

COMMITTEE PRINT

MAY 8, 2009

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To establish a National Climate Service at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish a National Climate Service at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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 “National Climate Serv-
5 ice Act of 2009”.

1 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

2 The purpose of this Act is to establish a National
3 Climate Service within the National Oceanic and Atmos-
4 pheric Administration to—

5 (1) advance understanding of climate variability
6 and change at the global, national, and regional lev-
7 els;

8 (2) provide forecasts, warnings, and other infor-
9 mation to the public on variability and change in
10 weather and climate that affect geographic areas,
11 natural resources, infrastructure, economic sectors,
12 and communities; and

13 (3) support development of adaptation and re-
14 sponse plans by Federal agencies, State, local, and
15 tribal governments, the private sector, and the pub-
16 lic.

17 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this Act:

19 (1) **ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**—The term “Advi-
20 sory Committee” means the Climate Service Advi-
21 sory Committee established under section 5.

22 (2) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means
23 the Director of the Climate Service Office.

24 (3) **REPRESENTATIVE.**—The term “representa-
25 tive” means an individual who is not a full-time or
26 part-time employee of the Federal Government and

1 who is appointed to an advisory committee to rep-
2 resent the views of an entity or entities outside the
3 Federal Government.

4 (4) SPECIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE.—The
5 term “Special Government Employee” has the same
6 meaning as in section 202(a) of title 18, United
7 States Code.

8 (5) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term “Under
9 Secretary” means the Under Secretary of Commerce
10 for Oceans and Atmosphere.

11 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICE.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, building
13 upon the resources of the National Weather Service and
14 other weather and climate programs in the National Oce-
15 anic and Atmospheric Administration, shall establish the
16 National Climate Service.

17 (b) CLIMATE SERVICE OFFICE.—The Under Sec-
18 retary shall establish a Climate Service Office. The Cli-
19 mate Service Office shall—

20 (1) coordinate programs at the National Oce-
21 anic and Atmospheric Administration to ensure the
22 timely production and distribution of data and infor-
23 mation on national, regional, and local climate varia-
24 bility and change over all time scales relevant for

1 planning and response, including intraseasonal,
2 interannual, decadal, and multidecadal time periods;

3 (2) ensure exchange of information between the
4 research and operational offices at the National Oce-
5 anic and Atmospheric Administration to identify re-
6 search needs for improving climate services, and en-
7 sure the timely and orderly transition of research
8 findings, improved technologies, models, and other
9 tools to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Ad-
10 ministration's operations;

11 (3) serve as liaison to and exchange information
12 with other Federal agencies that provide climate
13 services in order to—

14 (A) ensure the timely dissemination of in-
15 formation on weather and climate produced by
16 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
17 istration to other Federal agencies;

18 (B) ensure that data and information col-
19 lected by other Federal agencies relevant to im-
20 proving climate services is made available to the
21 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administra-
22 tion;

23 (C) facilitate the development and delivery
24 of climate services to relevant stakeholders; and

1 (D) obtain information from other Federal
2 agencies to improve the development and dis-
3 semination by the National Oceanic and Atmos-
4 pheric Administration of information on climate
5 and weather to other Federal agencies for the
6 development of climate service products by
7 those agencies;

8 (4) ensure cooperation and collaboration, as ap-
9 propriate, of the National Climate Service with
10 State, local, and tribal governments, academic and
11 nonprofit research organizations, and private sector
12 entities, including weather information providers and
13 other stakeholders; and

14 (5) ensure exchange of data, information, and
15 research with the United States Global Change Re-
16 search Program to support the development of as-
17 sessments required under the Global Change Re-
18 search Act of 1990 (15 U.S.C. 2921 et seq.).

19 (c) NATIONAL CLIMATE SERVICE.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall
21 operate the National Climate Service through a na-
22 tional center, the Climate Service Office, and a net-
23 work of regional and local facilities, including the es-
24 tablished regional and local offices of the National
25 Weather Service, six Regional Climate Centers, the

1 offices of the Regional Integrated Sciences and As-
2 sements program, the National Integrated
3 Drought Information System, and any other Na-
4 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or
5 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-
6 supported regional and local entities, as appropriate.

7 (2) REGIONAL CLIMATE CENTERS PROGRAM.—
8 The Under Secretary shall maintain a network of 6
9 Regional Climate Centers to work cooperatively with
10 the offices of State climatologists to—

11 (A) collect and exchange data and informa-
12 tion needed to characterize, understand, and
13 forecast regional and local weather and climate;

14 (B) facilitate collection and exchange of
15 data and information between the States and
16 Federal Government on weather and climate in
17 conjunction with the National Climatic Data
18 Center;

19 (C) support research and observations;

20 (D) obtain input on stakeholder needs for
21 weather and climate information and products;
22 and

23 (E) support State and local adaptation and
24 response planning.

1 (3) REGIONAL INTEGRATED SCIENCES AND AS-
2 SESSMENTS PROGRAM.—The Under Secretary shall
3 maintain a network of offices as part of the Regional
4 Integrated Sciences and Assessments Program. Such
5 offices shall engage in cooperative research, develop-
6 ment, and demonstration projects with the academic
7 community on climate products, technologies, mod-
8 els, and other tools to improve understanding and
9 forecasting of regional and local climate variability
10 and change and the effects on economic activities,
11 natural resources, and water availability, and other
12 effects on communities, to facilitate development of
13 regional and local adaptation plans to respond to cli-
14 mate variability and change, and any other needed
15 research identified by the Under Secretary or the
16 Advisory Committee.

17 (4) OTHER OFFICES.—In carrying out the func-
18 tions of the National Climate Service, the Under
19 Secretary shall utilize the assets and expertise of—

20 (A) the National Weather Service to—

21 (i) deliver operational weather and cli-
22 mate forecasts, warnings, products, and in-
23 formation through the National Climate
24 Services Division, Local Weather Forecast

1 Offices, Weather Service Offices, and River
2 Forecast Centers; and

3 (ii) develop climate forecast models
4 and tools through the National Centers for
5 Environmental Prediction;

6 (B) the National Environmental Satellite,
7 Data, and Information Service to provide data
8 services and support for product development
9 and operations through the National Climatic
10 Data Center and the Regional Climate Centers;

11 (C) the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric
12 Research to—

13 (i) provide research on product devel-
14 opment;

15 (ii) improve weather and climate fore-
16 cast models;

17 (iii) provide new technologies and
18 methods of observation; and

19 (iv) oversee the National Oceanic and
20 Atmospheric Administration supported re-
21 search performed by the Joint Cooperative
22 Institutes, universities, and other non-Fed-
23 eral entities;

24 (D) the National Integrated Drought In-
25 formation System to—

1 (i) provide an effective drought warn-
2 ing system;

3 (ii) coordinate and integrate Federal
4 research on droughts;

5 (iii) collect and integrate information
6 on key indicators of drought;

7 (iv) make usable, reliable, and timely
8 forecasts and assessments of drought, in-
9 cluding assessments of the severity of
10 drought conditions and impacts; and

11 (v) communicate drought forecasts,
12 conditions, and impacts to Federal, re-
13 gional, State, tribal, and local govern-
14 ments, the private sector, and the public;
15 and

16 (E) any other National Oceanic and At-
17 mospheric Administration offices or programs,
18 as appropriate.

19 (5) SERVICE ELEMENTS.—The National Cli-
20 mate Service shall—

21 (A) conduct analyses of and studies relat-
22 ing to the effects of weather and climate on
23 communities, including effects on agricultural
24 production, natural resources, energy supply

1 and demand, recreation, and other sectors of
2 the economy;

3 (B) carry out observations, data collection,
4 and monitoring of atmospheric and oceanic con-
5 ditions on a statewide, regional, national, and
6 global basis;

7 (C) provide information and technical sup-
8 port for Federal, regional, State, tribal, and
9 local government efforts to assess and respond
10 to climate variability and change;

11 (D) develop systems for the management
12 and dissemination of data, information, and as-
13 sessments, including mechanisms for consulta-
14 tion with current and potential users; and

15 (E) conduct research to improve fore-
16 casting, characterization, and understanding of
17 weather and climate variability and change and
18 its effects on communities, including its effects
19 on agricultural production, natural resources,
20 energy supply and demand, recreation, and
21 other sectors of the economy.

22 **SEC. 5. CLIMATE SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall estab-
24 lish a Climate Service Advisory Committee to provide ad-
25 vice on—

- 1 (1) climate service product development;
- 2 (2) delivery of services to decisionmakers and
3 other stakeholders;
- 4 (3) infrastructure to support observations and
5 monitoring;
- 6 (4) computation and modeling needs, research
7 needs, and other resources needed to develop, dis-
8 tribute, and ensure the utility of climate data, prod-
9 ucts, and services; and
- 10 (5) any other topics as may be requested by the
11 Under Secretary or Congress.

12 (b) MEMBERS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee
14 shall be composed of at least 25 members appointed
15 by the Under Secretary. Each member of the Advi-
16 sory Committee shall be qualified either—

17 (A) by education, training, and experience
18 to evaluate scientific and technical information
19 on matters referred to the Advisory Committee
20 under this section; or

21 (B) to evaluate the utility and need for cli-
22 mate products by planners, decisionmakers, the
23 private sector, and the public.

24 (2) TERMS OF SERVICE.—Members shall be ap-
25 pointed for 3-year terms, renewable once, and shall

1 serve at the discretion of the Under Secretary. Va-
2 cancy appointments shall be for the remainder of the
3 unexpired term of the vacancy, and an individual so
4 appointed may subsequently be appointed for 2 full
5 3-year terms if the remainder of the unexpired term
6 is less than one year.

7 (3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Under Secretary shall
8 designate a chairperson from among the members of
9 the Advisory Committee. The designated Chair-
10 person shall alternate between a member who is ap-
11 pointed as a representative and a member who is ap-
12 pointed as a Special Government Employee.

13 (4) SUBCOMMITTEES.—

14 (A) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Advisory
15 Committee shall establish—

16 (i) a Subcommittee on Science and
17 Technology to advise the National Climate
18 Service on needed research, technology de-
19 velopment, and additional observations,
20 and on any other scientific or technical
21 issues as appropriate; and

22 (ii) a Subcommittee on Product De-
23 velopment and Delivery composed pri-
24 marily of representatives of the community
25 of potential users of the products devel-

1 oped and delivered by the National Climate
2 Service.

3 The Advisory Committee may establish such ad-
4 ditional subcommittees of its members as may
5 be necessary.

6 (B) APPOINTMENT.—

7 (i) FULL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—At
8 least 50 percent of the members of the Ad-
9 visory Committee shall be appointed as
10 Special Government Employees.

11 (ii) SUBCOMMITTEES.—At least 75
12 percent of the members of the Sub-
13 committee on Science and Technology shall
14 be appointed as Special Government Em-
15 ployees. Not more than 25 percent of the
16 members of the Subcommittee on Product
17 Development and Delivery shall be ap-
18 pointed as Special Government Employees.

19 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS.—

20 (1) REPORTING.—The Advisory Committee
21 shall report to the Under Secretary and the appro-
22 priate requesting party.

23 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Under
24 Secretary shall provide administrative support to the
25 Advisory Committee.

1 (3) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Committee shall
2 meet at least twice each year, and at other times at
3 the call of the Under Secretary or the Chairperson.

4 (4) COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES.—A mem-
5 ber of the Advisory Committee shall not be com-
6 pensated for service on the Advisory Committee, but
7 may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem
8 in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with subchapter
9 I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code.

10 (d) EXPIRATION.—Section 14 of the Federal Advi-
11 sory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to
12 the Climate Service Advisory Committee.

13 **SEC. 6. REPEAL.**

14 The National Climate Program Act (15 U.S.C. 2901
15 et seq.) is repealed.