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October 25, 2007

Senator Barbara Mikulski
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
SD-144
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
SD-144
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby:

As you move forward with conferees to complete work on the Fiscal Year 2008 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, I write to express my support for the House inclusion of \$850,000 in funding for the University of Colorado's Total Solar Irradiance Monitor (TSIS) instrument.

This funding, supported by Representative Mark Udall, would respond to a decision by National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) leadership to de-manifest the TSIS climate instrument from the project—a decision that has far reaching implications for science, for congressionally mandated Earth Data Records (EDRs), and for the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics (LASP) located at the University of Colorado. Earlier this year, I contacted the NPOESS to share my dismay over this decision, but I am hopeful that the conference committee reviewing the House and Senate versions of the CJS Appropriations Act will support funding for the continued development of the TSIS instrument, regardless of whether the instrument flies on NPOESS.

The funding in the House-passed bill is essential to prevent layoffs and continue with the work of building the TSIS instrument at the LASP, a facility that has led the way in our nation's space and climate research efforts.

Furthermore, the House language indicates Congress's strong support scientific continuity and recognizes the critical role the TSIS instrument plays in ensuring that climate data—which scientists have been collecting for over 30 years—continues to be collected consistently and accurately. Since the TSIS instrument gathers data that fulfills the requirements for the congressionally mandated NPOESS Solar Irradiance Environmental Data Records, maintaining TSIS within the NPOESS—as the House bill recommends—would prevent a loss of continuity that could be devastating to this data record and to climate research as a whole.

It is my hope that with your support, the final bill will reflect support for the TSIS instrument. For your convenience, I have attached a copy of the House-passed language regarding climate sensors and the TSIS Suite. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff contact Matt Lee-Ashley at (202) 228-5905.

On behalf of Colorado, thank you for your leadership on this bill and for your continued support of climate change research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Salazar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ken Salazar
United States Senator