



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

Opening Statement

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Environment Subcommittee Hearing:
Working Toward Climate Equity: The Case for a Federal Climate Service
April 21, 2021

Thank you, Chairwoman Sherrill, for holding this important hearing today.

Good morning and thanks to all our witnesses for being here. As we heard at last month's climate hearing, climate change is impacting many facets of our society, and the time to make adaptation and mitigation decisions is now. It is vital that decision makers who are responsible for preparing our communities to adapt to and withstand the effects of climate change, both today and in the future, have the most up to date and relevant climate information possible.

As we often discuss on this Committee, the Federal government has a key role in investing in climate science, observations, and models that lead to robust climate data and information. But just having the science and data alone is not sufficient; it is important to translate that science and data into tools and technical support to help decision makers make appropriate adaptation and mitigation decisions. Climate services encompass that translation of climate data into actionable, relevant information.

There are many sources of Federal climate information and services that are freely available to the public, including several at agencies such as NOAA, USDA, and USGS. However, these programs are fragmented across the Federal government making it hard for communities to know where to turn when it comes time to make decisions. There is a clear need for coordination of these climate services at the Federal level.

Actionable climate information and services are critically important for small, rural, frontline, or otherwise underserved communities. Given the often-disproportionate impacts of climate change on underserved communities, access to these climate services is not something that can be left up to a community's ability to pay. Every community across our country deserves a level playing field when it comes to utilizing the highest quality climate information and decision support to help prepare them for future climate risk. The Federal government has a key role to play in ensuring equitable access to climate services for every American.

I look forward to today's discussion with this panel of expert witnesses to better understand what the end users of climate data and services need from the Federal government to help make the critical decisions that incorporate future climate risk.