



April 30, 2025

Howard W. Lutnick
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
Herbert Clark Hoover Building
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Lutnick,

As members of the business community in Colorado, we write to urge you to preserve funding for NOAA's national network of Cooperative Institutes (CIs) and NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR). The national network of 16 cooperative institutes across 33 states plays a critical role for businesses and the economy on a daily basis both in Colorado and across our nation.

The work of these institutes is felt every time a plane lands safely, every time farmers draw water for their crops in the arid west and every time communities successfully secure their homes against wildfire, tornados or other natural disasters. These are real and significant impacts that shape the health of businesses and the health of our state, regional and national economy.

If we were to lose our two cooperative institutes in Colorado, the job loss and economic impact would be significant. We know this economic impact would be similar across states

like Oklahoma and Mississippi, North Carolina and Florida, who would also experience significant job losses and the resulting economic decline.

For businesses in sectors such as aviation, insurance, agriculture, tourism, energy, and communications, the loss of information, analysis, and prediction provided by the institutes would significantly impact their operations. Institute-produced weather data is used hourly by aviation companies to ensure the safety of their planes and determine flight paths. Equally important to international aviation as well as our energy and communications sectors is the space weather forecasting capability of these institutes in predicting solar flares that impact both airline flight paths as well as the electric grid and communications infrastructure.

For our agricultural industries -- from individual family farms to larger-scale producers -- weather prediction is essential for crop yields and livestock health. Water resource research and analysis also plays a critical role in everything from individual irrigation decisions that impact farmers in our rural counties to large-scale management of the Colorado River, which is the economic lifeblood of seven states. Our ability to predict the movements of wildfires, tornados and other natural disasters has direct implications for the safety of our communities as well as the ability of the insurance industry to continue to insure our homes, automobiles and businesses.

As a business community reliant on this information, analysis and prediction, we must speak with one voice about the importance of the work occurring in these institutes. While we understand and respect the need to manage the federal budget and carefully steward taxpayer investments, the cooperative institutes are places where we all receive far more in return than we individually invest. The business community of Colorado, evidenced by the broad spectrum of interests as signatories below, implores you to preserve our cooperative institutes in Colorado and across our nation.

Respectfully,

Action Colorado
Boulder Chamber of Commerce
Club 20
Colorado Business Round Table
Colorado Chamber of Commerce
Colorado Farm Bureau

Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce
Latino Chamber of Commerce of Pueblo
South Metro Chamber of Commerce