



# *The Four Winds*

*National Weather Service Employees Organization*

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## **NWSEO's Work Paves Way for Funding Support**

(February 13, 2013) NWSEO is dedicated to informing members of Congress of the important work of the National Weather Service and how appropriate funding directly impacts the mission of saving lives and property. The relationships we build in this on-going process are showing results.

Congressman Chaka Fattah (D-PA) clearly expressed his support for NWS funding during a debate and vote on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives regarding an amendment to the Hurricane Sandy Supplemental Appropriations Act. Congressman Paul Broun (R-GA) filed an amendment to strike \$13 million from the NWS ground readiness project, claiming that the work is already underway, the funds were a “knee-jerk” reaction to Hurricane Sandy, and it should be delayed until the normal appropriations process.

### **Rep. Chaka Fattah's response, which is recorded in the Congressional Record is as follows:**

“I want to say that this amendment would do serious damage to our efforts in terms of the National Weather Service. In the mark of the House and the Senate appropriation bills for FY13, we had this \$13 million. It improves our forecasting. What does that mean on the ground? What it means on the ground, all across our country, when there is a severe weather incident; it means that we will have better information for evacuation purposes, if needed. It's about \$1 million a mile to evacuate. It's about saving lives.

“So when the gentleman, who is the maker of this amendment, said that he wished we could do this faster and he's not opposed to us having better information, then I join with him in part, in that part, because this is about providing necessary information to the American public about severe weather incidents and saving lives. This is money that both the House and the Senate intended to provide, but in the 112th we were unable to complete our work. This is vitally important to every single Member in this House in their districts, the businesses and families alike, that the National Weather Service and the satellite system be upgraded as quickly as possible.”

“We've had the greatest series of severe weather events—over \$1 billion each—that we've ever had in our history. It is not time for the greatest country and the wealthiest country in the world to retreat or to equivocate in making sure that we have the very best weather service information, and this satellite system is critically important thereto.”

“So I thank the gentleman for yielding. I would hope that the gentleman who is seeking waste find waste in some other area, because this is not waste. This is lifesaving

information and important throughout our country that the National Weather Service has this upgrade. It's something we would have passed anyway in the normal appropriations process."

NWSEO General Counsel Richard Hirn met with Fattah just hours before this debate. You may recall, Congressman Fattah also attended the NWSEO Spring Council Meeting last March.

## **NWSEO Secures \$44 million in funding for the AOC – Hurricane Hunters**

The National Weather Employees Organization's efforts resulted in \$44 million dollars in funding for the AOC. In January, Congress approved \$44 million to re-wing the P3s as part of the Sandy Supplemental. NWSEO's efforts were instrumental in securing this funding. Currently, the AOC has only two of these hurricane hunter planes – one of them would remain grounded without the funding. Although the Administration did not request this funding in its proposed supplemental appropriations bill, it was added in the House following NWSEO's request. This is one more example of NWSEO's work to protect jobs and strengthen our bargaining units.

## **Court Leave Arbitration Update**

NWSEO General Counsel presented at a recent hearing on NWS court leave on January 14. A decision is expected this spring. The hearing is the result of a grievance filed by NWSEO on behalf of a member who was denied full court leave during a period of time that he was required to report to jury duty. NWSEO thanks the Western Region stewards for participating in the court leave surveys and also to NWSEO members who provided helpful testimony.

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**No one cares more for National Weather Service employees than  
National Weather Service employees.**

**No one works harder for National Weather Service employees than  
National Weather Service employees.**

**We are NWSEO.**