

**H.R. 5450, NOAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT -- (Extensions of Remarks
- September 19, 2006)**

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SPEECH OF
HON. BOB ETHERIDGE
OF NORTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

- Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation to reauthorize NOAA and call on the agency to work to develop an inland warning system. Six years ago I held a Hurricane Summit in the Second District of North Carolina. This was in response to the devastation that was brought to my State by Hurricane Floyd. Hurricane Floyd was one of the most devastating storms to hit the United States in more than 25 years. When Hurricane Floyd roared ashore in North Carolina in September of 1999, the storm took at least 56 lives, and left damages upwards of \$6 billion from the Carolinas to New England.
- Although the National Weather Service uses the Saffir-Simpson Scale to classify hurricane strength according to wind speed, Hurricane Floyd showed us that much more damage, death, and destruction can be created by unexpected inland flooding. One year ago this fact was displayed again with disastrous intensity during Hurricane Katrina when the damage was not just limited to the immediate coastal areas of the gulf coast. After the storms there were inland areas in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama that were inaccessible for weeks following the severe flooding.
- The purpose of my Hurricane Summit was to bring together meteorological experts from universities, the National Hurricane Center, and the National Weather Service to develop a more accurate index for inland flood monitoring. With the information gathered at this summit, I drafted legislation to ensure that NOAA and the National Weather Service make significant improvements to their inland flood warning system. H.R. 2486, the Inland Flood Forecasting and Warning System Act of 2002, was passed in the 107th Congress and enjoyed wide bipartisan support.
- Mr. Speaker, this legislation directed NOAA and the National Weather Service to improve the capability to forecast inland flooding associated with tropical storms and hurricanes, to develop a distinctive inland flood warning index for emergency management officials, and to train emergency management officials, National Weather Service personnel,

and meteorologists to use these improved forecasting techniques for inland flooding.

- An important part of this legislation requires the National Weather Service and NOAA to report annually to Congress on the progress of this new flood index. I would like to continue to work with the members of the Science Committee and the Appropriations Committee to ensure that NOAA provides these reports to the Congress in a timely manner.
- Congress must provide the proper oversight to NOAA to ensure that the progress in developing an improved inland flooding index can be put in place to save lives.