

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 28, 2025

The Honorable Pete Hegseth  
Secretary of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330

The Honorable Laura Grimm  
Acting NOAA Administrator  
1401 Constitution Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Hegseth and Acting Administrator Grimm,

We write to express our concern regarding the recent National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announcement that the distribution of all Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP) products will be permanently terminated, effective July 31, 2025. The DMSP satellites are the leading sources of high-quality microwave data in the world, and our understanding is that these satellites are still viable. Our states rely upon, and help produce, the critical data and decision support tools produced by the DMSP. This abrupt action—for which no rationale was provided—raises serious questions about the potential impacts on our nation’s weather forecasting capabilities, particularly as we enter the peak of what is expected to be an active hurricane season.

DMSP satellites have provided critical weather and environmental data for decades, supporting both civilian and military operations. DMSP data contributes to half of the microwave scans upon which forecasters build their predictions.<sup>1</sup> Their incorporation in global forecasting models enhances the accuracy of hurricane location and intensity predictions and severe weather alerts. The loss of these data products without a clearly articulated transition plan jeopardizes not only forecast reliability but also public safety in coastal communities vulnerable to hurricanes and other extreme weather events. In addition, the National Snow and Ice Data Center has warned that the DMSP termination will create “a gap in data availability” for operations, as well as long-term monitoring and research of polar conditions.<sup>2</sup>

We share your commitment to modernizing weather satellite infrastructure and are aware that the U.S. Space Force deemed its new Weather System Follow-on Microwave (WSF-M) satellite as ready to support operational forecasting earlier this year. However, little information has been made publicly available regarding how this new system will compensate for the loss of the DMSP data or whether the replacement capabilities are fully integrated into NOAA and Department of Defense (DoD) forecasting operations.

Given the urgency of this development taking effect, we request a response to the following questions by September 1, 2025:

1. **Initial Decision.** Why did DoD choose to terminate DMSP data product distribution at

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<sup>1</sup><https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2025/06/27/alarmingly-bad-news-trump-admin-suddenly-terminates-crucial-weather-satellite-data-00428209>

<sup>2</sup><https://nsidc.org/data/user-resources/data-announcements/user-notice-ssmis-data-discontinuation-affecting-sea-ice-index-and-sea-ice-cdr-effective-30-june>

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this time? To what extent was this decision coordinated with NOAA, the National Hurricane Center, and other relevant civilian agencies?

2. **Follow-on Mission.** What systems, including WSF-M, are in place or planned to replace the data products historically provided by DMSP? What is the timeline for achieving full operational integration of these replacement capabilities into civilian and military forecasting models?
3. **Impacts.** How did you assess the potential impacts this data termination may have on hurricane forecasts and warnings during the 2025 hurricane season and what did your assessments conclude? What contingency plans have you implemented to address data shortfalls that may arise?

We urge DoD and NOAA to work collaboratively to ensure that vital weather data continuity is maintained and that the American public is not placed at unnecessary risk. We look forward to your response and to working together to uphold our nation's weather forecasting capabilities.

Sincerely,



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John Hickenlooper  
U.S. Senator



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Lisa Murkowski  
U.S. Senator