

**Calendar No. 629**114<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION**S. 2058****[Report No. 114–351]**

To require the Secretary of Commerce to maintain and operate at least one Doppler weather radar site within 55 miles of each city in the United States that has a population of more than 700,000 individuals, and for other purposes.

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**IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES**

SEPTEMBER 17, 2015

Mr. BURR (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

Reported by Mr. THUNE, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italics]

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**A BILL**

To require the Secretary of Commerce to maintain and operate at least one Doppler weather radar site within 55 miles of each city in the United States that has a population of more than 700,000 individuals, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Metropolitan Weather  
3 Hazards Protection Act of 2015”.

4 **SEC. 2. REQUIREMENT FOR OPERATION OF DOPPLER**  
5 **WEATHER RADAR SITES NEAR LARGE CITIES.**

6 (a) **REQUIREMENT.**—Beginning not later than 450  
7 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
8 retary of Commerce shall—

9 (1) maintain and operate at least one Doppler  
10 weather radar site within 55 miles of each city in  
11 the United States that has a population of more  
12 than 700,000 individuals; and

13 (2) ensure that each radar maintained and op-  
14 erated near a city described in paragraph (1) is  
15 available to the office of the National Weather Serv-  
16 ice that provides services to such city.

17 (b) **STANDARDS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that  
18 each radar maintained and operated under subsection (a)  
19 conforms with the same standards that apply to radars  
20 operated by the Secretary, acting through the Adminis-  
21 trator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-  
22 tration, on the day before the date of the enactment of  
23 this Act, including standards relating to the use of dual-  
24 polarization technology or other technologies included in  
25 Weather Surveillance Radar, 1988, Doppler (WSR-88D)  
26 radars.

1       (c) CONSIDERATIONS.—When determining the loca-  
 2 tion for constructing a radar to meet the requirements of  
 3 subsection (a), the Secretary shall take into consideration  
 4 nearby counties that have populations of more than  
 5 130,000 and do not otherwise have radar beam coverage  
 6 below 10,000 feet from Weather Surveillance Radar,  
 7 1988, Doppler (WSR-88D) radars.

8       (d) REPORT.—

9           (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
 10 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-  
 11 retary shall submit to Congress a report detailing  
 12 the Doppler weather radar sites that need to be con-  
 13 structed or acquired in order to meet the require-  
 14 ment of subsection (a).

15           (2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under  
 16 paragraph (1) shall include the following:

17           (A) Feasible locations for placement and  
 18 construction of radar sites, determined by the  
 19 Secretary to provide the necessary meteorolog-  
 20 ical capabilities to best protect a city described  
 21 in subsection (a).

22           (B) A timeline for when construction or  
 23 acquisition of each radar site will be complete.

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 *This Act may be cited as the “Metropolitan Weather*  
 3 *Hazards Protection Act of 2015”.*

4 **SEC. 2. STUDY ON GAPS IN NEXRAD COVERAGE AND RE-**  
 5 **QUIREMENT FOR PLAN TO ADDRESS SUCH**  
 6 **GAPS.**

7 *(a) STUDY ON GAPS IN NEXRAD COVERAGE.—*

8 *(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after*  
 9 *the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of*  
 10 *Commerce shall complete a study on gaps in the cov-*  
 11 *erage of the Next Generation Weather Radar of the*  
 12 *National Weather Service (known as “NEXRAD”).*

13 *(2) ELEMENTS.—Under the study required by*  
 14 *paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—*

15 *(A) identify areas in the United States with*  
 16 *limited or no Next Generation Weather Radar*  
 17 *coverage below 6,000 feet above ground level of*  
 18 *the surrounding terrain;*

19 *(B) for the areas identified under subpara-*  
 20 *graph (A), Charlotte, North Carolina, and sur-*  
 21 *rounding counties, central Washington State,*  
 22 *northwest New Mexico, and Columbus, Ohio, and*  
 23 *surrounding counties—*

24 *(i) identify the key weather effects for*  
 25 *which prediction would improve with im-*  
 26 *proved radar detection;*

1           (ii) identify additional sources of ob-  
2           servations for high impact weather that  
3           were available and operational for such  
4           areas on the day before the date of the en-  
5           actment of this Act, including Terminal  
6           Doppler Weather Radar (known as  
7           “TDWR”), air surveillance radars of the  
8           Federal Aviation Administration, and coop-  
9           erative network observers; and

10          (iii) assess the feasibility and advis-  
11          ability of efforts to integrate and upgrade  
12          Federal radar capabilities in such areas  
13          that are not owned or controlled by of the  
14          National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-  
15          istration, including radar capabilities of the  
16          Federal Aviation Administration and the  
17          Department of Defense;

18          (C) assess the feasibility and advisability of  
19          incorporating State-operated and other non-Fed-  
20          eral radars into the operations of the National  
21          Weather Service;

22          (D) identify options to improve radar cov-  
23          erage in the areas identified under subparagraph  
24          (A); and

1           (E) estimate the cost of, and develop a  
2           timeline for, carrying out each of the options  
3           identified under subparagraph (D).

4           (3) *REPORT.*—Upon the completion of the study  
5           required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit  
6           to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Trans-  
7           portation of the Senate and the Committee on  
8           Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Rep-  
9           resentatives a report on the findings of the Secretary  
10          with respect to the study.

11          (b) *PLAN TO IMPROVE RADAR COVERAGE.*—Not later  
12          than 30 days after the completion of the study required by  
13          subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall develop and submit  
14          to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transpor-  
15          tation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space,  
16          and Technology of the House of Representatives a plan to  
17          improve radar coverage in the areas identified under sub-  
18          section (a)(2)(A) by integrating, and upgrading where  
19          practicable, additional observation solutions to improve  
20          hazardous weather detection and forecasting.

21          (c) *REQUIREMENT FOR THIRD-PARTY REVIEWS RE-*  
22          *GARDING PLAN TO IMPROVE RADAR COVERAGE.*—The Sec-  
23          retary shall seek third-party reviews on scientific method-  
24          ology relating to, and the feasibility and advisability of,  
25          implementing the plan developed and submitted under sub-

1 *section (b), including the extent to which warning and fore-*  
2 *cast services of the National Weather Service would be im-*  
3 *proved by additional Next Generation Weather Radar cov-*  
4 *erage.*

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