

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 268

To authorize appropriations for the United States Weather Research Program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 8, 2003

Mr. EHLERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science

A BILL

To authorize appropriations for the United States Weather Research Program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “United States Weather
5 Research Program Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. PROGRAM FOCUS.**

7 The focus of the United States Weather Research
8 Program, an interagency program established under sec-
9 tion 108 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-

1 istration Authorization Act of 1992 (15 U.S.C. 313 note),
2 shall be on—

3 (1) hurricanes, floods, and heavy precipitation,
4 including both snow and rain;

5 (2) building on existing investments, including
6 those of the National Weather Service modernization
7 effort, to dramatically accelerate improvement in
8 weather forecasts;

9 (3) providing attention and resources in areas
10 where progress can be made quickly and where the
11 impact will be greatest;

12 (4) establishing goals that can be attained by
13 leveraging the resources of several agencies and
14 through the collaborative scientific efforts of the
15 operational and research communities in academia
16 and government; and

17 (5) making research grants to universities and
18 other research institutions.

19 **SEC. 3. PROGRAM RESEARCH PRIORITIES.**

20 The research priorities of the United States Weather
21 Research Program shall be in the areas of—

22 (1) hurricanes, to improve—

23 (A) landfall location forecasts; and

24 (B) forecasts of hurricane strength;

1 (2) heavy precipitation, to improve forecasts of
2 both winter storms and rain storms through better
3 prediction of timing, location, and intensity;

4 (3) floods, to improve—

5 (A) flood forecasting by coupling precipita-
6 tion forecasts with hydrologic prediction; and

7 (B) forecasting and warning systems for
8 inland flooding related to tropical cyclones;

9 (4) two-to-fourteen day forecasting, to—

10 (A) improve short and medium range nu-
11 merical weather predictions and warnings of
12 high-impact weather events;

13 (B) conduct the Hemispheric Observing
14 System Research and Predictability Experiment
15 (THORpex) to fill observational gaps in the
16 Northern Hemisphere; and

17 (C) test and evaluate advanced data as-
18 similation techniques in global models;

19 (5) societal and economic impacts, to—

20 (A) identify methods of delivering weather
21 information effectively and recommend ways to
22 improve weather communications;

23 (B) assess social and economic impacts of
24 adverse weather ranging from disastrous to rou-
25 tine;

1 (C) evaluate what weather information is
2 most useful to public and private decision mak-
3 ers; and

4 (D) perform research on societal and eco-
5 nomic impact to ensure a connection between
6 weather research and improvement of the
7 human condition; and

8 (6) testing research concepts at United States
9 Weather Research Program-sponsored test bed cen-
10 ters in an environment identical to those used by
11 operational meteorologists, to enable technology
12 transfer to those operational meteorologists.

13 **SEC. 4. INTERAGENCY PLANNING AND PROCESS.**

14 The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
15 tion, as the lead agency of the United States Weather Re-
16 search Program, shall coordinate and consult with the Na-
17 tional Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and
18 Space Administration, other appropriate Federal agencies,
19 and other appropriate entities to develop, and annually up-
20 date, a five-year plan—

21 (1) describing how Federal agencies can best
22 team with universities and other research institu-
23 tions;

24 (2) identifying social, economic, and military
25 needs and requirements for weather information, as

1 well as defining the research required to meet these
2 needs;

3 (3) outlining methods for dissemination of
4 weather information to user communities; and

5 (4) describing best practices for transferring
6 United States Weather Research Program research
7 results to forecasting operations.

8 **SEC. 5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

9 Not later than one year after the date of the enact-
10 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Adminis-
11 trator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-
12 tration shall transmit to the Committee on Science of the
13 House of Representatives and the Committee on Com-
14 merce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report
15 which shall include—

16 (1) the most recent five-year plan developed or
17 updated under section 4, including the roles and
18 funding to be provided by various Federal agencies
19 in achieving the objectives of the plan;

20 (2) a justification of any changes to the plan
21 since the last transmittal under this section; and

22 (3) a detailed assessment of the extent to which
23 the objectives of the plan have been achieved.

1 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Office
3 of Atmospheric Research of the National Oceanic and At-
4 mospheric Administration for carrying out this Act—

5 (1) for fiscal year 2004, \$15,000,000, of which
6 at least 50 percent shall be for competitive, merit-
7 reviewed grants to, or contracts or cooperative
8 agreements with, institutions of higher education (as
9 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act
10 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001));

11 (2) for fiscal year 2005, \$15,500,000, of which
12 at least 50 percent shall be for competitive, merit-
13 reviewed grants to, or contracts or cooperative
14 agreements with, institutions of higher education (as
15 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act
16 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)); and

17 (3) for fiscal year 2006, \$16,000,000, of which
18 at least 50 percent shall be for competitive, merit-
19 reviewed grants to, or contracts or cooperative
20 agreements with, institutions of higher education (as
21 defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act
22 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

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