

103^D CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 4998

To provide for an independent review of the implementation of the National Implementation Plan for modernization of the National Weather Service at specific sites, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 19, 1994

Mr. CRAMER (for himself, Mr. McCLOSKEY, Mr. ROEMER, Mr. BEVILL, Mrs. LLOYD, Ms. LONG, Mr. BARLOW, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. POSHARD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To provide for an independent review of the implementation of the National Implementation Plan for modernization of the National Weather Service at specific sites, 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 “Weather Service Mod-
5 ernization Performance Review Act of 1994”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

1 (1) the safety and welfare of the public depends
2 on the provision of accurate and timely weather in-
3 formation;

4 (2) in general, the National Implementation
5 Plan for modernization of the National Weather
6 Service required under the Weather Service Mod-
7 ernization Act provides a cost effective approach to
8 initiation of weather service modernization;

9 (3) some geographic areas, including northern
10 Alabama, north central, northeastern, and south-
11 western Indiana, southeastern Tennessee, southeast-
12 ern Illinois, northern California, southwestern and
13 northeastern Texas, central Oregon, central Idaho,
14 central Nevada, northwestern Ohio, northern Louisi-
15 ana, northeastern Iowa, north-central Florida, and
16 northeastern Arizona, may not realize the full bene-
17 fits of weather service implementation under the
18 plan; and

19 (4) there is a need to ensure, by means of an
20 independent, technical review, that the implementa-
21 tion of the weather service modernization plan at
22 specific sites fully meets the intent of law and does
23 not result in a degradation of existing service, in-
24 cluding no reduction in existing weather radar cov-
25 erage at an elevation of 10,000 feet.

1 **SEC. 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY.**

2 (a) The Secretary of Commerce (in this Act referred
3 to as the “Secretary”) shall provide for the public safety
4 by ensuring that the implementation of the National Im-
5 plementation Plan for the modernization of the National
6 Weather Service required under the Weather Service Mod-
7 ernization Act (in this Act referred to as the “National
8 Implementation Plan”) does not result in a degradation
9 of service in any specific geographic area, which shall in-
10 clude maintaining radar coverage with no degradation of
11 service for areas served by the National Weather Service
12 system, and also shall provide for radar coverage in some
13 areas which might not otherwise be adequate with respect
14 to specific unique weather phenomena which pose a sub-
15 stantial threat to public safety.

16 (b) Within 60 days after the date of enactment of
17 this Act, and biennially thereafter until 2 years have
18 passed after the implementation of the National Imple-
19 mentation Plan is completed, the Secretary shall publish
20 a notice in the Federal Register soliciting public comment
21 for a period of 60 days on specific geographic areas where
22 there is uncertainty whether such implementation will re-
23 sult in or has resulted in any degradation in service.

24 (c) Within 180 days after the date of enactment of
25 this Act, and within 60 days after the end of each biennial
26 comment period under subsection (b), the Secretary shall

1 enter into an agreement for an independent review, to be
2 completed within 180 days, by the National Research
3 Council of the National Academy of Sciences. Such review
4 shall, for each geographical area identified through a pub-
5 lic comment period under subsection (b)—

6 (1) evaluate any unique or extraordinary weath-
7 er conditions in the area;

8 (2) consider the proposed NEXRAD radar cov-
9 erage for the area, particularly to determine if the
10 area is or will be in an area of weak radar coverage;

11 (3) consider the effects of closing any local
12 Weather Service office on local weather service and
13 interaction with local emergency management agen-
14 cies; and

15 (4) consider the effects of transferring local
16 warning responsibility to a remote Weather Forecast
17 Office, including the effect on issuing weather
18 warnings by that remote office and communicating
19 with emergency management personnel with regard
20 to weather emergencies.

21 (d) The National Research Council shall submit rec-
22 ommendations, including any dissenting views, to the Sec-
23 retary regarding the need to supplement the National Im-
24 plementation Plan, revise any specific siting plans, estab-

1 lish radar coverage at altitudes less than 10,000 feet, or
2 improve radar coverage service.

3 (e) Within 60 days after receiving recommendations
4 from the National Research Council under subsection (d),
5 the Secretary shall transmit to the Congress a report con-
6 taining—

7 (1) the recommendations of the National Re-
8 search Council; and

9 (2) the actions the Secretary proposes to take
10 in response to those recommendations.

11 (f) For any area identified through a public comment
12 period under subsection (b), the Secretary shall take no
13 action which may result in a reduction of public safety,
14 including the closure of weather service offices, transfer
15 of responsibilities or duties of those offices, decommission-
16 ing of any warning radar, or transfer or reduction in per-
17 sonnel in those offices, until such time as the independent
18 review under subsection (c) is completed and a report with
19 respect to such review is transmitted to the Congress
20 under subsection (e).

21 (g) In carrying out this Act, the Secretary shall con-
22 sult with the Secretary of Defense and with the Secretary
23 of Transportation with respect to coverage of those De-
24 partment of Defense radars and Department of Transpor-

1 tation radars, respectively, which supplement the civil sys-
2 tem.

