

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Howard Lutnick  
Secretary of Commerce  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

I am writing to express outrage over the reported mass layoffs at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that will severely undermine its ability to serve the American public.<sup>1,2</sup> NOAA plays a vital role in public safety, economic security, and scientific leadership. Any actions by the administration to slash NOAA's budget, reduce its workforce, or eliminate key initiatives—including those that promote broader participation in the sciences—will have devastating consequences. Undermining NOAA's capabilities jeopardizes lives, livelihoods, and our nation's resilience. I strongly urge you to reverse these workforce reductions and oppose any budget or program cuts that will diminish the agency's critical functions.

NOAA's forecasting and research are indispensable to industries ranging from aviation and agriculture to shipping and fisheries. The agency tracks extreme weather, issues early warnings for hurricanes, and monitors climate patterns that influence everything from crop yields to disaster response. NOAA's work is not just about science—it is essential to public safety, national security, and economic stability.

In my district, NOAA's impact is especially significant. The National Weather Service office in Albany, New York provides critical forecasting that protects lives, supports local industries, and strengthens emergency preparedness. The New York State Mesonet partners with NOAA to collect real-time data on temperature, humidity, wind, and atmospheric pressure—essential tools for storm predictions, disaster response, and electricity reliability. Additionally, for over 40 years, NOAA has invested in the Hudson River, advancing scientific research, conservation, and public education. These contributions are irreplaceable, and any reductions would have far-reaching consequences for my constituents and communities nationwide.

Given NOAA's essential role, I request responses to these questions by March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025:

- Has NOAA conducted an impact assessment of these workforce reductions? If so, please provide that analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/science/science-news/noaa-workers-fired-weather-forecasts-programs-safety-rcna194568>

<sup>2</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/national-weather-service-layoffs-trump-doge-a65360a1eb2500b7d47c9c966e383f4a>

- How do you plan to address the concerns of industries and communities that rely heavily on NOAA's research and services?
- How do you plan to maintain NOAA's leadership in scientific research and innovation if key initiatives and personnel are cut?
- What opportunities will be provided for public and stakeholder input on these changes?
- How will reductions in staffing and resources affect NOAA's ability to provide timely and accurate severe weather warnings, including hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods?

The American people deserve a science-driven, transparent approach to weather forecasting, climate research, and emergency preparedness. I request an immediate response to these concerns and look forward to your assurances that NOAA's integrity and effectiveness will be preserved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul D. Tonko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress