

April 29, 2022

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Interior, Environment, and Related
Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Pingree, Chair Merkley, Ranking Members Joyce and Murkowski,

Our organizations write to urge you to include robust and urgently needed funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, to fulfill our national commitments to fight climate change, ensure clean air and protect the health of communities around the country. We strongly support substantially increased funding for EPA of, at minimum, President Biden's Budget request of \$11.9 billion in fiscal year 2023 (FY23).

Major investments in the agency are needed to protect frontline communities, workers, and the environment. For years, the EPA has been underfunded and unable to fully carry out its mission. We urge you to fully adopt President Biden's budget requests for funding to increase staffing and rebuild the Agency's capacity to reduce air, water, and climate pollution.

Clean and healthy air is a fundamental right, but millions of Americans are exposed to unhealthy air pollution, and this pollution disproportionately harms communities of color and low-income families. Worsening climate change is exacerbating these harms and many others, and time is running out to avoid a catastrophic level of warming. EPA cannot fully realize the promise of the Clean Air Act without substantial funding increases across the agency's air programs. Specifically, we call upon you to provide *at least* \$705 million for the Clean Air and Climate program (in the S&T and EPM accounts), as requested in the President's budget.

In addition, it has become increasingly evident that we cannot address environmental injustices and achieve equitable air pollution protections without expanding the nation's air monitoring infrastructure to produce more complete, actionable and enforceable data. We support an increase of \$100 million for community air quality monitoring as called for in the President's budget. To the extent that they are not already fully covered by the President's budget request, we strongly recommend increasing overall funding to support the following important new investments in air quality monitoring:

- \$150 million to fund deployment and maintenance of continuous fence line air monitoring using the best available technology (including National Air Toxics Trend Stations) at the 100 highest priority industrial sources emitting hazardous air pollutants.
- \$18 million to ensure fenceline monitoring and continuous emission monitoring are core components of national emission standards for chemical, petrochemical, and other sources of fugitive toxic air pollution. This monitoring is necessary to assure compliance with pollution limits and inform communities of what is in the air they breathe.
- \$75 million for a rapid expansion of the NAAQS or national ambient air monitoring network through the addition of at least 80 new NCore multipollutant monitoring stations in communities where this is most needed to protect people with asthma and other health conditions. The Committees should also direct EPA to assess and report on the status of the entire network and submit and implement a plan to remediate all failing or broken monitors.
- \$3 million to deploy at least 1,000 new low cost air quality sensors in communities disproportionately affected by air pollution to boost and complement the NAAQS monitoring network and increase communities' access to information about local air quality.

Also, we support the President's budget request for \$8.8 million for the Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET), which is the primary source for assessing long-term trends in acid rain, regional smog, and other air pollution at sites across the country that are not otherwise monitored, such as in 24 national parks. In addition, the IMPROVE monitoring network is critical for assessing regional haze air pollution problems in 156 national parks and wilderness areas. Continued EPA funding at or above current levels is essential to maintaining and servicing this infrastructure that provides crucial data in order to inform the Regional Haze program.

Another critical element of our nation's air protections are the state, local, and Tribal air agencies working on the front lines to protect our communities from air pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EPA provides grants to these agencies to help them carry out their essential functions, including maintaining air quality monitoring networks and providing the necessary data for much of the CAA. Federal funding under sections 103 and 105 for categorical grants has been flatlined for over a decade. Underfunding these programs has led to continued shortfalls that leave communities at an unacceptable risk, as programs and monitoring efforts must be scaled back or cut entirely. A recent survey by the National Association of Clean Air Agencies found that at least \$500 million is needed for state and local air agencies, and at minimum \$33 million for Tribal air agencies, to maintain their essential functions, including monitoring networks. We urge you to support increased funding above the budget request for state, local and Tribal air agencies to help rebuild these agencies as well.

Millions of Americans still live with dirty unhealthy air and we need to make far more rapid progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but with robust funding, EPA can address air and climate pollution and fulfill the important commitments that have been made. We urge

Congress to meet these funding needs, support absolutely critical progress on climate change, and finally ensure clean air for all.

Sincerely,

Adirondack Council
Appalachian Voices
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Central California Asthma Collaborative
Citizens Committee for Flood Relief
Citizens for Arsenal Accountability
Clean Air Task Force
Coal River Mountain Watch
Earthjustice
Environmental Defense Fund
Evergreen Action
Friends of Buckingham
GreenLatinos
League of Conservation Voters
Moms Clean Air Force
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Parks Conservation Association
National Resources Defense Council
National Wildlife Federation
Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition
Partnership for Policy Integrity
Sierra Club
The Alliance for Appalachia
Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment
Yogaville Environmental Solutions

cc: Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Chair Leahy, Vice-Chair Shelby, Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger