

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 1, 2007

The Honorable Carlos M. Gutierrez
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce
Herbert Hoover Building, Room 5421
Fourteenth Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to request that the Department of Commerce consider continuous funding of the regional climate centers program operated under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

At present, we understand that these centers will have to cease operations unless the Executive Branch provides bridge monies to keep them open and operating in Fiscal Year 2007. Congress has supported this program in the past and we anticipate that Congress will continue to support this program in the future. We have been pleased that NOAA has taken steps to complete a competitive procurement for this program, which demonstrates a level of support by NOAA as well as by Congress.

We are especially concerned that the potential loss of this program would deprive the public and the government of essential and specialized climate and weather data. The regional climate centers have previously played an important role in the dissemination of important climate data and have also collaborated with universities on important climate change studies and its potential impacts.

Again, we ask that you carefully consider the merits of this important program and we urge you to provide continued funding to keep the regional climate centers operating.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact us or our staff if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Harry Reid
United States Senator

John Ensign
United States Senator



THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

March 28, 2007

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

Thank you for your letter requesting funding for the Regional Climate Centers. The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Climatic Data Center has had responsibility for administration of the Regional Climate Centers since 1997. Over this period, NOAA has worked closely with the Western Regional Climate Center located in Reno, Nevada, to leverage regional expertise in climate and related data services to the benefit of the Western United States.

We are committed to working with you and your staff as we prepare to execute the Fiscal Year 2007 enacted budget. We will give your request full consideration. In addition, we look forward to announcing the winners of a new three-year competitive contract for regional climate data services soon after the Fiscal Year 2007 budget is finalized.

We appreciate your interest in and support of the Regional Climate Centers. If you have any questions, please contact me or Nat Wienecke, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, at 202-482-3663.

Sincerely,

Carlos M. Gutierrez



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Washington, D.C. 20230

March 28, 2007

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United States Senate
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