



NOAA OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION



John Gray, Director

NOAA's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs (OLIA) coordinates all NOAA contacts with the United States Congress and is responsible for planning, directing, and coordinating legislative programs that are of concern to the Office of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and the Administration. As the official liaison between the NOAA and the Congress, the OLIA communicates the Administration's views and is proactive in notifying Congress of important NOAA developments. Conversely, the OLIA keeps senior NOAA and Department of Commerce officials informed of critical congressional information and activities.

The OLIA accomplishes these tasks by providing a number of products and services. Any inquiries received by you from Members of Congress or congressional staff related to any of these products or services, as well as NOAA's programs and activities in general, should be referred to the OLIA.

Products and Services

Services for NOAA, the Department of Commerce, and the Administration

- Develops, coordinates, and implements the overall legislative strategy for NOAA; identifies and tracks all legislation of interest to NOAA; and keeps the Office of the Under Secretary and Assistant Administrators informed.
- Ensures good communication and coordination among legislative activities within NOAA Line, Program, and Staff offices.
- Manages every aspect of NOAA's participation in congressional hearings, including advising NOAA senior management of official requests for witnesses, ensuring that the witnesses are properly briefed, and overseeing the preparation and clearance of NOAA testimony, including providing drafting assistance for the written and/or oral testimony as requested.
- Coordinates with the Department of Commerce Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Services for Congress

- Rolls out the President's annual budget request to Congress.
- Coordinates and communicates the Administration's position on issues and programs of interest to NOAA on proposed pending legislation through views letters and congressional testimony at hearings.
- Provides congressional staff with technical drafting assistance, views letters for legislation, and opportunities to meet with NOAA experts, and ensures congressionally mandated reports ordered by NOAA authorizing committees are completed on time.
- Responds to all congressional inquiries in a timely manner through personal visits, e-mail, phone, fax, and mail.
- Briefs Members of Congress and their staff regularly on important NOAA.

Legislative Program Outputs

Every year the OLIA's legislative program activities encompass more than:

- 45,000 e-mails and phone calls (outgoing and incoming) with Members and congressional staff;
- 1,000 briefings and meetings with Members and congressional staff;
- 30 oversight and legislative hearings and 300 Questions for the Record in follow-up to hearings;
- 100 folders of correspondence to Members in response to their letters (many folders include letters to multiple Members) – NOAA overall does over 500 folders of congressional correspondence; and
- 1,232 NOAA grants, totaling over \$1.127 billion (FY 2009), that the OLIA reviews. For over 800 of these grants, the OLIA sends e-mail notifications and calls the office of each Representative in whose district the work is based, both Senators, and other Members as relevant. This equals to over 2,500 e-mails and 2,500 phone calls per year.