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# Congressman says new hurricane center coming to Florida

## Rep. Grayson says controversial energy bill will benefit state

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The contentious cap-and-trade debate on Capitol Hill has spawned one new initiative for Central Florida: a \$50 million national hurricane research center.

U.S. Rep. Alan Grayson announced Friday he had secured assurances from President Obama and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that such a facility would be brought to fruition.

It is expected to open in 2012 and will likely be located in Orlando, said Grayson, whose district includes much of eastern Marion County.

Grayson described the proposed center as a state-of-the-art facility capable of improving hurricane forecasting and delivering real-time information about storms to the public and the media.

The research conducted there will benefit Central Florida, the rest of the state as well as other areas of the nation vulnerable to hurricanes, Grayson said.

He also envisioned it becoming a magnet for global scholars trying to better grasp how major storms form and strike.

But its key benefit will be furthering understanding of hurricanes and how to improve our defense against them to save lives and protect property.

"Every time we have a hurricane, the damages run into the millions of dollars. Yet we spend only \$2 million [a year] on hurricane research. This remedies that," Grayson said in an interview.

Moreover, Grayson maintains, it targets money for a growing area of scientific research, meteorology, which has grown in importance with the heightened concern over climate change and global warming.

Grayson thinks the project will begin paying dividends on new jobs right away, as

mobilization begins for siting the project and eventual construction.

It will mean even more high-paying jobs down the road, he said.

One backer included Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

"I share [Grayson's] concern about the need for research on hurricane intensity and frequency and effects," Waxman said during debate of the issue.

"The harms from hurricanes are only going to increase with global warming, and we need to better understand the connections and impacts. ... I think it is a very worthwhile project."

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