AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT 117–54

OFFERED BY MS. SCHRIER OF WASHINGTON

At the end of subtitle F of title X, add the following new section:

SEC. 10. ASSESSMENT, PLAN, AND REPORTS ON THE AUTOMATED SURFACE OBSERVING SYSTEM.

(a) JOINT ASSESSMENT AND PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, shall—

(A) conduct an assessment of resources, personnel, procedures, and activities necessary to maximize the functionality and utility of the automated surface observing system of the United States that identifies—

(i) key system upgrades needed to improve observation quality and utility for weather forecasting, aviation safety, and other users;
(ii) improvements needed in observations within the planetary boundary layer, including mixing height;

(iii) improvements needed in public accessibility of observational data;

(iv) improvements needed to reduce latency in reporting of observational data;

(v) relevant data to be collected for the production of forecasts or forecast guidance relating to atmospheric composition, including particulate and air quality data, and aviation safety;

(vi) areas of concern regarding operational continuity and reliability of the system, which may include needs for on-night staff, particularly in remote and rural areas and areas where system failure would have the greatest negative impact to the community;

(vii) stewardship, data handling, data distribution, and product generation needs arising from upgrading and changing the automated surface observation systems;

(viii) possible solutions for areas of concern identified under clause (vi), includ-
ing with respect to the potential use of backup systems, power and communication system reliability, staffing needs and personnel location, and the acquisition of critical component backups and proper storage location to ensure rapid system repair necessary to ensure system operational continuity; and

(ix) research, development, and transition to operations needed to develop advanced data collection, quality control, and distribution so that the data are provided to models, users, and decision support systems in a timely manner; and

(B) develop and implement a plan that addresses the findings of the assessment conducted under subparagraph (A), including by seeking and allocating resources necessary to ensure that system upgrades are standardized across the Department of Defense, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to the extent practicable.

(2) STANDARDIZATION.—Any system standardization implemented under paragraph (1)(B) shall
not impede activities to upgrade or improve individual units of the system.

(3) Remote Automatic Weather Station Coordination.—The Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with relevant Federal agencies and the National Interagency Fire Center, shall assess and develop cooperative agreements to improve coordination, interoperability standards, operations, and placement of remote automatic weather stations for the purpose of improving utility and coverage of remote automatic weather stations, automated surface observation systems, and other similar stations and systems for weather and climate operations.

(b) Report to Congress.—

(1) In General.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(A) details the findings of the assessment required by subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(1); and
(B) the plan required by subparagraph (B) of such subsection.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include a detailed assessment of appropriations required—

(A) to address the findings of the assessment required by subparagraph (A) of subsection (a)(1); and

(B) to implement the plan required by subparagraph (B) of such subsection.

c) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT.—Not later than 4 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) evaluates the functionality, utility, reliability, and operational status of the automated surface observing system across the Department of Defense, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Administration;

(2) evaluates the progress, performance, and implementation of the plan required by subsection (a)(1)(B);

(3) assesses the efficacy of cross-agency collaboration and stakeholder engagement in carrying out
the plan and provides recommendations to improve such activities;

(4) evaluates the operational continuity and reliability of the system, particularly in remote and rural areas and areas where system failure would have the greatest negative impact to the community, and provides recommendations to improve such continuity and reliability;

(5) assesses Federal coordination regarding the remote automatic weather station network, air resource advisors, and other Federal observing assets used for weather and climate modeling and response activities, and provides recommendations for improvements; and

(6) includes such other recommendations as the Comptroller General determines are appropriate to improve the system.