

S 2058

An act to require the Secretary of Commerce to study the coverage gaps of the Next Generation Weather Radar of the National Weather Service and to develop a plan for improving radar coverage and hazardous weather detection and forecasting.

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Science, Technology, Communications

Introduced: Sep 17, 2015

Current Status: Referred to the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Latest Action: Referred to the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. (Dec 2, 2016)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2058>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Burr, Richard [R-NC]

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

Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Tillis, Thomas [R-NC]	R · NC		Sep 17, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Reported By	Sep 15, 2016
Science, Space, and Technology Committee	House	Referred To	Dec 2, 2016

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Science, Technology, Communications

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 3538	Identical bill	Sep 30, 2016: Referred to the Subcommittee on Environment.
114 HR 5089	Related bill	Sep 30, 2016: Referred to the Subcommittee on Environment.

(Sec. 1) This bill directs the Department of Commerce to complete, within 90 days after enactment of this bill, a study on gaps in the coverage of the Next Generation Weather Radar of the National Weather Service (NEXRAD).

In conducting this study, Commerce shall identify areas in the United States with limited or no NEXRAD coverage below 6,000 feet above ground level of the surrounding terrain.

For those areas identified, Commerce shall also:

- identify the key weather effects for which prediction would improve with improved radar detection;
- identify additional sources of observations for high impact weather available and operational for such areas, including Terminal Doppler Weather Radar, air surveillance radars of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and cooperative network observers; and
- assess the feasibility and advisability of efforts to integrate and upgrade federal radar capabilities in such areas that are not owned or controlled by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including radar capabilities of the FAA and the Department of Defense.

In addition, under such study Commerce shall:

- assess the feasibility and advisability of incorporating state-operated and other nonfederal radars into the operations of the National Weather Service;
- identify options to improve radar coverage in all of the areas identified as having limited or no NEXRAD coverage; and
- estimate the cost of, and develop a timeline for, carrying out each of the options identified.

After completing the study, Commerce shall submit a plan for improving radar coverage in the identified areas by integrating and upgrading, where practicable, additional observation solutions to improve hazardous weather detection and forecasting.

Commerce shall seek third-party reviews on scientific methodology related to, and the feasibility and advisability of, implementing the plan to improve radar coverage, including the extent to which warning and forecast services of the National Weather Service would be improved by additional NEXRAD coverage.

Actions Timeline

- **Dec 2, 2016:** Message on Senate action sent to the House.
- **Dec 2, 2016:** Received in the House.
- **Dec 2, 2016:** Referred to the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.
- **Dec 1, 2016:** Measure laid before Senate by unanimous consent. (consideration: CR S6679-6680; text of measure as reported in Senate: CR S6679)
- **Dec 1, 2016:** The committee substitute withdrawn by Unanimous Consent. (consideration: CR S6679)
- **Dec 1, 2016:** Passed/agreed to in Senate: Passed Senate with an amendment and an amendment to the Title by Unanimous Consent.
- **Dec 1, 2016:** Passed Senate with an amendment and an amendment to the Title by Unanimous Consent.
- **Sep 15, 2016:** Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Reported by Senator Thune with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. With written report No. 114-351.
- **Sep 15, 2016:** Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 629.
- **Dec 9, 2015:** Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.
- **Sep 17, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Sep 17, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.