



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

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## Opening Statement

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

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. I am pleased to welcome Administrator Spinrad today to discuss the fiscal year 2025 priorities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as we celebrate National Oceans Month and look forward to World Oceans Day on Saturday.

NOAA provides invaluable ocean, weather, and climate research and services to our nation. NOAA's execution of its mission to protect lives and property through science, stewardship, and service has always been a worthwhile investment for American taxpayers. NOAA's mission has only become increasingly urgent and valuable due to the climate change-induced increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Across the nation, Americans look to NOAA for critical and time-sensitive information when confronted with natural phenomena such as tornadoes, wildfires, hurricanes, tsunamis, geomagnetic solar storms, and much more. NOAA also supports the private sector and academia through partnerships and as well as the generation of high-quality research and data products.

Much of NOAA's life-saving work and accomplishments are carried out with little fanfare. Often, NOAA's success manifests as the prevention of negative consequences from natural hazards. While NOAA's success can be difficult to recognize and appreciate when disasters *don't* happen, we know that the quiet, hard work of NOAA scientists, meteorologists, pilots, and administrators culminates in saved lives and reduced economic and losses.

Though NOAA does an excellent job executing its mission, sustained investments in research, operations, and communication should still be made to bolster the effectiveness of the agency. NOAA's fiscal year 2025 budget request of 6.6 billion dollars, a 4% increase above the 2024 appropriations level, prioritizes investments in the next generation of weather satellite infrastructure – an investment that will pay off. NOAA also plans to expand its portfolio of

climate services, which will greatly benefit decision-makers grappling with the effects of climate change. As skilled public servants form the backbone of NOAA's scientific and operational endeavors, the agency also plans to invest in much-needed retention and recruitment of its excellent workforce.

Despite the impressive and valuable array of initiatives that NOAA plans for 2025, I am concerned about the proposed funding decreases to critical programs within the National Ocean Service and the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research. These funding reductions would negatively impact NOAA's capacity to execute coastal observations, ecosystem protection, ocean exploration, innovative research, educational outreach, and many more important functions that advance the agency's mission. I hope that we can discuss strategies to continue the essential work of these programs, even under the constraints of the Fiscal Responsibility Act. While supplemental funding made available to NOAA under the Inflation Reduction Act is being put to great use—and I'm excited to hear more about those projects—I want to hear what steps NOAA is taking to avoid a budgetary cliff for NOS and OAR when those funds expire, especially considering the proposed reductions in base budget in FY 2025.

I am also concerned about the majority's proposed topline appropriations reduction of 6% to non-defense funding that would do immense harm to NOAA and other critical science agencies within the federal government. Just over a week ago, NOAA announced that it predicts an above-normal 2024 Atlantic hurricane season. Now, more than ever, it is essential that we invest in our nation's scientific leadership, including in the ever-important sectors of weather, climate, and ocean research.

I look forward to hearing from Administrator Spinrad about NOAA's admirable work and how Congress can continue to support the agency.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.