

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2025

Laura Grimm
Acting Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1401 Constitutional Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Ms. Grimm:

I write to express my strong concern regarding the damaging reductions to staff and resources in the National Weather Service (NWS).

As the at-large representative for South Dakota, I represent the entire state, which is home to three NWS field offices — Sioux Falls, Rapid City, and Aberdeen. We have heard from numerous constituents and have read [concerning media reports](#) about reduced operating hours at the Rapid City office, critical staffing vacancies, and cuts to weather balloon launches—which provide vital upper atmospheric observations for forecasts—due to staff shortages.

Severe weather season is upon us and, as we know, it can strike at any time, which is why NWS field offices have previously operated 24/7, 365 days a year. For example, [earlier this week at 12:31 a.m.](#), a tornado touched down in the Rosebud Sioux Tribe area, causing significant damage and injuring six individuals.

Local emergency management relies on NWS offices to help coordinate emergency responses and for critical weather information to protect the public. Resources also must be available for meteorologists to conduct storm damage surveys, which help gather critical data that will help improve future weather warnings. These are the types of federal government functions that should be fully staffed and supported.

We deeply understand the dire fiscal situation our nation is facing, but we should not risk public safety in our efforts to correct decades of overspending. We look forward to a conversation with you and your team so we can ensure public safety remains a top priority.

Sincerely,



Dusty Johnson
Member of Congress