



# AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Executive Office

July 7, 2017

The Honorable Ed Perlmutter  
1410 Longworth Office Bldg  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Bridenstine  
216 Cannon House Office Bldg  
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson  
2468 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Perlmutter, Bridenstine, and Johnson,

On behalf of the over 7,500 members of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) and its Solar Physics Division (SPD), we write to express our strong support for the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act (H.R. 3086) and to thank you for your leadership on this important topic. The legislation that you introduced in the House is comprehensive in its scope, addressing key aspects of space weather and its significance for national security, for health, and for human and robotic space operations, including communications, in low Earth orbit and in interplanetary space.

In particular, the AAS and SPD endorse the following components of the bill, all of which are essential to our capability to understand the causes and effects of space weather, as well as to forecast space weather events:

- the need for continued operation of existing space- and ground-based observatories, as well as for complementary new instrumentation to provide timely and systematic observations of the Sun, solar wind, and geospace environment,
- the recognition of the wide impact of space weather and the concomitant call for strong cooperation between stakeholder agencies such as the National Science Foundation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and Departments of the Interior, Homeland Security, Energy, Transportation, and Defense,
- the call for the director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy to establish a space weather interagency working group, with broad representation across these key stakeholders, and for accountability to Congress through the submission of pertinent reports,
- the call for the formation of a space weather government-industry-university roundtable: "to facilitate communication and knowledge transfer among Government participants in the space weather interagency working group..., industry, and academia..."
- the emphasis on basic and applied research, e.g., analysis of data, interpretation of observations, and establishment of clear lines of communication between the multi-disciplinary research community and personnel through the formation of Heliophysics Science Centers, and
- the plan to establish a formal mechanism for the transition of research knowledge to operational capabilities and for communication of operational needs to the research community.

Thank you your attention to this timely and important issue. The membership of the SPD, which includes the nation's foremost experts in many of the areas addressed in this legislation, stands ready to assist in any way it can. If there is anything we can do, please do not hesitate to contact us via Dr. Joel Parriott, the AAS's Director of Public Policy, at (202)-328-2010 or joel.parriott@aa.org.

Sincerely,

Kevin B. Marvel,  
Executive Officer, American Astronomical Society

Dana Longcope  
Chair, Solar Physics Division