers our understanding of the ocean and provides early career exposure to ocean science for undergraduate and graduate students.⁴

Additionally, the proposed cuts will make it more difficult for countless small businesses to stay afloat amidst already rising costs. The elimination of NOAA's critical weather and climate data would devastate the agricultural industry, which relies on reliable and free access to NOAA data to plan crops. It is unacceptable that the administration would consider a proposal that would further disrupt the agricultural industry when Americans are already struggling to keep up with rising food costs. Additionally, plans to gut funding for NOAA's five geostationary satellites in orbit would harm our ability to collect critical weather forecasting data

¹ <https://www.npr.org/2025/04/11/nx-s1-5361366/major-budget-cuts-proposed-for-the-national-oceanic-and-atmospheric-administration>

² <https://www.noaa.gov/our-mission-values-and-vision#:~:text=Climate%2C%20weather%20and%20water%20affect,America's%20coastal%20and%20marine%20resources.>


³ <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/blogs/beyond-data/2024-active-year-us-billion-dollar-weather-and-climate-disasters>

⁴ <https://www.science.org/content/article/trump-seeks-end-climate-research-premier-u-s-climate-agency>

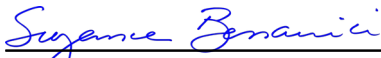
to help weather and climate research and coastal security. We fear cuts to this program would jeopardize the launch of the next generation of satellites, hampering scientific research that empowers weather forecasts, seasonal outlooks, and long-term studies of how our climate is changing.

We urge you to stand up for NOAA and reject this dangerous proposal. Do not endanger the lives, livelihoods, and property of the American people.

Sincerely,



Gabe Amo
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Environment



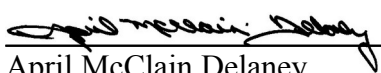
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman
Member of Congress



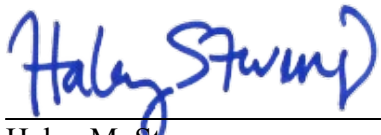
April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



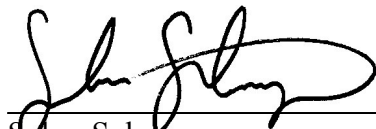
Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



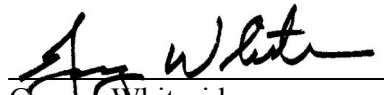
Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



George Whitesides
Member of Congress