

Senators introduce Volcano Warning and Monitoring bill

February 8, 2017

Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) introduced a bill to establish a National Volcano Early Warning and Monitoring System (S.346) on February 8. Lava flows, toxic gasses, mudslides, and large ash plumes from volcanoes pose a significant health and economic hazard.

S.346 acts to strengthen and unify existing volcano monitoring systems, such as the Alaska, Cascades, Hawaiian, Yellowstone, and California volcano observatories, into the National Volcano Early Warning System. The national monitoring system would strengthen observatory monitoring and warning capabilities.

The bill directs the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to create a plan to upgrade existing networks and create new networks that utilize state of the art volcano sensing equipment. The bill includes appropriated funds for the monitoring plan through fiscal year 2027.

Sen. Cantwell, who co-sponsored this bill, believes it will fill a gap in current volcanic monitoring and understanding, which will enable scientists to better protect U.S. citizens from the effects of these devastating hazards.

Sources: [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov), [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)
