

S 1573

Weather Alerts for a Ready Nation Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Science, Technology, Communications

Introduced: Jun 15, 2015

Current Status: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 268.

Latest Action: Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 268. (Oct 19, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1573>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Thune, John [R-SD]

Party: Republican • **State:** SD • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors

No cosponsors are listed for this bill.

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Reported By	Oct 19, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Science, Technology, Communications

Related Bills

No related bills are listed.

Weather Alerts for a Ready Nation Act of 2015

(Sec. 2) This bill directs the National Weather Service (NWS) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the Department of Commerce to employ at each of its weather forecast offices at least one warning coordination meteorologist who shall:

- serve the geographic area of responsibility covered by the office to help ensure that users of NWS products can respond effectively to improve weather event outcomes;
- liaise with specified users of NWS products and services to evaluate the adequacy and usefulness of such products and services;
- collaborate with other appropriate weather forecast offices and state, local, and tribal government agencies in developing, proposing, and implementing plans to improve the usefulness of such products and services;
- ensure the maintenance and accuracy of severe weather call lists, appropriate office severe weather policy or procedures, and other severe weather or dissemination methodologies or strategies; and
- work closely with state, local, and tribal emergency management agencies, and other agencies related to disaster management, to ensure a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness effort.

A warning coordination meteorologist may also take on specified additional responsibilities.

In carrying out this Act the NWS may place a warning coordination meteorologist with a state or local emergency manager if necessary or convenient.

(Sec. 3) NOAA shall assess its system for issuing watches and warnings for hazardous weather and water events, including:

- an evaluation of whether the system meets the purpose of risk communication to the general public that informs action to prevent loss of life and property, and
- development of recommendations for legislative and administrative action to improve the system and for research necessary to address the following focus areas.

The assessment shall focus on ways to:

- communicate the risks posed by hazardous weather or water events to the public that are most likely to result in action to mitigate the risk,
- communicate the risks posed by such events to the public as broadly and rapidly as practicable,
- preserve the benefits of the existing watches and warning system, and
- maintain the utility of the system for government and commercial users of such system.

In conducting the assessment NOAA shall use methodologies generally accepted by the weather enterprise, including social and behavioral sciences.

Based on the assessment, NOAA shall take actions necessary to improve the system, support efforts to satisfy research needs to enable its future improvement, and ensure that any major change to it:

- is validated by social and behavioral science;
- accounts for the needs of various demographics, vulnerable populations, and geographic regions;

accounts for the differences between types of weather and water hazards;

- responds to the needs of federal, state, and local government partners and media partners; and
- accounts for necessary changes to federally-operated watch and warning propagation and dissemination infrastructure and protocols.

(Sec. 4) NOAA shall report annually to Congress on the use of contractors at the NWS for the most recently completed fiscal year.

Actions Timeline

- **Oct 19, 2015:** Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Reported by Senator Thune with an amendment in the nature of a substitute and an amendment to the title. With written report No. 114-154.
- **Oct 19, 2015:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 268.
- **Jun 25, 2015:** Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Jun 15, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jun 15, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.