



## UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

120 David L. Boren Blvd  
Norman, OK 73072  
Phone: (405) 325-1819  
Fax: (405) 325-1108  
[www.weathersphere.org](http://www.weathersphere.org)

# Courtesy of Reuters—01/13/2009

## Obama urged to spend billions on weather research

By: Tim Gaynor

PHOENIX, Jan 13 (Reuters) - Weather scientists on Tuesday urged Barack Obama to spend \$9 billion on satellites and research to prepare for hurricanes, tornadoes and wildfires and examine links between destructive weather and climate change.

Members of the American Meteorological Society meeting in Phoenix said they want Obama, who becomes U.S. president on Jan. 20, to provide the funds over the next five years.

"There are some very basic research questions that need to be addressed so that we can make wise policy ... and better protect people and infrastructure," said John Snow, a hurricane expert at the University of Oklahoma.

Severe weather kills people across the country each year, and homeowners, businesses and insurers are hit by billions of dollars in direct damages and disruption to services.

Last year, Hurricanes Ike and Gustav roared over Louisiana and parts of Texas, killing dozens of people, destroying homes and disrupting oil and gas production.

The United States needs a new generation of weather observation satellites to replace aging systems and provide better forecasting and climate analysis, the scientists said.

"We do not have sufficient (weather observing) satellites already manufactured to continue beyond the middle of the next decade," said Joe Friday, a former president of the society.

"If we lose that satellite capability, we set back forecasting by 30 years," he added.

Climate scientists also are seeking to boost the computer power for climate research and prediction, and funding for research into the relationship between weather and climate change.

U.S. weather experts and researchers have presented the policy proposals to Obama's

transition team in Washington.

Last month Obama picked a "green dream team" to his administration to battle climate change and push for major policy changes.

Designees include Nobel Prize-winning physicist Stephen Chu to head the Energy Department, and John Holdren, a Harvard University expert on climate change, who will be White House science adviser. (Reporting by Tim Gaynor; Editing by Xavier Briand)