



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

Opening Statement

**Ranking Member Deborah Ross (D-NC)
of the Subcommittee on Environment**

Subcommittee on Environment Hearing:
*An Overview of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Budget Proposal for
Fiscal Year 2024*

May 11, 2023

Thank you, Chairman Miller, for holding this important hearing on NOAA's Fiscal Year 2024 budget request, and thank you to the honorable Administrator Spinrad for joining us this morning to discuss NOAA's plans for this upcoming year.

NOAA is at the forefront of weather and climate prediction and research, fisheries management, coastal resilience, environmental stewardship, economic development, and more. By executing its mission, NOAA is playing a critical role in protecting the health and wellbeing of people and the environment in the United States—as it has been doing for decades. Without a doubt, it is paramount for Congress to continue supporting NOAA's mission through a well-funded budget.

I was excited to see that the focus of NOAA's Fiscal Year 2024 budget is building a climate-ready nation. As we are all aware, climate change is progressing at break-neck pace, with some impacts being seen far sooner than models have predicted. Severe weather events including drought, flooding, coastal erosion, and super storms are becoming more common and their destructive power is increasing. Climate change threatens our food system by affecting the productivity of agriculture and fisheries. The importance and timeliness of NOAA's focus on building a climate-ready nation cannot be understated.

With a more than 450 million dollar increase in discretionary appropriations from the Fiscal Year 2023 enacted budget, NOAA is poised to shore up its efforts in key areas critical to the interests of Americans. I would like to specifically highlight a few here. Building on the investments made in the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, NOAA's requested funding will support an earth system approach to climate products and services, advance precipitation predictions across weather and climate timescales, and support a whole-of-government effort to address the climate crisis.

North Carolina's 2nd District, which I represent, is home to NC State University and close to other major research universities on the forefront of addressing the climate crisis in the U.S. and beyond. Partnerships between academic institutions and NOAA—and access to competitive grants for research—rely on the agency receiving a robust and reliable funding stream. Beyond these grants and partnerships, agriculture and fisheries are major contributors to my state's economy. We must ensure NOAA has the support it needs to provide the science necessary to effectively manage our food resources and economy.

However, NOAA's Fiscal Year 2024 plans for improving its life-saving products, services, and other capabilities are at risk. I am very concerned about the proposed budget cut led by Speaker McCarthy that

passed the House. Cutting NOAA's budget by at least 22% below the Fiscal year 2023 enacted levels will be devastating to the progress NOAA is making to increase forecast accuracy and support communities in becoming climate resilient. I hope all Members in this Committee can agree on the importance of NOAA's mission and work together to support its critical work.

I look forward to hearing from Administrator Spinrad today about NOAA's plans for Fiscal Year 2024 and how Congress can support them.

I yield back.