

SENATE HEARINGS ON WEATHER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

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The United States Senate held hearings on national weather resources management research and development policy, programs and organization at Washington, D.C. on October 24 and 26, 1979. These hearings, which were held before the Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space of the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, were the latest in the series of congressional weather modification hearings which have been held during the past thirty years. They were presided over by Senator Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois and Senator Howell Heflin of Alabama.

The direct antecedent of the hearings was passage of the National Weather Modification Policy Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-490) which authorized the Commerce Department to make a comprehensive study of weather modification and assess its impacts. The law required the department to make a report to the President and the Congress summarizing its findings and recommending national weather modification research and development policy, programs and organization. The Secretary of Commerce established a Weather Modification Advisory Board to provide advice on the issues required to be addressed under the law. Although that board issued its report in July 1978, the Department's Report to the President and the Congress: National Weather Modification Policies and Programs was not released until late in 1979. In the meanwhile Senator Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma introduced Senate Bill 829 in the spring of 1979 and Senator Stevenson introduced Senate Bill 1644 during the summer. The hearings were called by Senator Stevenson's subcommittee to consider those two bills and the issues raised since passage of Public Law 94-490.

During the hearings testimony was given by Senator Bellmon, representatives of NOAA, NSF, NASA, and the Bureau of Reclamation, persons from NACOA, NAS, and the Weather Modification Advisory Board, and from various experts on weather modification and its impacts. The Weather Modification Association was invited to participate, and I made a statement on our behalf. That statement, which has been reproduced from the official record of the hearings, was based upon resolutions passed at the Newport Beach meeting of the WMA in the fall of 1978 and at the Reno annual meeting in the spring of 1979. Also taken into consideration were the positions adopted by the membership attending the October 1979 meetings at Banff. Complete proceedings of the hearings may be obtained from the Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space in Washington, D.C. 20510.