

109<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# S. 2751

To strengthen the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's drought monitoring and forecasting capabilities.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 4, 2006

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska (for himself and Mr. DOMENICI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## A BILL

To strengthen the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's drought monitoring and forecasting capabilities.

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 “National Integrated  
5 Drought Information System Act of 2006”.

6       **SEC. 2. NOAA PROGRAM TO MONITOR AND FORECAST**  
7                               **DROUGHTS.**

8       (a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary of Com-  
9 merce for Oceans and Atmosphere shall establish a Na-

1 tional Integrated Drought Information System within the  
2 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

3 (b) SYSTEM FUNCTIONS.—The System shall—

4 (1) provide an effective drought early warning  
5 system that—

6 (A) is a comprehensive system that collects  
7 and integrates information on the key indica-  
8 tors of drought in order to make usable, reli-  
9 able, and timely drought forecasts and assess-  
10 ments of drought, including assessments of the  
11 severity of drought conditions and impacts;

12 (B) communicates drought forecasts,  
13 drought conditions, and drought impacts on an  
14 ongoing basis to—

15 (i) decisionmakers at the Federal, re-  
16 gional, State, tribal, and local levels of gov-  
17 ernment;

18 (ii) the private sector; and

19 (iii) the public,

20 in order to facilitate better informed, more  
21 timely decisions and support drought mitigation  
22 and preparedness programs that will reduce im-  
23 pacts and costs; and

24 (C) includes timely (where possible real-  
25 time) data, information, and products that re-

1 flect local, regional, and State differences in  
2 drought conditions;

3 (2) coordinate, and integrate as practicable,  
4 Federal research in support of a drought early warn-  
5 ing system, improved forecasts, and the development  
6 of mitigation and preparedness tools and techniques;

7 (3) build upon existing drought forecasting, as-  
8 sessment, and mitigation programs at the National  
9 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including  
10 programs conducted in partnership with other Fed-  
11 eral departments and agencies and existing research  
12 partnerships, such as that with the National  
13 Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Ne-  
14 braska-Lincoln; and

15 (4) be incorporated into the Global Earth Ob-  
16 servation System of Systems.

17 (c) CONSULTATION.—The Under Secretary shall con-  
18 sult with relevant Federal, regional, State, tribal, and local  
19 government agencies, research institutions, and the pri-  
20 vate sector in the development of the National Integrated  
21 Drought Information System.

22 (d) COOPERATION FROM OTHER FEDERAL AGEN-  
23 CIES.—Each Federal agency shall cooperate as appro-  
24 priate with the Under Secretary in carrying out this Act.

1 (e) DROUGHT DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
2 “drought” means a deficiency in precipitation—

3 (1) that leads to a deficiency in surface or sub-  
4 surface water supplies (including rivers, streams,  
5 wetlands, ground water, soil moisture, reservoir sup-  
6 plies, lake levels, and snow pack); and

7 (2) that causes or may cause—

8 (A) substantial economic or social impacts;

9 or

10 (B) substantial physical damage or injury  
11 to individuals, property, or the environment.

12 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

13 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Sec-  
14 retary of Commerce for use by the Under Secretary of  
15 Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere in implementing  
16 section 2—

17 (1) \$8,000,000 for fiscal year 2007;

18 (2) \$9,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;

19 (3) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009  
20 and 2010; and

21 (4) \$11,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2011  
22 and 2012.

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