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U.S. Weather Commission Panel Talk – AMS Town Hall Meeting  
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*We are here today to talk about an idea that originated primarily from UCAR and leaders of The Weather Coalition. It has seemed an idea very “research community” centric.*

*It has seemed too many to be a solution in search of a problem. I am here with an open mind, but with compelling questions.*

*So I ask:*

*What strategic objective is the community trying to achieve, and then, what method or vehicle is best to achieve that.*

*Some suggested the idea was sparked by something I said, not too long ago: that in an era of fiscal challenge, if we as a community do not come together, and advocate where resources need to go, others will.*

*I did say that and I believe it.*

*A weather commission, appointed by others, such as the Congress and the President, at any time, but especially at a time of political discord in the nation’s body politic, concerns me. Many in this room have worked for years, if not decades, to achieve a successful cooperative environment.*

*Is the surrendering of advocacy for the weather community, to yet another group, who may have less understanding about what is needed than the groups we now work to influence, a good idea?*

*Some have said a Weather Commission would draw attention to the needs of the community.*

*Perhaps... but what would the commission be charged with and by whom? The originators of the idea, mostly the academic and research view, see one emphasis. I can tell you the weather industry sees another, and the commission may see a third.*

*Much progress has been made, do we want to advocate for a situation we cannot control. Advocates have said a primary goal would be "Do No Harm." I agree with that goal. But I see no path that can ensure that outcome. And a process that could cost millions and last for years - misses the urgency of now.*

*The budget and legislative process may be messy; is it rendered less so and more productive through the appointment of a commission.*

*Would the NCEP computers AccuWeather and others pushed Congress to fund have been aided by a weather commission?*

*Would the budget anomaly for the continuation of the satellite program attained a few months ago, been aided by a weather commission? I have no way of knowing.*

*What I do know, from my 30 plus years of working the Halls of Congress and the White House, working on getting much of the relevant legislation and policies and processes that underpin the freedom of weather data today and many other weather related policies we take for granted, is that this is a high risk, high stake game.*

*Advocates of a weather commission have boldly asserted what the weather commission will do, but as Tom Bogdan and others have correctly pointed out, we will not control that.*

*I think we all want to understand the issues the initiators feel, need to be addressed, and how a weather commission would support the Weather Enterprise as a whole. While a congressionally-chartered Weather Commission may be an approach ... there is no certainty regarding a Commission's charge, timing, makeup, and outcomes.*

*This makes it difficult at this time, or any time, to judge its merit.*

*The American Weather Industry always supports initiatives whose strategic purpose fits within five primary tenants, which I can quickly summarize:*

- 1. To empower and facilitate the American weather enterprise to achieve its full potential*
- 2. To define the value chain of all parts of the American weather enterprise to ensure the American public is served with the best possible information employing the most cost efficient combination of private and public institutions.*
- 3. To place special focus on NOAA/NWS role as the builder of the nation's core weather infrastructure, public warnings for events that pose imminent threat to life and property, and working with America's Weather Industry, to achieve world-wide leadership in weather and weather media.*

4. *To focus federal support to ensure a legislative and budgetary agenda which makes maximum and optimum use of all parts, public and private, of the American weather enterprise.*
5. *And to encourage the execution of the aligned missions and roles through public and private partnerships.*

*Those are goals the American Weather Industry has advanced and supported for decades. They are beneficial to the entire weather enterprise and the nation. Those are worthy strategic objectives.*

*The big question is, where does a weather commission idea fit with these strategic objectives, and how does it advance the ball relative to them and the weather enterprise as a whole.*

*Thank you.*