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[Legislation](#) > 2007-2008 (110th Congress) > [H.R. 3445](#)



H.R. 3445: Weather Mitigation Research and Technology Transfer Authorization Act of 2007

HR 3445 IH

110th CONGRESS

1st Session

H. R. 3445

To establish the Weather Mitigation Operations and Research Board, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

August 3, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science and Technology

A BILL

To establish the Weather Mitigation Operations and Research Board, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the 'Weather Mitigation Research and Technology Transfer Authorization Act of 2007'.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this Act to develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated national weather mitigation policy and a national cooperative Federal and State program of weather mitigation research and development.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) BOARD- The term 'Board' means the Weather Mitigation Advisory and Research Board.

(2) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- The term `Executive Director' means the Executive Director of the Weather Mitigation Advisory and Research Board.

(3) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT- The term `research and development' means theoretical analysis, exploration, experimentation, and the extension of investigative findings and theories of scientific or technical nature into practical application for experimental and demonstration purposes, including the experimental production and testing of models, devices, equipment, materials, and processes.

(4) WEATHER MITIGATION- The term `weather mitigation' means changing or controlling, or attempting to change or control, by artificial methods the natural development of atmospheric cloud forms or precipitation forms which occur in the troposphere. Examples include rain enhancement, snowpack augmentation, and hail suppression.

SEC. 4. WEATHER MITIGATION ADVISORY AND RESEARCH BOARD ESTABLISHED.

(a) In General- There is established in the Department of Commerce the Weather Mitigation Advisory and Research Board.

(b) Membership-

(1) IN GENERAL- The Board shall consist of 11 members appointed by the Secretary of Commerce, of whom--

(A) at least 1 shall be a representative of the American Meteorological Society;

(B) at least 1 shall be a representative of the American Society of Civil Engineers;

(C) at least 1 shall be a representative of the National Academy of Sciences;

(D) at least 1 shall be a representative of the National Center for Atmospheric Research of the National Science Foundation;

(E) at least 2 shall be representatives of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the Department of Commerce;

(F) at least 1 shall be a representative of institutions of higher education or research institutes; and

(G) at least 1 shall be a representative of a State that is currently supporting operational weather mitigation projects.

(2) TENURE- A member of the Board serves at the pleasure of the Secretary of Commerce.

(3) VACANCIES- Any vacancy on the Board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(b) Advisory Committees- The Board may establish advisory committees to advise the Board and to make recommendations to the Board concerning legislation, policies, administration, research, and other matters.

(c) Initial Meeting- Not later than 30 days after the date on which all members of the Board have been appointed, the Board shall hold its first meeting.

(d) Meetings- The Board shall meet at the call of the Chair.

(e) Quorum- A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(f) Chair and Vice Chair- The Board shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members.

SEC. 5. DUTIES OF THE BOARD.

(a) Promotion of Research and Development- In order to assist in expanding the theoretical and practical knowledge of weather mitigation, the Board shall promote and fund research and development, studies, and investigations with respect to--

(1) improved forecast and decisionmaking technologies for weather mitigation operations, including tailored computer workstations and software and new observation systems with remote sensors; and

(2) assessments and evaluations of the efficacy of weather mitigation, both purposeful (including cloud-seeding operations) and inadvertent (including downwind effects and anthropogenic effects).

(b) Financial Assistance- Unless the use of the money is restricted or subject to any limitations provided by law, the Board shall use amounts in the Weather Mitigation Research and Development Fund--

(1) to pay its expenses in the administration of this Act; and

(2) to provide for research and development with respect to weather mitigation by grants to, or contracts or cooperative arrangements with, public or private

agencies.

(c) Report- The Board shall submit to the Secretary of Commerce biennially a report on its findings and research results.

SEC. 6. POWERS OF THE BOARD.

(a) Studies, Investigations, and Hearings- The Board may make any studies or investigations, obtain any information, and hold any hearings necessary or proper to administer or enforce this Act or any rules or orders issued under this Act.

(b) Personnel- The Board may employ, as provided for in appropriations Acts, an Executive Director and other support staff necessary to perform duties and functions under this Act.

(c) Cooperation With Other Agencies- The Board may cooperate with public or private agencies to promote the purposes of this Act.

(d) Cooperative Agreements- The Board may enter into cooperative agreements with the head of any department or agency of the United States, an appropriate official of any State or political subdivision of a State, or an appropriate official of any private or public agency or organization for conducting weather mitigation activities or cloud-seeding operations.

(e) Conduct and Contracts for Research and Development- The Executive Director, with the approval of the Board, may conduct and may contract for research and development activities relating to the purpose described in section 2.

SEC. 7. COOPERATION WITH THE WEATHER MITIGATION OPERATIONS AND RESEARCH BOARD.

The heads of the departments and agencies of the United States and the heads of any other public or private agencies and institutions that receive research funds from the United States shall, to the extent possible, give full support and cooperation to the Board and to initiate independent research and development programs that address weather mitigations.

SEC. 8. FUNDING.

(a) In General- There is established within the Treasury of the United States the Weather Mitigation Research and Development Fund, which shall consist of amounts appropriated pursuant to subsection (b) or received by the Board under subsection (c).

(b) Authorization of Appropriations- There are authorized to be appropriated to the Board for the purposes of carrying out this Act \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006 through 2015. Any sums appropriated under this subsection shall remain available, without fiscal year limitation, until expended.

(c) Gifts- The Board may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

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