



HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE INCREASES NWS FUNDING AT NWSEO'S REQUEST — ALSO NIXES NAME CHANGE

On June 7, the House Appropriations Committee approved next year's funding for the National Weather Service. The amount approved for NWS operations - \$667 million - is \$14 million *more* than was requested by the Administration. The total amount approved for the National Weather Service, including operations, facilities and procurement, is \$856 million, \$17 million *more* than requested by the President. The amount recommended by the Appropriations Committee will likely be approved by the full House of Representatives shortly. The Senate Appropriations Committee has just begun consideration of the NOAA budget.

The increase in the NWS appropriations came about as a result of an intensive lobbying effort by NWSEO. This began last winter when NWSEO Vice President, Dan Sobien, and General Counsel, Richard Hirn, met with the senior Clerk of the Science, State, Justice and Commerce Appropriations Subcommittee to discuss how the under-funding of the NWS has endangered services and why the amount requested by the Administration for the coming year was inadequate to resolve structural under-funding of the NWS. NWSEO leaders and some rank and file members had breakfast with the Ranking Democrat on the Committee, Rep. Alan Mollohan (W.VA), on April 21. NWSEO's General Counsel also attended a dinner for the Subcommittee's Chair, Rep. Frank Wolf, (VA) last month. The union submitted formal testimony to the Subcommittee in April. Additional informal meetings were held with Congressional staff to discuss NWS funding levels.

In addition to taking positive steps on the budget, the Appropriations Committee also criticized NOAA's attempt to change the name of the National Weather Service. In the report accompanying the appropriations recommendation, the Committee wrote:

“The Committee understands that NOAA has withdrawn a proposal to change the name of the National Weather Service, as well as other NOAA line offices. The Committee agrees that these changes are unnecessary and that renaming could lead to confusion among users of long-standing programs and services with substantial name recognition.”

The Committee also included language which prohibits NOAA from “taxing” the NWS or other line agencies for NOAA-wide administrative costs as it has done in previous years. Thus, all funds appropriated for the NWS will go to the NWS and cannot be diverted by NOAA to other programs without a formal “reprogramming” of funds.

The Committee included language in its report to ensure that NOAA does not attempt to evade Congressional oversight of how appropriations are used in future years by submitting future budget requests under broad thematic or program goals such as “climate” or “ecosystem management,” rather than by line office:

“The Committee continues to expect NOAA to include in the annual budget justification document a clear delineation of the positions, full-time equivalents, and salary-related costs with respect to each line office.”

At its meeting, the Committee also beat back an attempt by Rep. Peterson (who represents State College, PA) to include language in the Appropriations bill or report similar to that proposed by Sen. Santorum that would preclude the NWS from providing services similar to those provided by private weather service companies. Rep. Peterson has received over \$10,000 in campaign contributions from AccuWeather officials and their families. The Committee agreed to include in its report that encourages the NWS “to take maximum advantage of capabilities and services that already exist in the commercial sector to eliminate duplication and maximize accomplishment of the core mission of the NWS.”

The NWSEO continues to fight hard to preserve your current job and ensure your future opportunities. Proper funding for the NWS will reduce the pressure on the agency from cutting jobs to balance the budget. It will also allow for future training for your career enhancement. We will continue this fight and are the **only** organization that can or will do this for you.

STATE COLLEGE HITS A MILESTONE

NWS WFO CTP (State College PA) has reached a rare milestone of having ALL Forecasters as NWSEO members. In addition to this entire group of 10 Senior and General Forecasters, NWSEO Branch 1-86 members (**comprising a total of 16**) include: Two of three Hydro Meteorological Technicians (HMTs), the Senior Service Hydrologist (SSH), The Information Technology Officer (ITO), and 2 out of 4 Electronic Technicians (El Techs).

As Steward I am greatly encouraged by the ambition and support this diverse group is contributing to the NWS and our organization, particularly at this time of heated political activity.

It's also my pleasure to say thanks to each of the NWSEO Branch 1-86 members for their true team spirit, and valuable advice they often provide to me. It's my continued goal to channel their dedication and energy into the efforts of maintaining a "world class" team of professionals meeting the mission of providing forecasts and warnings, along with data and equipment support to protect life and property of US citizens.

Barry Lambert - Steward - NWSEO Branch 1-86

CREDIT CARD PROCESS BACK ON-LINE

As a result of a new application load by our previous provider, we lost the ability to calculate the dues amount for processing by new members. We have now programmed a new on-line form and are ready to begin processing new members via credit card using Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

LEGISLATIVE ALERT ISSUED FOR S. 786

NWS Duties Act of 2005 (S. 786) introduced by Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA) will have an adverse effect on our ability to do our jobs and will severely impact the public. To assist the public with voicing their opposition to this legislation, NWSEO has provided everyone with the means to directly send an email to your Senator. Please go to our new Legislative Action Center on our website: www.nwseo.org.

Some of you may be concerned about your rights as federal employees to lobby a bill pertaining to the NWS. In a memo to DL Johnson dated June 3, 2005, from Barbara Fredericks, Assistant General Counsel for Administration in the Department of Commerce, you are informed that

“Employees in a personal capacity may contact Congress directly and indirectly by asking others to do so for them (“grassroots lobby”).”

The memo goes on to advise employees to not engage in this activity on government premises during working hours or utilizing government resources such as phones, internet, or fax machines.

We need everyone reading this to send out this legislative alert to oppose S. 786, and to ask everyone you know to also go to our website and send this legislative alert to their Senators. Please help us stop the NWS Duties Act of 2005.

Fraternally,
Paul T. Greaves
National President

&

Daniel A. Sobien
Executive Vice President