



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

Opening Statement of Ranking Member Frank Lucas

**Environment Subcommittee Hearing: A Review of the NOAA Fiscal Year 2020
Budget Request**

April 30, 2019

Thank you, Chairwoman Fletcher, for holding this hearing on NOAA's FY20 budget request. NOAA has a broad array of responsibilities ranging from weather forecasting and climate prediction, to ocean and atmosphere observation. NOAA's work benefits America's farmers and ranchers, coastal communities, disaster personnel, land use planners, weather forecasters, and Americans across the country. NOAA's research and publicly available data has an immense economic impact.

The president's budget proposal for NOAA reflects difficult decisions made across the federal government. I appreciate the efforts of the Administration to submit a proposal that emphasizes NOAA's core priorities, principally protecting life and property. Beyond those basic functions, NOAA is prioritizing other areas within its jurisdiction, including improving agency efficiencies for satellite management, maximizing the economic contributions of our coastal and marine resources, and reducing the impacts of extreme weather incidents.

We have heard concerns about some of the proposed cuts included in this request. I would remind my colleagues that the President's budget request is just a starting point for our discussions, and we're here today to learn more about how best to prioritize NOAA's resources. It's also important to note that in recent years Congress has decided to fund NOAA at a higher rate than the president's budget request.

Many of my constituents are interested in NOAA's work, particularly the National Weather Service. Oklahoma is home to cutting edge research on weather forecasting and climate prediction. Last month, I had the opportunity to tour the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State to learn about the research being conducted in partnership with NOAA.

I also toured the National Weather Center in Oklahoma and heard from many dedicated researchers working to improve our weather forecasting abilities. There was one unmistakable conclusion from this trip: the work done by the National Weather Service is very important and must be a focus of this committee's work this Congress.

As a rancher, I can tell you that accurate weather prediction is critical for our nation's agricultural producers. So I have a keen interest in the committee's work to help improve weather forecasting. During the 115th Congress, this committee passed my Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 which was subsequently passed into law and is being implemented by NOAA.

I look forward to hearing about NOAA's continued implementation efforts for this act.

I want to thank Dr. Jacobs for appearing before the subcommittee today. His enthusiasm for his work is apparent and he brings a unique perspective to NOAA's leadership thanks to his extensive private sector experience. Madame Chairwoman, I yield back.

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