

OPENING STATEMENT
Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Environment Subcommittees Hearing
2318 Rayburn House Office Building
July 9, 2013; 10:00 AM

“Markup of: H.R. 2413, Weather Forecasting Improvement Act of 2013”

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to reiterate the comments of my colleague, Ms. Bonamici.

Weather should not be, cannot responsibly be, a partisan issue. The whole country experiences severe weather and billions of dollars in business and investments are tied to weather and seasonal forecasts. I am disappointed that the efforts of our Chairman and Ranking Member on this Subcommittee have not produced a bipartisan bill that all the Members can rally behind.

The Committee has never tried to pass a weather authorization that lacked the support of the weather enterprise. This bill does not have that support now and, based on the testimony of June 26, I doubt it can get that support without significant changes.

The Science, Space, and Technology Committee has had its reputational ups and downs, but there are only one or two areas in our jurisdiction that have been as historically non-partisan as weather forecasting. I know this is a hard Congress to find space to cooperate, but I want to encourage all the Members in the strongest terms to try here. Reauthorizing weather programs is the type of policy issue where the American people just cannot understand why we can't get along.

I hope that we can get there before we markup at Full Committee and I will be the first to congratulate both Members if they can honestly address the problems with the current bill and move us to a place where all of us can be proud of our work. I will do anything I can to help in this effort.