

**Calendar No. 689**

114TH CONGRESS }  
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT  
114-385 }

SPACE WEATHER RESEARCH AND  
FORECASTING ACT

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R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND  
TRANSPORTATION

ON

S. 2817



NOVEMBER 28, 2016.—Ordered to be printed

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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### SPACE WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING ACT

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Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation, submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 2817]

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, to which was referred the bill (S. 2817) to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment (in the nature of a substitute) and recommends that the bill (as amended) do pass.

#### PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of S. 2817, as reported, is to improve the understanding and forecasting of space weather events, and for other purposes.

#### BACKGROUND AND NEEDS

Space weather refers to naturally occurring variations in the space environment between the Sun and the Earth, including solar flares, solar energetic particles, solar wind, and coronal mass ejections.<sup>1</sup> These solar events can interact with Earth and its surrounding space, including the Earth's magnetic field.<sup>2</sup> Space weather is relevant to U.S. economic and social well-being because these naturally occurring variations could cause disruption to electrical power grids, navigation systems, communications networks, and satellite and aircraft operations. Therefore, space weather has economic, safety, health, and national security implications. As the

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<sup>1</sup> National Science and Technology Council, *National Space Weather Strategy*, October 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Homeland Security, *The Strategic National Risk Assessment (SNRA) in Support of PPD 8: A Comprehensive Risk-Based Approach toward a Secure and Resilient Nation*, December 2011.

United States becomes more and more dependent on communication networks, navigation systems, and electrical power grid technologies, the impact of space weather poses an increasing risk to infrastructure.

Historical records indicate that space weather events of great severity have occurred within the last 150 years. The most famous geomagnetic power outage happened during a space storm in March 1989 when six million people in Quebec, Canada lost power for nine hours. The Great Geomagnetic Storm of May 1921, which produced ground currents as much as ten times stronger than the 1989 Quebec storm, was used as a case study to model its effect on the modern power grid. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) found there would be more than 350 transformers at risk of permanent damage and 130 million people without power if the 1921 storm happened today. The strongest geomagnetic storm on record is the Carrington Event of August-September 1859, which was ranked over 50 percent stronger than the storm of May 1921. A contemporary repetition of the Carrington Event would cause extensive social and economic disruptions,<sup>3</sup> including power outages, radio blackouts, and satellite malfunctions, and impacts to telecommunications, GPS navigation, banking and finance, and transportation. According to the NAS estimates, the total economic impact in the first year alone could reach up to \$2 trillion, approximately 20 times greater than the costs of Hurricane Katrina.<sup>4</sup> Scientists do not know the likelihood of such an event recurring, or whether such an event is even the worst-case scenario.

In October 2015, the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) released both the National Space Weather Strategy and the National Space Weather Action Plan, the result of a multi-agency task force led by the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) seeking to enhance the integration of existing national efforts to understand, predict, prepare for, and mitigate space weather.

S. 2817 would help implement the National Space Weather Strategy and the National Space Weather Action Plan by setting national priorities to increase and improve space weather observations, science, and forecasting abilities. If utility and satellite operators know a storm is coming, they could take measures to reduce damage, such as disconnecting wires, shielding vulnerable electronics, and powering down critical hardware.

Currently, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO) spacecraft includes the Large Angle and Spectrometric Coronagraph (LASCO) instrument that provides data with an advanced warning of incoming solar flares of 24 hours to 72 hours depending on the energy emitted. However, SOHO/LASCO was launched 20 years ago on December 2, 1995, and has already exceeded its design life. Therefore, this bill would require NASA and NOAA to consider addi-

<sup>3</sup> National Aeronautics and Space Administration, *Severe Space Weather - Social and Economic Impacts*, accessed April 20, 2016, at <http://science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2009/21jan-severespaceweather/>.

<sup>4</sup> National Academy of Sciences, *Severe Space Weather Events - Understanding Societal and Economic Impacts: A Workshop Report*, 2008.

tional capability for solar imaging to provide continuous space weather forecasting in the event of a SOHO/LASCO failure.

#### SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

If enacted, S. 2817, as amended, would provide clear roles and responsibilities for Federal agencies, including NASA, NOAA, the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Department of Defense (DOD) to better understand, predict, and forecast space weather. Specifically, the bill would direct NOAA and the DOD to provide operational space weather forecasts, and it would direct NASA and the NSF to conduct heliophysics research, develop next-generation technologies, and transfer scientific research findings, data, and models to operational forecasters.

The bill also would direct NOAA and NASA to immediately begin planning for back-up solar observations to prevent a single point of failure in the current satellite fleet, and direct the agencies to develop space weather benchmarks to characterize the nature, frequency, and intensity of expected space weather events. Additionally, the bill would direct the DHS and national security agencies to assess the vulnerability of critical infrastructure and national security assets to space weather events and manage associated risks and impacts, and it would direct the FAA to assess safety implications and methods to mitigate the safety implications of space weather events to civil aviation.

#### LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Space, Science, and Competitiveness Subcommittee Ranking Member Gary Peters introduced S. 2817, the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, on April 19, 2016, and the bill was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate. Senators Cory Gardner and Cory Booker are original cosponsors.

No hearings were held on the bill in the 114th Congress; however, the Committee's Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness held a hearing in the 113th Congress entitled, "Assessing the Risks, Impacts, and Solutions for Space Threats," which included testimony on threats posed by space weather.

On April 27, 2016, the Committee met in open Executive Session to consider S. 2817. Senator Peters offered a modified amendment in the nature of a substitute that added an FAA provision, a NASA finding and clarification, a Navy support role where practicable, and a requirement for the OSTP to consult with commercial industry. The modified substitute was approved by the Committee by voice vote to serve as the underlying text for consideration. The Committee then approved two first degree amendments to the substitute by voice vote. Senator Markey's amendment added to the finding on the Department of Interior's role related to space weather. Senator Schatz's modified amendment required the NSF and the DOD to improve, as necessary and advisable, ground-based observations of the Sun in order to help meet identified priorities.

The bill, as amended, was ordered to be reported to the Senate favorably by voice vote.

No similar legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives.

#### ESTIMATED COSTS

In accordance with paragraph 11(a) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee provides the following cost estimate, prepared by the Congressional Budget Office:

##### *S. 2817—Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act*

Summary: S. 2817 would require the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to capture imagery of coronal mass ejections (CMEs). A CME is the release of large quantities of matter and electromagnetic radiation from the sun. The bill also would largely codify existing multi-agency efforts under the National Space Weather Program.

Based on information provided by NOAA and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that acquiring and launching into space the equipment necessary to capture imagery of CMEs would cost \$182 million over the 2017–2021 period.

Enacting S. 2817 would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply. CBO estimates that enacting the legislation would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

S. 2817 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary effect of S. 2817 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2017–2021
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Estimated Authorization Level .....	1	20	80	70	40	211
Estimated Outlays .....	1	8	45	70	58	182

Basis of estimate: For this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 2817 will be enacted by the end of 2016 and that the necessary amounts will be appropriated for each fiscal year.

Currently, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) operates several spacecraft that provide imagery of CMEs; however, those vehicles are outdated. S. 2817 would require NOAA to assume that responsibility and ensure the United States continues to capture images of earth-directed CMEs. Based on an analysis of information provided by the agency and assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts, CBO estimates that securing that capability would cost \$182 million over the 2017–2021 period. Those amounts would be used to acquire a coronagraph, a spacecraft, and a launch vehicle by 2022. CBO expects that most of that spending would occur in the years leading up to the launch as NOAA would need to acquire and establish the flight and ground

systems necessary to operate the spacecraft well in advance of the launch. Additional amounts would be necessary in 2022 and beyond in order to operate and maintain the spacecraft and coronagraph.

Other provisions in the bill would codify ongoing activities carried out by several agencies under the National Space Weather Program. In 2016, those agencies spent a combined \$160 million on activities related to space weather. Because the activities required under those provisions could be carried out at existing funding levels, CBO estimates that implementing those provisions would not affect the federal budget.

Pay-As-You-Go considerations: None.

Increase in long-term direct spending and deficits: CBO estimates that enacting S. 2817 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2027.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: S. 2817 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimate prepared by: Federal costs: Jeff LaFave; Impact on state, local, and tribal governments: Jon Sperl; Impact on the private sector: Amy Petz.

Estimate approved by: H. Samuel Papenfuss; Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

#### REGULATORY IMPACT

In accordance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee provides the following evaluation of the regulatory impact of the legislation, as reported:

##### NUMBER OF PERSONS COVERED

S. 2817 as reported does not create any new programs or impose any new regulatory requirements, and therefore would not subject any individuals or businesses to new regulations.

##### ECONOMIC IMPACT

The legislation is not expected to have a negative impact on the Nation's economy. On the contrary, it will likely reduce adverse economic impacts if space weather events occur by increasing preparedness.

##### PRIVACY

The reported bill is not expected to impact the personal privacy of individuals.

##### PAPERWORK

S. 2817 would require the Director of the OSTP to submit a report to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives regarding the integrated strategy for solar and solar wind observations beyond the lifetime of the current assets. S. 2817 also would direct the Space Weather Interagency Working Group to develop preliminary benchmarks to

describe the nature, frequency, and intensity of space weather disturbances. The Space Weather Interagency Working Group would be directed to publish the final benchmarks not later than 18 months after the preliminary benchmarks are developed.

#### CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING

In compliance with paragraph 4(b) of rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee provides that no provisions contained in the bill, as reported, meet the definition of congressionally directed spending items under the rule.

#### SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

##### *Section 1. Short title.*

This section would provide the short title of the bill, the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act.

##### *Section 2. Space weather.*

This section would include the findings of Congress and Federal agency roles regarding space weather. The NSTC, under the OSTP, would be directed to establish an interagency working group on space weather to improve the ability of the United States to prepare, avoid, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potentially devastating impacts of space weather events. This section also would direct the OSTP to coordinate program responsibilities of the National Space Weather Program members based on agency capabilities. This section also would direct the OSTP, in coordination with NOAA, NASA, the NSF, and the DOD, and in consultation with academic and commercial communities, to develop an integrated strategy for solar and solar wind observations beyond the lifetime of current assets. It also would direct NASA to maintain SOHO/LASCO operations for as long as the satellite continues to deliver quality observations.

This section also would direct NOAA to secure reliable secondary capability for near real-time coronal mass ejection imagery, prioritizing a cost-effective solution and considering options such as commercial solutions, prize authority, academic, and international partnerships. NOAA would be directed to develop an operational contingency plan to provide continuous space weather forecasting in the event of a SOHO/LASCO failure, and develop requirements and a plan for follow-on space-based observations for operational purposes.

This section would direct the NSF, the Air Force, and where practicable the Navy, to maintain and improve, as necessary and advisable, ground-based observations of the Sun in order to help meet identified priorities, and provide space weather data. It also would require the NSF to provide key data streams for research and space weather model development, to develop experimental models for scientific purposes, and to support the transition of experimental models to operations. This section also would direct NOAA, the Air Force, and, where practicable, the Navy to conduct and publish a survey to identify and prioritize the needs of space weather forecast users. It also would require the NSF, NASA, and the DOD to continue to carry out basic research activities on heliophysics, geospace science, and space weather, and require the



NSF, NOAA, and NASA to pursue multidisciplinary research in subjects that further our understanding of solar physics, space physics, and space weather.

This section also would direct NASA to implement missions that meet the science objectives identified by the NAS decadal surveys, and direct NASA, the NSF, NOAA, the Air Force, and, where practicable, the Navy to develop a formal mechanism to transition research to operations and enhance coordination between modeling and forecasting centers. This section would require NASA and the NSF to support the development of technologies and instrumentation to improve space weather forecasting lead-time and accuracy. Lastly, this section would direct NASA and the NSF to make space weather data obtained for scientific research purposes available to space weather forecasters and operations centers.

### *Section 3. Space weather metrics.*

This section would define “space weather disturbance” and “space weather benchmark.” It also would direct the Space Weather Interagency Working Group to assess existing data, historical records, models, and peer-reviewed studies on space weather and develop preliminary benchmarks for measuring solar disturbances, and update those benchmarks as necessary. This section would require the Space Weather Interagency Working Group to publish final benchmarks, and require the NAS to review those benchmarks.

### *Section 4. Protection of critical infrastructure.*

This section would direct NOAA, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, to provide information about space weather hazards to the DHS. It would direct the DHS, in consultation with NOAA and the heads of other relevant agencies, to include an assessment of the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to space weather events and support critical infrastructure providers in managing risks and impacts associated with space weather.

### *Section 5. Protection of national security assets.*

This section would direct the National Security Council, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, to assess the vulnerability of the national security community to space weather events and develop mechanisms to protect national security assets from space weather threats.

### *Section 6. Ensuring the safety of civil aviation.*

This section would direct the FAA, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, to assess safety implications and methods to mitigate the safety implications of space weather events to civil aviation. This section also would direct the FAA, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, to develop methods to increase interaction between the aviation, space weather research, and service provider communities.

## CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new material is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

## TITLE 51. NATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL SPACE PROGRAMS

**CHAPTER 607—SPACE WEATHER**

60701. *Space weather*  
 60702. *Observations and forecasting*  
 60703. *Research and technology*  
 60704. *Space weather data.*

**§ 60701. Space weather**

(a) *FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:*

(1) *Space weather events pose a significant threat to humans working in the space environment and to modern technological systems.*

(2) *The effects of severe space weather events on the electric power grid, satellites and satellite communications and information, airline operations, astronauts living and working in space, and space-based position, navigation, and timing systems could have significant societal, economic, national security, and health impacts.*

(3) *Earth and space observations provide crucial data necessary to predict and warn about space weather events.*

(4) *Clear roles and accountability of Federal departments and agencies are critical for an efficient and effective response to threats posed by space weather.*

(5) *In October 2015, the National Science and Technology Council published a National Space Weather Strategy and a National Space Weather Action Plan seeking to integrate national space weather efforts and add new capabilities to meet increasing demand for space weather information.*

(b) *FEDERAL AGENCY ROLES.—*

(1) *FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—*

(A) *the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provides operational space weather forecasting and monitoring for civil applications, maintains ground and space-based assets to provide observations needed for forecasting, prediction, and warnings, and develops requirements for space weather forecasting technologies and science;*

(B) *the Department of Defense provides operational space weather forecasting, monitoring, and research for the department's unique missions and applications;*

(C) *the National Aeronautics and Space Administration provides increased understanding of the fundamental physics of the Sun-Earth system through space-based observations and modeling, develops new space-based technologies and missions, and monitors space weather for NASA's space missions;*

(D) the National Science Foundation provides increased understanding of the Sun-Earth system through ground-based measurements, technologies, and modeling;

(E) the Department of the Interior collects, distributes, and archives operational ground-based magnetometer data in the United States and its territories, and works with the international community to improve global geophysical monitoring and develops crustal conductivity models to assess and mitigate risk from space weather induced electric ground currents; and

(F) the Federal Aviation Administration provides operational requirements for space weather services in support of aviation and for coordination of these requirements with the International Civil Aviation Organization, integrates space weather data and products into the Next Generation Air Transportation System, and conducts real-time monitoring of the charged particle radiation environment to protect the health and safety of crew and passengers during space weather events.

(2) OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall—

(A) coordinate the development and implementation of Federal Government activities to improve the Nation's ability to prepare, avoid, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potentially devastating impacts of space weather events; and

(B) coordinate the activities of the National Space Weather Program members.

(c) SPACE WEATHER INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—In order to continue coordination of executive branch efforts to understand, prepare, coordinate, and plan for space weather, the National Science and Technology Council shall establish an interagency working group on space weather that includes representatives of the Federal agencies participating in the National Space Weather Program, and of other Federal agencies, as appropriate.

(d) NATIONAL SPACE WEATHER PROGRAM.—In order to understand and respond to the adverse effects of space weather, the National Space Weather Program shall leverage capabilities across participating Federal agencies, including—

(1) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(2) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(3) the National Science Foundation;

(4) the Department of Defense;

(5) the Department of the Interior;

(6) the Department of Homeland Security;

(7) the Department of Energy;

(8) the Department of Transportation, including the Federal Aviation Administration; and

(9) the Department of State.

(e) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—

(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the interagency collaboration between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on terrestrial weather observations provides—

(A) *an effective mechanism for improving weather and climate data collection while avoiding unnecessary duplication of capabilities across Federal agencies; and*

(B) *an agency collaboration model that could benefit space weather observations.*

(2) *INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall enter into 1 or more interagency agreements providing for cooperation and collaboration in the development of space weather spacecraft, instruments, and technologies in accordance with this chapter.*

**§ 60702. Observations and forecasting**

(a) *POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to establish and sustain a baseline capability for space weather observations.*

(b) *INTEGRATED STRATEGY.—*

(1) *IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and the Secretary of Defense, and in consultation with the academic and commercial communities, shall develop an integrated strategy for solar and solar wind observations beyond the lifetime of current assets, that considers—*

(A) *the provision of solar wind measurements and other measurements essential to space weather forecasting; and*

(B) *the provision of solar and space weather measurements important for scientific purposes.*

(2) *CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the strategy under paragraph (1), the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall consider small satellite options, hosted payloads, commercial options, international options, and prize authority.*

(c) *CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS.—In order to sustain current space-based observational capabilities, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall—*

(1) *in cooperation with the European Space Agency, maintain operations of the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory/Large Angle and Spectrometric Coronagraph (referred to in this section as “SOHO/LASCO”) for as long as the satellite continues to deliver quality observations; and*

(2) *prioritize the reception of LASCO data.*

(d) *ADDITIONAL CAPABILITY FOR SOLAR IMAGING.—*

(1) *IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall secure reliable secondary capability for near real-time coronal mass ejection imagery.*

(2) *OPTIONS.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall develop options to build and deploy 1 or more instruments for near real-time coronal mass ejection imagery.*

(3) *CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing options under paragraph (2), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and At-*

*mospheric Administration shall consider commercial solutions, prize authority, academic and international partnerships, microsattellites, ground-based instruments, and opportunities to deploy the instrument or instruments as a secondary payload on an upcoming planned launch.*

(4) *COSTS.—In implementing paragraph (1), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall prioritize a cost-effective solution.*

(5) *OPERATIONAL PLANNING.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall develop an operational contingency plan to provide continuous space weather forecasting in the event of a SOHO/LASCO failure.*

(6) *BRIEFING.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives on the options for building and deploying the instrument or instruments described in paragraph (2) and the operational contingency plan developed under paragraph (5).*

(e) *FOLLOW-ON SPACE-BASED OBSERVATIONS.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, shall develop requirements and a plan for follow-on space-based observations for operational purposes, in accordance with the integrated strategy developed under subsection (b).*

(f) *REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the integrated strategy under subsection (b), including the plans for follow-on space-based observations under subsection (e).*

(g) *GROUND-BASED OBSERVATIONS.—The National Science Foundation, the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Navy shall each—*

(1) *maintain and improve, as necessary and advisable, ground-based observations of the Sun in order to help meet the priorities identified in section 60703(a); and*

(2) *provide space weather data by means of its set of ground-based facilities, including radars, lidars, magnetometers, radio receivers, aurora and airglow imagers, spectrometers, interferometers, and solar observatories.*

(h) *GROUND-BASED OBSERVATIONS DATA.—The National Science Foundation shall—*

(1) *provide key data streams from the platforms described in subsection (g) for research and to support space weather model development;*

(2) *develop experimental models for scientific purposes; and*

(3) *support the transition of the experimental models to operations where appropriate.*

**§ 60703. Research and technology**

(a) *USER NEEDS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, in conjunction with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall conduct a comprehensive survey to identify and prioritize the needs of space weather forecast users, including space weather data and space weather forecast data needed to improve services and inform research priorities and technology needs.*

(2) *CONTENTS.*—*In conducting the comprehensive survey under paragraph (1), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, at a minimum, shall—*

(A) *consider the goals for forecast lead time, accuracy, coverage, timeliness, data rate, and data quality for space weather observations;*

(B) *identify opportunities to address the needs identified under paragraph (1) through collaborations with academia, the private sector, and the international community;*

(C) *identify opportunities for new technologies and instrumentation to address the needs identified under paragraph (1); and*

(D) *publish a report on the findings under subparagraphs (A) through (C).*

(3) *PUBLICATION.*—*Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, shall—*

(A) *make the results of the comprehensive survey publicly available; and*

(B) *notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives of the publication under subparagraph (A).*

(b) *RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.*—

(1) *BASIC RESEARCH.*—*As part of the National Space Weather Program, the Director of the National Science Foundation, Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and Secretary of Defense shall continue to carry out basic research activities on heliophysics, geospace science, and space weather and support competitive, merit-based, peer-reviewed proposals for research, modeling, and monitoring of space weather and its impacts, including science goals outlined in Solar and Space Physics Decadal surveys conducted by the National Academy of Sciences.*

(2) *MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH.*—

(A) *FINDINGS.*—*Congress finds that the multidisciplinary nature of solar and space physics creates funding challenges that require coordination across scientific disciplines and Federal agencies.*

(B) *MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH.*—As part of the National Space Weather Program, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall pursue multidisciplinary research in subjects that further our understanding of solar physics, space physics, and space weather.

(C) *SENSE OF CONGRESS.*—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Director of the National Science Foundation should support competitively awarded Heliophysics Science Centers.

(c) *SCIENCE MISSIONS.*—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall seek to implement missions that meet the science objectives identified in Solar and Space Physics Decadal surveys conducted by the National Academy of Sciences.

(d) *RESEARCH TO OPERATIONS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, shall—

(A) develop a formal mechanism to transition National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, Air Force, and Navy research findings, models, and capabilities, as appropriate, to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Department of Defense space weather operational forecasting centers; and

(B) enhance coordination between research modeling centers and forecasting centers.

(2) *OPERATIONAL NEEDS.*—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Director of the National Science Foundation, shall develop a formal mechanism to communicate the operational needs of space weather forecasters to the research community.

(e) *TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT.*—

(1) *FINDINGS.*—Congress finds that observations and measurements closer to the Sun and advanced instrumentation would provide for more advanced warning of space weather disturbances (as defined in section 3 of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act).

(2) *TECHNOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTATION DEVELOPMENT.*—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Director of the National Science Foundation shall support the development of technologies and instrumentation to improve space weather forecasting lead-time and accuracy to meet the needs identified by the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

**§ 60704. Space weather data**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Director of the National Science Foundation shall—*

(1) *make space weather related data obtained for scientific research purposes available to space weather forecasters and operations centers; and*

(2) *support model development and model applications to space weather forecasting.*

(b) *RESEARCH.*—*The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall make space weather related data obtained from operational forecasting available for scientific research.*

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION  
AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2010

[Public Law 111–267; 124 Stat. 2805]

**[SEC. 809. SPACE WEATHER.**

[42 U.S.C. 18388]

**[(a) FINDINGS.**—The Congress finds the following:

**[(1)** Space weather events pose a significant threat to modern technological systems.

**[(2)** The effects of severe space weather events on the electric power grid, telecommunications and entertainment satellites, airline communications during polar routes, and space-based position, navigation and timing systems could have significant societal, economic, national security, and health impacts.

**[(3)** Earth and Space Observing satellites, such as the Advanced Composition Explorer, Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites, Polar Operational Environmental Satellites, and Defense Meteorological Satellites, provide crucial data necessary to predict space weather events.

**[(b) ACTION REQUIRED.**—The Director of OSTP shall—

**[(1)** improve the Nation’s ability to prepare, avoid, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potentially devastating impacts of space weather events;

**[(2)** coordinate the operational activities of the National Space Weather Program Council members, including the NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center and the U.S. Air Force Weather Agency; and

**[(3)** submit a report to the appropriate committees of Congress within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act that—

**[(A)** details the current data sources, both space- and ground-based, that are necessary for space weather forecasting; and

**[(B)** details the space- and ground-based systems that will be required to gather data necessary for space weather forecasting for the next 10 years.]