

## EPA PROVISIONS OF FY 2019 CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT

On February 14, 2019, the House and the Senate passed a government spending bill funding EPA and other government agencies through September 30, 2019. While the FY 2019 EPA Appropriation leaves EPA off the Trump chopping block, with funding at last year's level, it does nothing to protect EPA from "death by a thousand cuts," starving it of new funding, and passively allowing a host of EPA [de]regulatory actions to cripple environmental protection.

The EPA funding provision is not nearly as harmful as the drastic cuts proposed in the president's nearly identical 2019 and 2018 budgets, which Congress rejected. The Trump budget proposals aimed to destroy ("deconstruct" in the administration's pompous parlance) the agency's ability to protect America's people and environment. But Congress' rejection of those drastic cuts is cold comfort while EPA management weakens environmental protection and pursues the goals of those cuts:

- **Flat EPA science funding, but a virtual war on science** replacing independent scientists with energy industry employees on science review bodies, ignoring science findings in shaping rules, and even proposing a rule *requiring* EPA to ignore some scientific evidence in rulemaking.
- **Flat agency program funding**, but dramatic rollbacks in the protections of key programs.
- **Flat enforcement funding**, but drastic cuts in enforcement and penalties. 80% fewer civil investigations and the lowest fines and fewest criminal enforcement cases in a quarter century.
- **Flat funding for climate protection programs**, but active denial of climate science and actions to *increase* climate change by rolling back climate protection programs like the Clean Power Plan and vehicle emission standards, and taking half measures that may do more harm than good.
- **Flat funding to support state programs**, but proposals to reduce state authority to protect water resources from pipelines and set vehicle mileage standards to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **No funds for staff cuts**, but allowing EPA's workforce to shrink to its smallest since 1989, weakening EPA and advancing the president's goal of reducing EPA to "little tidbits."

Protecting the funding status quo by rejecting ruinous cuts is not enough. With EPA's budget in a holding pattern year after year, in the face of inflation, the agency must pay more each year for facilities and other overhead, with less money for its real work. Frozen funding also limits the agency's ability to fully respond to evolving problems and priorities such as the new actions required under the 2016 amendments to the Toxic Substances Control Act, and growing demands on EPA's emergency response role in catastrophic weather events. Worst of all, EPA is diverting the limited resources it does have to actions to weaken environmental protection by rolling back important regulations.

The Appropriations Act does not directly advance the administration's ongoing efforts to cripple EPA regulatory programs and starve the agency of staff and funding, but it does little to stop its efforts to shrink the agency and thwart its mission, with or without congressional funding or approval.

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