

28 November 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
230 U.S. Capitol Building (Senate)  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
419 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
232 U.S. Capitol Building (House)  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
204 U.S. Capitol Building (House)  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leaders McConnell, Schumer, and Pelosi:

On behalf of the Friends of NOAA (FoNOAA) Coalition, we would like to thank you for your efforts in crafting the fiscal year (FY) 2019 appropriations bills. We understand that in a time of budget restraints, Congress must make difficult financial decisions. However, strong and sustained funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is critical to protecting our nation's security, economy, environment, and quality of life.

While we continue to support funding NOAA at \$6.2 billion in FY2019, we ask that you support this critical agency by **funding NOAA to the maximum extent possible in the final FY2019 appropriations bills**. For NOAA to continue its lifesaving work and implement the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act as required by law, the agency requires strong, predictable funding in both FY2019 and beyond.

From [monitoring](#) the conditions that lead to destructive wildfires in California, to forecasting devastating hurricanes, NOAA provides lifesaving services to the nation. This November, California saw devastating fires that destroyed more than 10,000 structures and took dozens of lives. Above average summer temperatures combined with an exceptionally dry fall created prime conditions for wildfire. NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information tracks the climatological data that lead to events such as deadly wildfires, and helps scientists, land managers, and officials understand the conditions that lead to such catastrophic events. NOAA satellites, such as the Suomi NPP, also help to capture images from space that help monitor the extent of the fire and smoke plumes.

NOAA also served an important role in forecasting, monitoring, and evaluating damage of devastating hurricanes Florence and Michael in 2018. Both Florence and Michael slammed the U.S. within four weeks of each other. NOAA issued the warnings to ensure communities were prepared and safe. Storm surge is often the leading cause of death associated with tropical storms, but with NOAA's introduction of storm surge watches, warnings, and flooding maps, communities throughout the United States are more informed than ever before. NOAA's [National Geodetic Survey](#) also provides aerial images that help communities understand the extend of impacts after storms such as Florence.

In addition to providing lifesaving data and warnings, NOAA serves as a hub of technological innovation and scientific advancement. NOAA recently unveiled a [new weather radar](#) which could save communities invaluable time and money by better forecasting severe and hazardous weather. This month, NOAA's GOES-17 satellite began transmitting its first high definition images of Alaska, Hawaii, and the Pacific Ocean. These are the most detailed images that have ever been available, providing revolutionary data for observing sea ice, volcanic ash, and wildfires. Moreover, NOAA is doing groundbreaking work in advancing ocean observations. NOAA's underwater gliders collect critical data from the surface to the deep ocean that have implications for Harmful Algal Blooms (HABS), fish stocks, and ocean acidification. This important information supports the economic wellbeing and public health of coastal communities across the nation.

Finally, NOAA does the critical work that informs stakeholders about how changes in the global climate impact the natural environment, economy, and human health and welfare across the U.S. The recently released [National Climate Assessment](#) is an important tool for farmers, businesses, health professionals, and countless other stakeholders to both understand future risks and plan for mitigating them. The recent report found that climate change is projected to cost some economic sectors hundreds of billions of dollars by the end of the century, as well as alter the geographic range of vector-borne diseases such as Zika, West Nile, and Lyme. In order to keep our economy strong and communities healthy, it is imperative that NOAA is fully supported to study and understand these risks.

Without strong funding in an FY19 appropriations bill, NOAA will not be able to reach its full potential in understanding and warning the nation about environmental risks like those we have seen throughout 2018. Friends of NOAA urges you to continue your support of this important agency by **completing the appropriations process and funding NOAA to the maximum extent possible in FY2019.**

Thank you for your support and consideration. The Friends of NOAA coalition looks forward to working with you in the future to advance NOAA's critical mission.

Sincerely,

Friends of NOAA Co-Chairs

**Carissa Bunge**  
*Senior Public Affairs  
Specialist*  
American Geophysical  
Union

**Ari Gerstman**  
*Director of Washington  
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*Manager, Public Affairs*  
Consortium for Ocean  
Leadership

CC: The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen

The Honorable Nita Lowey

The Honorable John Culberson

The Honorable José Serrano

The Honorable Richard Shelby

The Honorable Patrick Leahy

The Honorable Jerry Moran

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen