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September 6, 2019

The Honorable Neil Jacobs, Ph.D.

Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Environmental Observation and Prediction and Acting  
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
1401 Constitution Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Acting Under Secretary Jacobs:

On Wednesday, President Trump made headlines after displaying a map of the National Hurricane Center forecast for August 29, 2019 that showed Hurricane Dorian could track over Florida. The map the President displayed included what appeared to be a hand-drawn half-circle suggesting that the hurricane's original path could have hit Alabama. As a staunch supporter of scientific integrity, I have serious concerns about the alteration of official data produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

As Hurricane Dorian continues to wreak havoc on the coast of the Carolinas and makes its way up the Eastern Seaboard, it is critical for the public to have an accurate and up-to-date forecast of the storm's trajectory. To date, the hurricane caused at least 30 deaths and left thousands homeless in the Bahamas – numbers that are expected to rise as the picture on the ground becomes clearer. In order to prevent the loss of more lives and to ensure emergency management personnel, first responders, and the general public can properly prepare for potential crisis, the dissemination of factual information is paramount. NOAA's commitment to scientific integrity is well established and assurance of its continued credibility is of the utmost importance.

I look forward to working with NOAA to protect the public's access to accurate information produced by the agency, which is critically important to emergency preparedness and response. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate