

rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7289, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NOAA CHIEF SCIENTIST ACT

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3952) to strengthen the role of the Chief Scientist of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in order to promote scientific integrity and advance the Administration's world-class research and development portfolio.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3952

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "NOAA Chief Scientist Act".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO REORGANIZATION PLAN NO. 4 OF 1970 RELATING TO CHIEF SCIENTIST OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended to read as follows:

"(d)(1) There is in the Administration a Chief Scientist of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (in this subsection referred to as the 'Chief Scientist'), who shall be selected by the Administrator and compensated at the rate now or hereafter provided for Level V of the Executive Schedule pursuant to section 5316 of title 5, United States Code. In selecting a Chief Scientist, the Administrator shall give due consideration to any recommendations for candidates which may be submitted by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science Advisory Board, and other widely recognized, reputable, and diverse United States scientific or academic bodies, including minority serving institutions or other such bodies representing underrepresented populations. The Chief Scientist shall be the principal scientific adviser to the Administrator on science and technology policy and strategy, as well as scientific integrity, and shall perform such other duties as the Administrator may direct. The Chief Scientist shall be an individual who is, by reason of scientific education and experience, knowledgeable in the principles of scientific disciplines associated with the work of the Administration, and who has produced work of scientific merit through an established record of distinguished service and achievement.

"(2) The Chief Scientist shall—

"(A) adhere to any agency or department scientific integrity policy and—

"(i) provide written consent to all applicable scientific integrity and other relevant science and technology policies of the Administration prior to serving in such position, with such written consent to be made available on a publicly accessible website of the Administration;

"(ii) in conjunction with the Administrator and other members of Administration leadership, undergo all applicable training programs

of the Administration which inform employees of their rights and responsibilities regarding the conduct of scientific research and communication with the media and the public regarding scientific research; and

"(iii) in coordination with the Administrator and other members of Administration leadership, make all practicable efforts to ensure Administration employees and contractors who are engaged in, supervise, or manage scientific activities, analyze or communicate information resulting from scientific activities, or use scientific information in policy, management, or regulatory decisions, adhere to established scientific integrity policies of the Administration;

"(B) provide policy and program direction for science and technology priorities of the Administration and facilitate integration and coordination of research efforts across line offices of the Administration, with other Federal agencies, and with the external scientific community, including through—

"(i) leading the development of a science and technology strategy of the Administration and issuing policy guidance to ensure that overarching Administration policy is aligned with science and technology goals and objectives;

"(ii) chairing the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science Council and serving as a liaison to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science Advisory Board;

"(iii) providing oversight to ensure—

"(I) the Administration funds high priority and mission-aligned science and technology development, including through partnerships with the private sector, Cooperative Institutes, academia, nongovernmental organizations, and other Federal and non-Federal institutions; and

"(II) there is no unnecessary duplication of such science and technology development;

"(iv) ensuring the Administration attracts, retains, and promotes world class scientists and researchers from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and expertise;

"(v) promoting the health and professional development of the Administration's scientific workforce, including by promoting efforts to reduce assault, harassment, and discrimination that could hamper such health and development; and

"(vi) ensuring coordination across the scientific workforce and its conduct and application of science and technology with the Administration's most recent Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan;

"(C) under the direction of the Administrator, promote, communicate, and advocate for the Administration's science and technology portfolio and strategy to the broad domestic, Tribal, and international communities and Congress, represent the Administration in promoting and maintaining good public and community relations, and provide the widest practical and appropriate dissemination of science and technology information concerning the full range of the Administration's earth system authorities;

"(D) manage an Office of the Chief Scientist—

"(i) which shall be staffed by Federal employees of the Administration detailed to the office on a rotating basis, in a manner that promotes diversity of expertise, background, and to the extent practicable, ensures that each line office of the Administration is represented in the Office over time;

"(ii) in which there shall be a Deputy Chief Scientist, to be designated by the Administrator or Acting Administrator from among the Assistant Administrators on a rotational basis, as appropriate to their backgrounds or expertise, who shall advise and support the Chief Scientist and perform the functions and duties of the Chief Scientist for not more than one year in the event the Chief Scientist is unable to carry out the duties of the Office, or in the event of a vacancy in such position; and

"(iii) which may utilize contractors pursuant to applicable laws and regulations, and offer

opportunities to fellows under existing programs; and

"(E) not less frequently than once each year, in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Science Council, produce and make publicly available a report that—

"(i) describes the Administration's implementation of the science and technology strategy and scientific accomplishments from the past year;

"(ii) details progress toward goals and challenges faced by the Administration's science and technology portfolio and scientific workforce;

"(iii) provides a summary of Administration-funded research, including—

"(I) the percentage of Administration-funded research that is funded intramurally;

"(II) the percentage of Administration-funded research that is funded extramurally, including the relative proportion of extramural research that is carried out by—

"(aa) the private sector;

"(bb) Cooperative Institutes;

"(cc) academia;

"(dd) nongovernmental organizations; and

"(ee) other categories as necessary; and

"(III) a summary of Administration-funded research that is transitioned to operations, applications, commercialization, and utilization; and

"(iv) provides reporting on scientific integrity actions, including by specifying the aggregate number of scientific and research misconduct cases, the number of consultations conducted, the number of allegations investigated, the number of findings of misconduct, and a summary of actions in response to such findings.

"(3) Nothing in this subsection may be construed as impeding the ability of the Administrator to select any person for the position of Chief Scientist the Administrator determines is qualified to serve in such position."

(b) SAVING CLAUSE.—The individual serving as Chief Scientist of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act may continue to so serve until such time as the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration selects such a Chief Scientist in accordance with subsection (d) of section 2 of Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970 (5 U.S.C. App.), as amended by subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3952, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3952, the NOAA Chief Scientist Act.

Scientific integrity is a critical component of scientific research.

NOAA supports the American public in a variety of ways but is well known for its provision of civilian weather forecasts, watches, and warnings. This is why it is important for the agency to

be considered a trusted scientific authority. The role of NOAA's chief scientist is pivotal in this respect.

While this position is statutorily defined, prior to this bill, the role lacked clear expectations and responsibilities or even qualifications. This has led to inconsistencies in how the role has been carried out historically.

This bill clarifies the role of the chief scientist to ensure that they adhere to and uphold scientific integrity directives at NOAA.

This commitment to scientific integrity at the highest levels of NOAA's leadership further underscores its importance to the agency's mission. This bill also requires the NOAA administrator to consider candidates with an established background of practice-led research and scientific achievement in fields relevant to NOAA's mission. This ensures the chief scientist will have pertinent experiences and expertise to draw from while carrying out this role.

H.R. 3952 also establishes an Office of the Chief Scientist within NOAA. Critically, this office will support the chief scientist's efforts to foster an environment that would encourage the recruitment and retention of a diverse scientific workforce. Diversity is a key component of ensuring that all voices and research perspectives are heard.

Attracting scientists with a diversity of backgrounds and expertise will allow NOAA to approach research questions from new perspectives.

I also take a moment to acknowledge NOAA's recent appointment of Dr. Sarah Kapnick as NOAA's chief scientist. Dr. Kapnick has a rich background that includes experience as a physical scientist at NOAA and more recently in the private sector. She embodies many of the qualities identified for consideration in a chief scientist that this bill requires, and I congratulate her on her selection.

I also thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA) for working together to introduce this bipartisan bill. I urge my colleagues to support this bill's passage.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3952, the NOAA Chief Scientist Act, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA to most of us, has a broad mission that includes monitoring and conserving our coasts, strengthening fisheries, forecasting severe weather, and improving emergency management. That is just a small sample of what they do.

Their work either involves directly conducting research or using research to inform how they can provide the best services to American industries and communities. That is why the position of chief scientist at NOAA is so important. The chief scientist is tasked with advising the NOAA administrator, providing direction for NOAA's science

and technology policies, and leading scientific integrity efforts.

This bill doesn't create a new role for the chief scientist at NOAA. That position has been utilized by the agency for a long time now. Instead, in recognition of how important it is for the agency to have a chief scientist, this bill simply makes that role's existing responsibilities into law.

It also ensures that the position will never be vacant for long by creating a process for naming an acting chief scientist when the role is empty. And having an office support staff for the chief scientist will make sure critical activities don't slip through the cracks.

We rely on NOAA to perform critical R&D and to implement sound scientific policies. Doing so requires capable scientific research, and this bill ensures that NOAA will always have that. It is especially timely, given that earlier this month Sarah Kapnick was named to the role of chief scientist at NOAA. I wish her luck there. I hope she will continue NOAA's long history of scientific excellence.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Madam Speaker, the NOAA Chief Scientist Act is smart legislation that codifies an important existing role at NOAA.

A scientific agency needs scientific leadership, and H.R. 3952 ensures that NOAA will always have that in place.

I thank the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Ms. SHERRILL), the chair of our Environment Subcommittee, for introducing this bill. I also thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA), the ranking member of the Research and Technology Subcommittee, for leading the Republican side.

Madam Speaker, this is a smart, simple bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3952, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3952, the NOAA Chief Scientist Act, as amended. This bill takes measures to better support and define the role of the Chief Scientist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

One of my great priorities as Chairwoman of the Science Committee has been reinforcing the importance of scientific integrity across our federal science agencies. The NOAA Chief Scientist Act prioritizes scientific integrity at the highest levels of leadership at NOAA by requiring the Chief Scientist to publicly acknowledge his or her commitment to agency scientific integrity policies. Scientific integrity and transparency are integral to ensuring federal agencies can maintain their status as trusted resources to Americans.

This bill lays out qualifications for the Chief Scientist, as this role should be held by some-

one with expertise and experience in the field. This bill includes additional provisions that would support the expanded role of the Chief Scientist and make the science and technology activities of the agency transparent and accessible to the public.

This bipartisan bill was introduced by Representative SHERRILL of New Jersey and Representative FEENSTRA from Iowa, who worked together on its provisions. I am proud of the Science Committee's work this Congress to develop scientifically sound, bipartisan legislation. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of a bill that advances scientific integrity at NOAA and urge my colleagues to support it.

I include in the RECORD an exchange of letters on H.R. 3952 sent between the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and the Committee on Natural Resources.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, May 24, 2022.

Hon. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources,
Longworth House Office Building, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRIJALVA: I am writing you concerning H.R. 3952, the "NOAA Chief Scientist Act" which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and sequentially to the Committee on Natural Resources. I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this bill. I recognize that the bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Natural Resources. I acknowledge that you will waive further consideration of H.R. 3952, that this action is not a waiver of future jurisdictional claims by the Committee on Natural Resources over this subject matter.

I will make sure to include a copy of our exchange of letters in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and will support the appointment of conferees from the Committee on Natural Resources during any House-Senate conference involving this legislation. Thank you for your cooperation on this legislation.

Sincerely,

EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Chairwoman, Committee on Science, Space,
and Technology.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, May 24, 2022.

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Chair, Committee on Science, Space, and Tech-
nology, House of Representatives, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR JOHNSON: In recognition of the goal of expediting consideration of H.R. 3952, the "NOAA Chief Scientist Act," the Committee on Natural Resources agrees to waive formal consideration of the bill as to provisions that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Natural Resources.

The Committee on Natural Resources takes this action with the mutual understanding that, in doing so, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues within our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation.

I also ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look

forward to continuing to work with you as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA,

Chair, House Natural Resources Committee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7361, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. TIFFANY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7361) to upgrade the communications service used by the National Weather Service, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7361

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Weather Service Communications Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8541 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section: “SEC. 415. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS.

“(a) SYSTEM UPGRADE.—The Director of the National Weather Service shall improve the instant messaging service used by National Weather Service personnel by implementing a commercial off-the-shelf communications solution hosted on the public cloud to serve as a replacement for the communications system in use as of the date of the enactment of this section (commonly referred to as ‘NWSChat’). Such communications solution shall satisfy requirements set forth by the Director to best accommodate future growth and perform successfully with increased numbers of users.

“(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$3,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2023 through 2026, to remain available until expended.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 414 the following new item:

“Sec. 415. National Weather Service communications.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER) and the gen-

tleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 7361, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7361, the National Weather Service Communications Improvement Act.

This bipartisan bill, introduced by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA) directs the National Weather Service to improve its current instant messaging communication service, also known as NWSChat.

NWSChat is a vital tool used by National Weather Service professionals to communicate with emergency managers, the media, and other strategic partners during high-impact and severe weather events. This tool ensures that the media and emergency response managers can retrieve real-time information to help protect Americans and their property during dangerous events.

However, NWSChat has experienced several issues recently which have caused delays in the National Weather Service’s ability to share critical weather information. This bill would help to address these issues by requiring the National Weather Service to transition NWSChat to an up-to-date, cloud-based commercial platform.

Just last week, the National Weather Service announced that it would be upgrading its chat service to use the commercially available Slack collaborative platform. It was reassuring to see the Weather Service take this step to address the recent outages and issues with NWSChat.

This bill will help support the agency with clear congressional direction and corresponding authorization of appropriations language to help ensure a seamless transition of NWSChat to this new platform.

Reliable and uninterrupted communication is critical during severe weather events. The National Weather Service Communications Improvement Act will support the improvement of this lifesaving tool.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7361, the National Weather Service Communications Improvement Act. Right now, the National Weather Service is years behind when it comes to the internal communications system known as NWSChat.

This instant messaging system is how forecasters and local emergency managers communicate with each other before, during, and after a severe weather event unfolds. This instantaneous communication is critical to their ability to warn and prepare communities for dangerous storms quickly and accurately.

It was developed decades ago out of necessity by employees within the National Weather Service, not by a company that specializes in application development. Therefore, NWSChat has had its fair share of hiccups, especially when a large number of users try to access it at once.

□ 1515

Surprisingly, the heaviest user traffic is usually during a large, destructive weather event when officials are trying to anticipate what is coming toward their communities.

H.R. 7361 will help solve this problem by authorizing the National Weather Service to upgrade their instant messaging service to a commercial, off-the-shelf solution. These services can handle a large number of users and easily adapt to technology upgrades, giving our forecasters a flexible and modern messaging service.

Living in Tornado Alley, I am very familiar with how quickly storms can form and change direction, so I can tell you that if a small upgrade like this makes storm warnings even a few seconds faster, that time can absolutely be the difference between life and death.

Madam Speaker, I thank my Committee on Science, Space, and Technology colleague, Mr. FEENSTRA, for introducing this bill. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. FEENSTRA).

Mr. FEENSTRA. Madam Speaker, I thank Ranking Member LUCAS for yielding and for his leadership on the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 7361, the National Weather Service Communications Improvement Act, is a bill that was born from a tragedy in my home State of Iowa.

On March 5, a tornado outbreak in central and southwest Iowa killed seven people. It was the deadliest storm in our State since 2008.

During this storm, an issue at the National Weather Service caused up to a 7-minute delay from when meteorologists issued warnings to when the public was alerted. In Iowa, we know that even the smallest delays can be a matter of life and death.

Then, just a month later, in April, eight tornadoes were confirmed during a storm. Luckily, this time around, there were no deaths. Despite that, we had 135-mile-an-hour winds and severe