

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1523

To modify operations of the National Water Center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 30, 2025

Mrs. BRITT (for herself and Mr. WELCH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To modify operations of the National Water Center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Water Research Opti-
5 mization Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF OPERATIONS OF NATIONAL**
 2 **WATER CENTER.**

3 Section 301 of the Coordinated Ocean Observations
 4 and Research Act of 2020 (42 U.S.C. 10371) is amend-
 5 ed—

6 (1) in subsection (a)—

7 (A) in paragraph (1)(A)—

8 (i) in the matter preceding clause (i),
 9 by inserting “, within the Office of Water
 10 Prediction of the National Weather Serv-
 11 ice,” after “shall establish”;

12 (ii) in clause (i), by striking “and”
 13 after the semicolon;

14 (iii) in clause (ii), by striking the pe-
 15 riod and inserting “; and”; and

16 (iv) by adding at the end the following
 17 new clause:

18 “(iii) to lead the transition of water
 19 research by the Federal Government, in-
 20 cluding model development, into operations
 21 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
 22 Administration and the National Weather
 23 Service.”;

24 (B) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end
 25 the following:

1 “(F) Serving as the primary center within
2 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
3 istration for research, development, collabora-
4 tion, and coordination of the water research
5 and operational activities of the Administration
6 and other centers and networks of the Federal
7 Government, including those of the Department
8 of Agriculture, the Army Corps of Engineers,
9 the Bureau of Reclamation, the United States
10 Geological Survey, and the Federal Emergency
11 Management Agency.

12 “(G) Integrating and promoting consist-
13 ency among national and regional hydrological
14 operations.”; and

15 (C) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(3) INCORPORATION INTO UNIFIED FORECAST
17 SYSTEM.—The Under Secretary shall use the Weath-
18 er and Climate Operational Supercomputing System,
19 or any successor system, to support the development
20 and implementation of advanced water resources
21 modeling capabilities under paragraph (2)(B) and
22 shall incorporate those modeling capabilities into the
23 unified forecast system.”;

24 (2) by striking subsection (b);

1 (3) by redesignating subsections (c), (d), and
 2 (e) as subsections (b), (e), and (f), respectively;

3 (4) by inserting after subsection (b), as redesign-
 4 nated by paragraph (3), the following:

5 “(c) ORGANIZATION WITH RIVER FORECAST CEN-
 6 TERS.—The Under Secretary, acting through the Director
 7 of the Office of Water Prediction of the National Weather
 8 Service, shall supervise and oversee the administration,
 9 management, and operations of each River Forecast Cen-
 10 ter of the National Weather Service and coordinate those
 11 operations with the National Water Center.

12 “(d) ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT OF COOP-
 13 ERATIVE INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH TO OPERATIONS IN
 14 HYDROLOGY.—The Under Secretary, acting through the
 15 Director of the Office of Water Prediction of the National
 16 Weather Service, shall administer the duties and activities
 17 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 18 related to the Cooperative Institute for Research to Oper-
 19 ations in Hydrology, or any successor entity, and coordi-
 20 nate the activities of the Institute with the National Water
 21 Center.”; and

22 (5) in subsection (e)(4), as redesignated by
 23 paragraph (3), by striking “fiscal year 2024” and
 24 inserting “each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028”.

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