



AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY

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11 February 2005

Rep. Vicki Truitt
Texas House of Representative
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

Dear Representative Truitt:

We have been made aware of the bill introduced in the Texas legislature (HB 577) that would restrict the use of the term "meteorologist" to describe only those individuals in the media who have degrees in meteorology, atmospheric science, or other natural sciences that included a specific set of course work as outlined in the bill; or those who have completed similar training while serving in the armed forces.

The American Meteorological Society (AMS) is a nonprofit scientific and professional society of over 11,000 members in the atmospheric and related sciences spanning the academic, government, and private (including broadcast media) sectors. The AMS has been the leading organization in the field both nationally and internationally since 1919. The Society created an official statement providing a guideline for the use of the term "meteorologist" in 1990 (see attached and supporting documentation) and the Society continues to feel that this guideline is the most appropriate one for the use of this term. The AMS guideline acknowledges that some individuals without degrees in atmospheric science or meteorology may still have achieved, through a combination of course work in specific core curriculum areas and experience, the necessary knowledge base to be referred to as a meteorologist.

The Society feels that it is the responsibility of the atmospheric science community to work through its scientific and professional societies to ensure a common reference to the title meteorologist for the best interest of the field and all those who use and are impacted by weather and climate information, including the general public. While the Society encourages steps that lead to increased professionalism of our field, legislation defining the term meteorologist should only be pursued if the definition is consistent with that supported by the profession itself as provided in the 1990 AMS statement.

The AMS would be happy to work with you or your staff to modify the bill so that it was consistent with the AMS guideline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith L. Seitter'.

Keith L. Seitter
Executive Director