



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**

Opening Statement

**Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)**

Environment Subcommittee Hearing:

*An Overview of the Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget for  
the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*

June 4, 2024

Thank you, Chairman Miller and Ranking Member Ross for holding this hearing on NOAA's Fiscal Year 2025 budget request. Welcome back Dr. Spinrad, and thank you for your service and leadership at NOAA.

NOAA's mission of science, service, and stewardship is accomplished through many diverse programs and activities that span the Earth's systems from the bottom of the ocean to the sun. This critically important scientific agency is required to understand and predict the changes in climate, weather, and oceans; --- conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems; --- and effectively communicate all of this information to the right people in order to protect lives, property, and our economy. This is no small feat, especially during this time of constrained resources and the growing urgency to address climate change.

Understandably, with its top line constrained by the Fiscal Responsibility Act, NOAA had to make difficult decisions in its fiscal year 2025 Request.

In NOAA's request, I am pleased to see the support for the next generation of satellites. The environmental data used from these satellites are critical to NOAA, commercial industries, and other Federal and international partners in a wide range of applications --including providing 95% of the data used in weather forecast models. It was not that long ago that NOAA's satellites were on the Government Accountability Office's high-risk list due to a potential gap in coverage. To make sure these environmental satellites do not rejoin that list, NOAA must ensure there are no delays and no unnecessary cost overruns. As these projects progress, I look forward to seeing NOAA's plans to make certain they stay on track.

While there are other bright spots in the budget request, I have a grave concern with NOAA's proposal to make steep cuts to some of its research programs. NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research conducts critical weather, climate, and ocean research that supports all the

other line offices within NOAA. This budget would bring invaluable research to a halt or significantly delay any progress. For instance, the Joint Technology Transfer Initiative, which incorporates research into operations, would face a 90% decrease in funding. The U.S. Weather Research Program which houses various weather phenomena research projects— including fire weather and seasonal to subseasonal prediction -- would take a 20% hit to its budget. Ocean Research will also take a devastating hit to its bottom line. These types of cuts would be detrimental to the prediction and response to our changing climate.

Last month, House Republican appropriators announced that they have no plans to follow the agreement of the Fiscal Responsibility Act. Instead, they intend to slash non-defense spending by 6%. I worry that the President's budget proposal for NOAA is making it even harder for the rest of us to fight to restore NOAA's budget.

This committee has heard over and over the importance of our scientific research. Robust funding for federal science agencies, including NOAA, is necessary if we want to be the world leader in cutting edge research and technology.

Dr. Spinrad, I look forward to hearing from you on NOAA's priorities for this upcoming fiscal year in these challenging times and how this Committee can help support NOAA meet its mission. Likewise, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in securing the necessary investments for NOAA.

I yield back.