



AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY

Headquarters: 45 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-3693
Washington Office: 1120 G Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20005

Keith L. Seitter, Executive Director

2 August 2010

The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chairman
Committee on Science and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2321 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Gordon,

On behalf of the American Meteorological Society (AMS), I am writing in reference to the **NASA Authorization Act of 2010, HR 5781**. The communities represented by the AMS have interests in Titles III, IV, and VI, and after further study we may wish to offer comments on those. At present, however, we wish to offer our support to the language in Title IX, Section 905, dealing with space weather.

As you know, space weather can have a direct impact on much of our advanced technological systems, including the electric power grid, aviation, Global Navigation Satellite Systems [such as the Global Positioning System (GPS)] applications, communication systems, satellites, and space flight. Space weather can also affect national security and emergency response systems. Additionally, with the potential space tourism and intercontinental space flight markets, space weather risks are equally important to the commercial space transportation industry. As our nation continues to make huge investments in space-based technology and applications, it is especially critical that the government develop a long-term strategy for a sustainable space weather program, as stated in this bill.

The AMS supports the Director of OSTP, in coordination with NASA, NOAA, NSF, and other relevant federal agencies, and other stakeholders to prepare a long-term strategy for a sustainable space weather program and develop a plan to implement the strategy. Since its inception in 1995 the interagency National Space Weather Program (NSWP) has been successful in coordinating space weather research, forecasting, and other activities. However, as our nation continues to make huge investment in the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) and modernizing GPS, it is especially critical that OSTP lead a space weather program strategy to ensure that the goals and action plans will meet the pace at which our societal, technical, and national security needs are also evolving. As part of this strategy, a National Academies study on research, infrastructure, and operational needs for space weather, will be key to improve our nation's ability to predict space weather events.

The AMS Policy Program held a policy workshop a few years ago on *Integrating Space Weather Observations and Forecasts into Aviation Operations*. The workshop highlighted the need for improved space weather prediction for aviation operations. The workshop report is available online at <http://www.ametsoc.org/atmospolicy/spacewxworkshop.html>. This October, we are organizing a policy workshop on *Satellite Navigation & Space Weather: Understanding the Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience*. Through continuous interaction with the space weather and end-user communities, AMS is well aware of the importance of space weather observations, research, services, and forecasting. As stated in the AMS Policy Statement on Space Weather (copy attached), we strongly endorse activities and investment to further our understanding of space weather and its practical applications. The language in section 905 is very consistent with the recommendations in the AMS Policy Statement.

In closing, AMS strongly supports the language in Title IX Section 905 calling for a space weather strategy and implementation plan and a National Academies study on prediction. I urge you to retain this language in H.R. 5781.

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith L. Seitter
AMS Executive Director



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The Honorable Ralph M. Hall
Ranking Member, Committee on Science and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
2405 Rayburn Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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