

## Georgia's Center for a Sustainable Coast among 500 U.S. organizations signing letter urging Congress to oppose Trump cuts at NOAA

On March 3, Center for a Sustainable Coast joined nearly 500 businesses, organizations, and institutions in signing a letter to Congress urging officials to oppose alarming, unwarranted cuts to the staffing and budget of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) by the Trump administration. Other Georgia organizations signing the letter include Wild Cumberland and Satilla Riverkeeper.

As the Center's executive director underscored in a recent letter to the editor [*below*], these cuts are especially reckless after a year when Georgians suffered over \$10 billion in damages caused by severe weather events, against which NOAA programs provide safeguards to protect the public. As the letter to Congress explains, loss of these safeguards and other science-based NOAA initiatives will not only harm the public but will also endanger a broad spectrum of businesses and thousands of jobs that are the backbone of coastal communities nationwide.

See below, (1) Letter to Congress and (2) Letter to Editor in *The Brunswick News*.

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Dear Members of Congress,

The businesses, organizations, and institutions signed below strongly urge you to oppose actions by the Trump administration to dismantle, privatize, or significantly diminish the critical services and functions of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Established by President Richard Nixon in 1970, NOAA has provided life-saving weather forecasting, scientific research, and emergency preparedness services to the American people for more than 50 years. Whether it's tracking hurricanes or safeguarding the country's fisheries, NOAA is vital to the everyday lives and operations of countless communities and businesses that stretch across our nation and the world.

Alarming, statements and actions from the new administration indicate intent to downsize, break apart, or even eliminate NOAA. We remain gravely concerned about continued threats to the agency, including staff layoffs and intimidation, deep budget cuts, research censorship, and other actions that jeopardize its critical mission and services. Reports that unauthorized DOGE staffers have infiltrated agency headquarters and demanded access to confidential information are particularly concerning.

If not stopped, further action by the administration to interfere with NOAA's critical services and mission could endanger our economy, health, public safety, and national security. The agency's work is especially crucial as extreme weather events become more frequent and severe, with climate-related natural disasters and extreme weather events costing Americans over \$182 billion last year alone. Undermining NOAA's operations could risk the safety of millions of Americans and destabilize countless industries, from farming and fisheries to energy and finance, threatening job losses and economic downturn.

To protect our communities, businesses, and life-saving public services, we strongly urge you to reject any further attempts to diminish NOAA's critical services and the workforce that provides them. Instead, we call on you to champion efforts to strengthen the agency in its mission to provide the best science, service, and stewardship as the agency works to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, ocean and coasts; to share that knowledge and information with others; and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources. We are counting on you to reject reckless efforts to diminish this critical agency—for the future of our health, safety, economies, communities, and ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources.

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## OPINION

### Calling upon our 'better angels'

Undeniably, we are living in turbulent times. Daily news is deluged with disturbing reports about essential government services threatened by the unmerited, unaccountable misuse of authority directed at eliminating them.

Aside from illegitimate cuts resulting in millions tragically starving, thousands of American farmers are being harmed by \$2 billion in lost sales due to foreign aid programs blocked by the president. Also at risk are millions of citizens living in areas exposed to flooding, high winds, and other damaging impacts of extreme weather, made far more destructive by heat-trapping emissions released in burning fossil fuels – while federal actions to reduce and buffer such damages are being unjustifiably terminated, compounding soaring insurance rates.

Curbing climate-change impacts is opposed by opportunistic corporations that enormously profit by shifting their operating costs onto the public. Since 1980, 186 severe storms have been documented, each causing at least \$1 billion in damage, now totaling more than a half-trillion dollars. Over a third of these rapidly intensifying events have occurred in the past five years. “As baseline temperatures rise, the threat of severe storms increases,” reports the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Coastal Georgia is dangerously vulnerable to the loss of federal environmental safeguards, and the entire state is growing more threatened by storm hazards. In 2024 alone, Georgia suffered over \$10 billion in severe weather damage, equivalent to a quarter of the state budget.

Georgians must call upon their better angels to defend our communities by opposing these illegitimate, exploitative efforts to eliminate vital public programs.

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