

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 13, 2026

Acting Administrator Brian Stone
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-4684

Dear Acting Administrator Stone:

We write in response to the National Science Foundation's Dear Colleague Letter titled "*NSF Intent to Restructure Critical Weather Infrastructure.*" The National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) delivers substantial value to the nation as an integrated hub of Earth system science that protects Americans and supports our economy. We have serious concerns about how structural changes to the organization will affect national weather forecasting capabilities, national security functions, and the long-term return on federal investment.

Congress has consistently appropriated funds for NCAR as an integrated national capability serving multiple federal agencies and public partners. As stewards of taxpayer resources, we have a responsibility to ensure that significant structural changes preserve core capabilities, avoid duplication, and protect the value of long-standing federal investments.

NCAR serves as a backbone of the nation's weather and Earth system science enterprise, translating research into practical, operational tools. Since its founding in 1960, NCAR has evolved to deepen our understanding of interconnected Earth systems and integrate previously siloed research areas. It integrates weather observations, advanced modeling, and high-performance computing into a cohesive system that delivers tangible benefits to communities and national security. NCAR-developed models underpin forecasting advancements used by NOAA, the Department of Defense, FAA-supported aviation systems, and private weather companies, reducing duplication and inefficiency across agencies and sectors.

NCAR is also a national leader in seasonal forecasting, supporting preparedness for future weather conditions across the military, private sector, emergency management, and agriculture. Its aircraft icing and turbulence forecasting tools, long distributed by NOAA's Aviation Weather Center, are foundational to aviation safety. NCAR's contributions in this space are widely relied upon and deeply embedded in operational systems.

The NCAR-Wyoming Supercomputing Center is a cornerstone of the nation's ability to integrate, analyze, and model complex Earth system datasets. These computing capabilities are purpose-built for atmospheric and Earth system sciences, which differ substantially from more generic high-performance computing environments. The close integration between computing infrastructure and Earth system research is essential to maintaining operational forecasting capabilities and cost efficiency.

NCAR tools support our national defense by enabling mission-critical, global intelligence on weather conditions, directly supporting sensitive military operations. NCAR scientists are also advancing machine-learning techniques to detect atmospheric toxic releases that could endanger troops. In addition, NCAR's leadership in space weather and Earth-Sun system research is equally vital to defense readiness, supporting the prediction of solar storms that can disrupt satellites essential for GPS, communications, and intelligence systems. These capabilities help safeguard military operations, command-and-control networks, and the critical infrastructure that underpins national security, as well as commerce.

Fragmenting NCAR's capabilities, including divesting its research aircraft or supercomputing center, would increase contracting, coordination, and oversight costs while weakening operational integration that currently reduces duplication across agencies. By maintaining common infrastructure and open modeling frameworks, NCAR minimizes duplication, strengthens partnerships, and maximizes the return on federal research investments across states and sectors.

In sum, we oppose the restructuring and weakening of NCAR, which would erode critical research capacity, disrupt long-standing partnerships, and diminish our ability to understand, anticipate, and respond to extreme weather-related risks.

Sincerely,



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



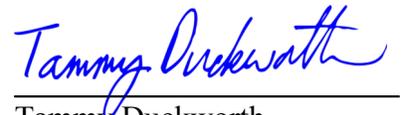
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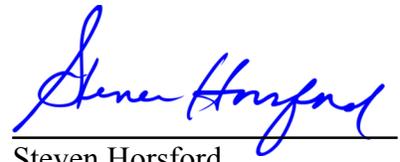
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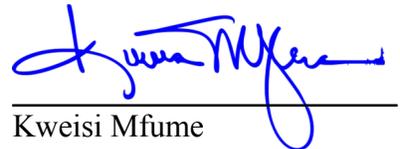
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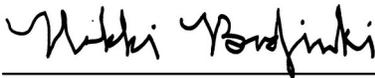
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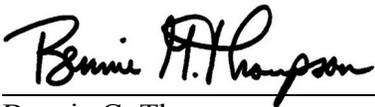
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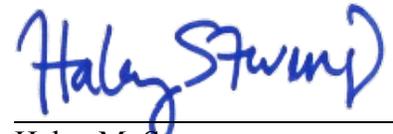
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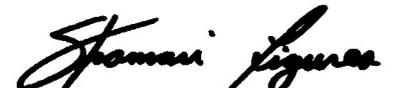
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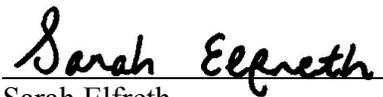
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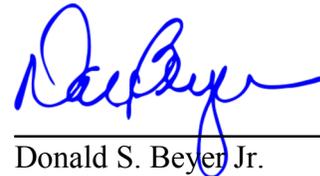
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