

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2020*

**Statement on Signing the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020**

*December 23, 2020*

Today, I have signed into law S. 2981, the "National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020" (the "Act"), which will provide helpful changes to the governance of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps. I note that section 207 of the Act purports to authorize NOAA officers to communicate directly with the Congress, free from supervision within the executive branch and free from consequence in the event they make unauthorized disclosures, such as classified or confidential information related to an ongoing investigation. Consistent with the understanding long expressed by Presidents in signing similar legislation into law, provisions of this nature cannot detract from my constitutional authority to supervise, control, and correct NOAA officers' communications with the Congress related to their official duties, including in cases where such communications reveal sensitive information protected by executive privilege. I anticipate that when supervising officials decide that they must defer, limit, or preclude the disclosure of sensitive information by a NOAA officer, they will contact the appropriate congressional committees promptly to begin the accommodation process that has traditionally been followed with respect to disclosure of sensitive information.

DONALD J. TRUMP

The White House,  
December 23, 2020.

NOTE: S. 2981, approved December 23, was assigned Public Law No. 116–259. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

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