



May 6, 2025

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

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

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

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

Dear Chairs Simpson and Murkowski, and Ranking Members Pingree and Merkley:

The undersigned health, medical and nursing organizations strongly urge you to provide robust funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the fiscal year 2026 (FY26) Interior, Environment and Related Agencies bill. From helping the public know what's in the air they breathe to reducing toxic emissions, the agency plays a necessary and critical role in improving health outcomes. To achieve its mission of delivering clean air and healthy environments, the agency requires \$12 billion or certainly no fewer than FY24 enacted funds.

EPA has led the successful charge to ensure cleaner air and less pollution, but poor air quality still impacts large swaths of the population, and the progress made thus far is under threat. The American Lung Association's "State of the Air" 2025 report found that nearly half of Americans live in areas with unhealthy levels of air pollution.

Even with that backdrop, EPA leadership has announced plans to roll back critical clean air safeguards, dramatically reduce staffing and even consider eliminating offices or programs entirely. This decimation of the agency and its mission is happening without input from Congress or experts and in some cases, without proper notice and public comment.

Clean air is critical for a healthy population and a healthy economy. We urge Congress to protect EPA and its mission of protecting America's health from harmful pollutants by providing the funding EPA needs to achieve that mission. Within the agency, there are a number of air-focused

programs critical for public health that must also receive adequate investment. The programs included in this letter are not an exhaustive list but represent key priorities of the undersigned health groups.

Clean Air Program

EPA's Clean Air Program protects people from the impacts of air pollution, improves health and saves lives. This program provides states, Tribes and localities with resources and support to meet federal air quality standards and protect health from dangerous air pollution. Crucial activities like oversight, testing vehicles to ensure they meet required emissions levels, and mitigating worsening of air quality in polluted places are also funded by this program. **Please provide at least \$915.5 million for EPA's Clean Air Program, with \$694.6 million in Environmental Programs & Management and \$220.9 million in Science & Technology.**

Categorical Grants for State, Local and Tribal Air Monitoring

State, local and Tribal air agencies receive grants from EPA to help maintain their air monitoring networks. Federal funding has failed to cover the costs of adequately maintaining and improving air monitors, which hinders the ability to inform the public about what they're breathing and in effectively spending resources on pollution cleanup. The National Association of Clean Air Agencies and the National Tribal Air Association have stated that in order to adequately operate the nation's air quality monitoring networks, increases in federal funds are needed.¹ **Please provide \$500 million for State and Local Air Quality Management and \$85.25 million for Tribal Air Quality Management.**

Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program

The Diesel Emissions Reduction (DERA) Grant program continues to be a cost-effective program that enjoys bipartisan support. According to EPA's 2022 report to Congress, the health benefits of diesel emissions reduction projects are cost-effective, with monetized health benefits estimated to exceed federal funding by a factor of 10 to 1. Still, there are millions of dirty diesel engines that are polluting communities that can be cleaned up. **Please provide \$150 million for DERA grants.**

Indoor Air Quality in Schools

The Indoor Environments Division of the Office of Air and Radiation provides critical resources for improving indoor air quality, including in schools. Exposure to indoor environmental pollution can decrease attendance, negatively impact test scores and worsen asthma symptoms or other health impacts. A 2020 GAO report found that 41% of school districts were in need of HVAC repairs in at least half of their schools. Educators and school personnel need education, training and resources to implement effective prevention measures. Additionally, the Office of Children's Health Protection plays a critical role in researching children's risks and exposures in school and childcare facilities. **Please provide \$100 million for the Office of Air and**

¹ National Association of Clean Air Agencies FY 2025 Funding Recommendations October 2023
https://www.4cleanair.org/wp-content/uploads/NACAA_FY_2025_Grant-Recommendations.pdf

Radiation/Indoor Environments Division and \$10 million to EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection.

Enforcement and Compliance

Enforcing EPA's science-backed air quality standards is necessary to truly achieve intended health benefits. EPA must have the resources and capacity to reduce non-compliance, as well as enforce penalties for violations. EPA must also be prepared to respond to civil enforcement actions authorized by the Clean Air Act. Additionally, some communities face higher uphill climbs to achieve clean air. Ensuring that the communities most impacted by pollution are targeted for clean-up not only provides the greatest health benefits, it's also widely supported and cost-effective. **Please provide \$162.1 million for Compliance Monitoring and \$485 for Enforcement.**

Wildfire Smoke Preparedness

Wildfires pose an urgent and increasing threat to public health. In 2023, wildfires in Canada and the Northeast set off unprecedented air quality alerts down the Midwest and East Coast, increasing emergency department visits for asthma-related conditions. Wildfires later that summer in Maui and the Los Angeles wildfires in 2025 underscore the need for robust forecasting, communication, education and other preparedness measures to protect against the impacts of wildfire smoke. **Please provide \$15 million for wildfire smoke preparedness grants.**

Achieving a healthy America is impossible without a strong EPA. Appropriately funding the agency is a responsibility we urge Congress to meet. Please support \$12 billion in funding to EPA in Fiscal Year 2026.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy
Environments
Allergy and Asthma Network
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Chest Physicians
American College of Physicians
American Lung Association
American Thoracic Society
American Public Health Association
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
Children's Environmental Health Network
Health Care Without Harm

Medical Students for a Sustainable Future
(MS4SF)
National Association of Pediatric Nurse
Practitioners
National Environmental Health Association
National League for Nursing
OUCH-Int'l (Oncology Advocates United
for Climate and Health - International)
Physicians for Social Responsibility