



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement of Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas)

An Overview of the Budget Request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for Fiscal Year 2017

Chairman Smith: Thank you, Chairman Bridenstine. We are here to discuss the President's Fiscal Year 2017 budget request for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This year, NOAA's request comes in at \$5.8 billion. While I support elements of NOAA's budget, other parts of the President's budget request cannot be justified. For example, the administration's request continues to increase funding for climate research at the expense of other important areas of research.

This administration continues to prioritize climate funding over weather research. The president's budget requests \$190 million for climate research while only \$100 million is dedicated to weather research. NOAA should fully fund weather research as authorized in the House-passed bipartisan *Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act*.

It is NOAA's job to monitor the climate and disseminate data to the public. But under this administration, this usually takes the form of monthly news releases that fail to include all relevant data sources. For example, the agency often ignores satellite measurements, which are considered by many to be the most objective.

NOAA and NASA both claimed, for example, that 2014 was the hottest year on record. However, scientists at NASA concluded that they were only 38 percent certain that 2014 was in fact the hottest on record. NASA buried this statistic in a footnote to their report. Similarly, in 2015, NOAA and NASA's joint news release for the temperature of 2015 did not mention satellite data.

However, a prominent satellite data set from the University of Alabama at Huntsville showed that 2015 was only the 3rd warmest year on record and another widely used satellite dataset (RSS) showed that 2015 was only the 4th warmest on record, contrary to NOAA's claims. The truth is that neither 2014 nor 2015 were the hottest year on record. Satellite data, which NOAA had access to, clearly refutes NOAA's claims.

Likewise, a recent report presented at the American Geophysical Union and coauthored by the Texas and Alabama State climatologists has called into question the placement and quality of many ground stations across the U.S. The report

concluded that this may have resulted in inaccurate temperature readings used by NOAA.

Instead of hyping a climate change agenda, NOAA should focus its efforts on producing sound science and improving methods of data collection. NOAA should prioritize areas of research that significantly impact Americans today, such as ways to improve weather forecasting. Unfortunately, climate alarmism often takes priority at NOAA. This was demonstrated by the agency's decision to prematurely publish the 2015 study that attempted to make the two-decade halt in global warming disappear.

The study, led by NOAA meteorologist Mr. Thomas Karl, used controversial new methods to readjust historical temperature data upward. The goal was clear from the start: remove a weakness in the administration's climate change agenda. This Committee began an investigation last July to examine NOAA's use of data in this study as well as their role in carrying out the administration's extreme climate agenda. The Committee heard from whistleblowers that the study was rushed into publication and that internal debate was stifled before moving forward.

Even more suspicious was the timing of this study. It was published just as the administration was about to propose its final Clean Power Plan regulation at the United Nation's Paris Climate Change Conference. This controversial study appears to serve only one purpose: to promote the administration's drastic and costly regulations.

Well-respected scientists have recently rebutted NOAA's claims. A new peer-reviewed study, published in the journal Nature, confirms the halt in global warming. According to one of the study's lead authors, it "essentially refutes" NOAA's study. The media were quick to cover NOAA's study last year. But the many well-respected scientists who refuted NOAA's claims were ignored by much of the national media, including the very same outlets that had previously reported that there never was a halt in global warming.

To date NOAA has failed to comply with a lawfully issued subpoena. Instead of devoting time and resources to misinform the public, NOAA should give the Committee answers to our valid questions. NOAA should adhere to the scientific standards of being objective, independent of political considerations, timely, and having findings based on all available sources of information.

Instead, NOAA ignores legitimate sources of objective information, such as satellite data, in order to promote the administration's biased climate change agenda. Thank you, Chairman Bridenstine, I yield back.

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