

Public Law 94-490
94th Congress

An Act

To authorize and direct the Secretary of Commerce to develop a national policy on weather modification, and for other purposes.

Oct. 13, 1976
[S. 3383]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "National Weather Modification Policy Act of 1976".

National Weather
Modification
Policy Act of
1976.

SEC. 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds and declares the following:

15 USC 330 note.
15 USC 330 note.

(1) Weather-related disasters and hazards, including drought, hurricanes, tornadoes, hail, lightning, fog, floods, and frost, result in substantial human suffering and loss of life, billions of dollars of annual economic losses to owners of crops and other property, and substantial financial loss to the United States Treasury;

(2) Weather modification technology has significant potential for preventing, diverting, moderating, or ameliorating the adverse effects of such disasters and hazards and enhancing crop production and the availability of water;

(3) The interstate nature of climatic and related phenomena, the severe economic hardships experienced as the result of occasional drought and other adverse meteorological conditions, and the existing role and responsibilities of the Federal Government with respect to disaster relief, require appropriate Federal action to prevent or alleviate such disasters and hazards; and

(4) Weather modification programs may have long-range and unexpected effects on existing climatic patterns which are not confined by national boundaries.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is therefore declared to be the purpose of the Congress in this Act to develop a comprehensive and coordinated national weather modification policy and a national program of weather modification research and development—

Policy.
Research and
development
program.

(1) to determine the means by which deliberate weather modification can be used at the present time to decrease the adverse impact of weather on agriculture, economic growth, and the general public welfare, and to determine the potential for weather modification;

(2) to conduct research into those scientific areas considered most likely to lead to practical techniques for drought prevention or alleviation and other forms of deliberate weather modification;

(3) to develop practical methods and devices for weather modification;

(4) to make weather modification research findings available to interested parties;

(5) to assess the economic, social, environmental, and legal impact of an operational weather modification program;

(6) to develop both national and international mechanisms designed to minimize conflicts which may arise with respect to the peaceful uses of weather modification; and

(7) to integrate the results of existing experience and studies in weather modification activities into model codes and agreements for regulation of domestic and international weather modification activities.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

15 USC 330 note.

As used in this Act:

(1) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Commerce.

(2) The term "State" means any State of the United States, the District of Columbia, or any Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States.

(3) The term "weather modification" means any activity performed with the intention and expectation of producing changes in precipitation, wind, fog, lightning, and other atmospheric phenomena.

SEC. 4. STUDY.

15 USC 330 note.

The Secretary shall conduct a comprehensive investigation and study of the state of scientific knowledge concerning weather modification, the present state of development of weather modification technology, the problems impeding effective implementation of weather modification technology, and other related matters. Such study shall include—

(1) a review and analysis of the present and past research efforts to establish practical weather modification technology, particularly as it relates to reducing loss of life and crop and property destruction;

(2) a review and analysis of research needs in weather modification to establish areas in which more research could be expected to yield the greatest return in terms of practical weather modification technology;

(3) a review and analysis of existing studies to establish the probable economic importance to the United States in terms of agricultural production, energy, and related economic factors if the present weather modification technology were to be effectively implemented;

(4) an assessment of the legal, social, and ecological implications of expanded and effective research and operational weather modification projects;

(5) formulation of one or more options for a model regulatory code for domestic weather modification activities, such code to be based on a review and analysis of experience and studies in this area, and to be adaptable to State and national needs;

(6) recommendations concerning legislation desirable at all levels of government to implement a national weather modification policy and program;

(7) a review of the international importance and implications of weather modification activities by the United States;

(8) a review and analysis of present and past funding for weather modification from all sources to determine the sources and adequacy of funding in the light of the needs of the Nation;

(9) a review and analysis of the purpose, policy, methods, and funding of the Federal departments and agencies involved in weather modification and of the existing interagency coordination of weather modification research efforts;

(10) a review and analysis of the necessity and feasibility of negotiating an international agreement concerning the peaceful uses of weather modification; and

(11) formulation of one or more options for a model international agreement concerning the peaceful uses of weather modification and the regulation of national weather modification activities; and a review and analysis of the necessity and feasibility of negotiating such an agreement.

SEC. 5. REPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall prepare and submit to the President and the Congress, within 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, a final report on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study conducted pursuant to section 4. Such report shall include:

Submittal to
President and
Congress.
15 USC 330 note.

(1) a summary of the findings made with respect to each of the areas of investigation specified in section 4;

(2) other findings which are pertinent to the determination and implementation of a national policy on weather modifications;

(3) a recommended national policy on weather modification and a recommended national weather modification research and development program which is consistent with, and likely to contribute to, achieving the objectives of such policy;

(4) recommendations for levels of Federal funding sufficient to support adequately a national weather modification research and development program;

(5) recommendations for any changes in the organization and involvement of Federal departments and agencies in weather modification which may be needed to implement effectively the recommended national policy on weather modification and the recommended research and development program; and

(6) recommendations for any regulatory and other legislation which may be required to implement such policy and program or for any international agreement which may be appropriate concerning the peaceful uses of weather modification, including recommendations concerning the dissemination, refinement, and possible implementation of the model domestic code and international agreement developed under the specifications of section 4.

Each department, agency, and other instrumentality of the Federal Government is authorized and directed to furnish the Secretary any information which the Secretary deems necessary to carry out his functions under this Act.

Cooperation.

(b) **OPERATION AND CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall solicit and consider the views of State agencies, private firms, institutions of higher learning, and other interested persons and governmental entities in the conduct of the study required by section 4, and in the preparation of the report required by subsection (a).

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION FOR APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this Act not to exceed \$1,000,000.

15 USC 330 note.

(b) Section 6 of the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the reporting of weather modification activities to the Federal Government", approved December 18, 1971 (85 Stat. 736; 88 Stat. 1212; 15 U.S.C. 330e), is further amended by striking out "1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, and 1977," and inserting in lieu thereof "1973 through 1980,".

Approved Oct. 13, 1976.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

SENATE REPORT No. 94-859 (Comm. on Commerce).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 122 (1976):

May 21, considered and passed Senate.

Sept. 20, considered and passed House, amended.

Sept. 28, Senate concurred in House amendments.