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FY 2007 Appropriations Update
With about a week to go before Congress recesses for the November elections, no FY 2007 appropriations bill has been completed, and the bill funding NSF, NASA and NOAA has not gone to the Senate floor for a vote. The bills funding the Defense Department and Homeland Security may pass before the new fiscal year begins. All other programs and agencies will be funded through a continuing resolution, which will keep programs running until after the elections on November 7. When Congress returns, they will try and finish the remaining appropriations bills but most observers believe that that cannot happen until after Thanksgiving so at least one extension – and probably more – will have to be passed before the FY07 appropriations are finalized.

Friends of NOAA Conference Letter
As reported earlier this summer, the newly established Friends of NOAA coalition of environmental, research, commercial and employee groups was formed to advocate for $4.4 billion for NOAA in FY 2007.

At the end of this update is a letter the coalition has drafted to the leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees that will negotiate FY07 funding levels for NOAA, when the bill moves to conference. The list of institutions signing the letter is impressive, we would like to encourage UCAR member institutions or their departments to also sign onto this letter if appropriate. To do so, let Laura Curtis know by Wednesday, September 27, if you would like to sign on. It will then be ready to go when Congress returns in November.

NOAA Organic Act
In a surprising development, the House leadership called for a vote on H.R. 5450 - the NOAA Organic Act which passed by unanimous consent earlier this week. Even though the bill made it through the House, it is very unlikely the Senate will take it up this year. However, passing this bill could be helpful in moving it forward in Congress next year.
The House-passed version of this bill is just a first step. For example, it does not include language establishing a federally charted advisory committee in regard to weather and climate operations and services. As you may recall, the Weather Coalition has recommended that such a committee be created, which would help to coordinate federal and nongovernmental efforts in weather data gathering and dissemination.

Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006
A bill creating a public database for tracking federal contracts and grants has been approved by Congress and is awaiting the President’s signature. The “Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006” (S. 2590), introduced by Senators Tom Coburn (R-OK) and Barack Obama (D-IL), will require the Office of Management and Budget to set up a public website that will allow users to search all federal contracts and grants of more than $25,000. The new site is expected to be online by January 1, 2008.

American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) Update
Congress has introduced a number of innovation/competitiveness-related bills, in support of the President’s American Competitiveness Initiative, and both House and Senate Appropriations Committees have provided increased funding for basic research and education for NSF, NIST and the Department of Energy’s Office of Science in FY07. One more bill may be coming down the pike: Senate Majority Leader, Bill Frist (R-TN) is expected to introduce a new innovation bill before Congress breaks, which would merge several existing ACI bills. This may soon go to the Senate floor by unanimous consent. “The National Competitiveness Investment Act” will incorporate provisions from the “PACE-Energy Act” (S. 2197) and the “American Innovation and Competitiveness Act” (S. 2802).

Congressional Hearings
Several hearings occurred too late to provide details in this month’s update. The Senate Environment Committee held a hearing on the Asia Pacific Partnership; the House Government Reform Committee held a hearing entitled “Climate Change Technology Research: Do We Need a ‘Manhattan Project’ for the Environment?”; the House Science Committee’s Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing on DOE’s Climate Change Technology Programs; and the House Science Committee’s Subcommittee on Research held a hearing on the International Polar Year. Full details should be available on the committee websites by the time of publication.

Developing Common Priorities for the Weather And Climate Community
The AMS Board on Enterprise Communication (BEC) and the Weather Coalition will co-host a Town Hall Meeting at the January 2007 AMS Annual Meeting to identify and discuss the major issues facing the entire weather and climate community and to discuss how to improve our community's effectiveness. A panel of experts from industry, academia, and scientific and professional associations, will be asked to respond to a draft statement about our community's top priorities.

The draft statement on top community priorities is now available for review on the AMS (www.ametsoc.org) and the Weather Coalition (www.weathercoalition.org) websites. We encourage all stakeholders to post comments on the AMS CWCE Message Board. Discussion
on the AMS Message Board and other comments received prior to the town hall meeting will feed directly into the Town Hall meeting in January.

**Climate Change Policy and Legislation News**  
*California Sues Automakers:* California Attorney General Bill Lockyer filed a federal lawsuit against six major carmakers arguing that they are liable for the damages caused by their vehicles' global warming emissions. The suit is similar to one brought by New York and other states against major electric utilities.  

*California Legislation:* The State Assembly has approved three bills that await approval by Governor Schwarzenegger: (1) a state-wide mandatory limit on greenhouse gas emissions; (2) requirements for half of the cars sold in the state to run on alternative fuels by 2020; and (3) limits on the global warming emissions of electricity generation purchased from other states.  

*Arizona Executive Order:* Governor Napolitano issued an Executive Order for a Climate Change Action Plan stemming from the Governor's Climate Change Advisory Group's (CCAG) policy recommendations.  

Opinion Polling: Recent polling by Zogby and by LA Times/Bloomberg provide insight into public opinion on the urgency of global warming and response measures.  

*Congressional Budget Office Report:* The CBO, a non-partisan Congressional research unit, released a report entitled “Evaluating the Role of Prices and R&D in Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions,” which discusses the relative effectiveness of different policy approaches being discussed in Congress.  
[http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=7567&sequence=0](http://www.cbo.gov/showdoc.cfm?index=7567&sequence=0)

Pre-Annual Meeting Reminder: April Burke and Joel Widder from Lewis-Burke Associates LLC in Washington, DC, will conduct a workshop on Tuesday, October 10. They will provide an overview of the federal budget process, insight into the manner in which policy that affects science is shaped, information on trends that influence congressional and Executive Branch decisions about science, and tips on how you can influence policy makers through effective advocacy. Go to [http://www.ucar.edu/governance/meetings/oct06/tours.html](http://www.ucar.edu/governance/meetings/oct06/tours.html) to register.
Dear Chairman Wolf, Chairman Shelby, Representative Mollohan and Senator Mikulski:

As supporters, stakeholders, users, partners, and the employees’ union of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), we -- the Friends of NOAA Coalition -- recommend that you and your fellow conferees meeting on the FY 2007 Commerce-Justice-Science and State Appropriations Act (HR 5672) support an appropriation for NOAA consistent with the level recommended in the Senate version of this appropriations act. An investment of $4.4 billion for NOAA in FY 2007, the level proposed by the Senate, would restore critical funding for core programs and would also enhance support for the research, education, environmental observation, and resource management activities important for our national security, environment, economy and overall quality of life.

Weather and climate sensitive industries, both directly and indirectly, account for about one-third of the Nation’s GDP ranging from finance, insurance, and real estate to services, retail and wholesale trade and manufacturing. Industries directly impacted by weather such as agriculture, construction, energy distribution, and outdoor recreation account for nearly 10% of GDP. Six billion dollars annually is lost in economic efficiencies as a result of air traffic delays, of which 70% is attributed to weather. Total annual Federal spending for weather information is about $25 per household (including aviation and defense, in addition to NOAA), which produces an annual benefit-cost ratio of 4.4 to 1 for U.S. households alone, or net national benefits of $8.8 billion a year. This does not include benefits in agriculture, transportation, construction, or benefits to households in other countries that rely on weather information from the United States.

Economic activity in coastal regions is significant. Seventy-five percent of the nation’s Gross State Product came from the coastal states in 2003. Almost half of the national economy came from the coastal watershed counties, and more than one-third came from those counties in which states

The Friends of NOAA are supporters, stakeholders, partners, and unionized employees of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and exist to encourage the White House and the Congress to provide appropriate support for the agency as it carries out its mission of saving lives and livelihoods. For information about the Friends of NOAA, please visit www.friendsofnoaa.org.
operate their Coastal Zone Management programs. The near shore area, which is 4% of the nation’s land, produces more than 11% of the nation’s economic output. That portion of the U.S. economy that depends directly on the ocean is also large, with 2.2 million people employed and $197 billion in output (gross state product) in 2003. Research and outreach conducted by Sea Grant colleges and institutions on Manila clams and blue mussels have resulted in new industries worth $19 million annually while research and extension work on hybrid striped bass aquaculture has led to a $25 million dollar annual business.

In this country, aquaculture represents about $1 billion per year industry to the farmers and produces about $6 billion per year in retail food. The U.S. currently imports over 70% of the seafood that we consume and at least 40% of that is from aquaculture. Overall, our citizens consume about 16 lbs. of seafood per capita per year (half the global average) and, as the population continues to grow, the U.S. will need to find another 2 million metric tons of high quality seafood each year at a value of about $2-8 billion per year. If we double our seafood consumption to the global average as recommended by health experts, the required amount of seafood and its value would double. This possibility helps demonstrate how NOAA’s investment in aquaculture can play a critical role in this part of the Nation’s economy.

Estimates of the economic impacts of harmful algal blooms in the United States average $75 million annually. These impacts are the sum of different kinds of direct output impacts across four categories of effects: public health (divided between fish ciguatera and shellfish poisonings); commercial fishing; recreation and tourism; and monitoring and management costs. However individual outbreaks can cause economic damage that exceeds the annual average. For example, outbreaks in Chesapeake Bay in 1997 cost the Maryland seafood and recreational fishing industries almost $50 million in just a few months. Lost sales of shellfish in Maine and Massachusetts due to closures imposed as a consequence of the 2005 bloom of *Alexandrium fundyense* were estimated to be $11 million for the months of May through September. Invasive algal blooms along Maui’s Kihei coast cause over $20 million in potential revenue lost each year to the State of Hawaii – including reductions in property value, rental income, and clean up costs.

Preliminary estimates of the potential economic benefits from new investments in an Integrated Ocean Observing System in US waters range from $500 million to $1 billion per year, estimated largely in terms of increased economic activity and social surplus realized as a result of improved information about coastal marine conditions. The annual economic return to the U.S. economy associated with NOAA’s El Niño ocean observing and forecast system is between 13 and 26%, which is significantly higher than the Office of Management and Budget’s 5.8% minimum rate of return specified for Federal projects.

The services, products and research results provided by NOAA -- from predicting coastal hazards to managing drought and wildfires to ensuring safe and healthy seafood – touch the lives of every American. If funded at the $4.4 billion level (about $15 per person annually) recommended by the Senate NOAA would be able to continue serving the varied interests of our Nation by providing accurate and up-to-date weather forecasting, fisheries management information, prediction and tracking information related to severe weather, access to navigational information, scientific research and vital local community assistance.

NOAA has proven its worth to the Nation repeatedly. Just over one year ago, the National Weather Service and its National Hurricane Center issued its forecast for Hurricane Katrina – a forecast that probably saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Moreover, it is the integration of NOAA’s many activities that allows the agency to deliver such valuable life-saving services and information to our citizens. This integrated system includes satellites in space, buoys at sea, coastal and ocean
observatories, weather stations coast to coast, and the people who provide life saving information to those with responsibility for the public’s safety at the state and local level.

The Members of the Friends of NOAA Coalition appreciate the severe budgetary constraints under which the Congress has to work. However, we also believe that NOAA and its partners directly contribute to the health, safety, and continued economic development of our country. As a result, the Coalition urges the conference committee to do everything it can to adopt the Senate’s bottom line funding recommendation for NOAA. Thank you for the opportunity to present these views.

Sincerely,

University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
The Weather Coalition
Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education
Joint Ocean Commission Initiative
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Space Enterprise Council
Reinsurance Association of America
Shipbuilders Council of America
United Fishermen's Marketing Association
Sea Grant Association
National Association of Marine Laboratories
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
Coastal States Organization
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
National Weather Service Employees Organization
National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
Campaign for Environmental Literacy
The Ocean Foundation
National Environmental Trust
National Council for Science and the Environment
Council of Environmental Deans and Directors
Alaska Oceans Program
Fugro Pelagos, Inc.
Institute for Exploration
International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers
National Fisheries Institute
Dauphin Island Sea Lab
Marine Technology Society
Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Southern California
Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, University System of Georgia
Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
Marine Sciences Research Center at Stony Brook University
The Alliance for Earth Observations
The Nature Conservancy
Planetary Data, Incorporated
Vaisala Inc.
University of Washington
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
DTN Meteorlogix
Institute of the Environment, University of California, Los Angeles

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