

April 14, 2023

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

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

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski,

On behalf of our collective millions of members and supporters, we write with full support of President Biden's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget Request of \$12.083 billion to fund the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and urge you to meet this request in FY 2024 appropriations bills. This funding is crucial for the EPA to fulfill its mission to protect human health and the environment, including its work to strengthen clean air safeguards and advance environmental justice.

Years of sweeping cuts resulted in skeletal programs and staffing levels that have made it extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible, for the EPA to effectively protect public health and safety. Inadequate resources have forced the EPA to cut back on enforcement activities, letting egregious polluters off the hook and leaving nearby communities – usually marginalized communities of color – unprotected. Insufficient funding has severely limited the agency's ability to enforce environmental regulations; combat climate change; ensure clean air, water, and public lands; safeguard communities from harmful chemicals; and deliver economic benefits for all Americans.

We urge you also to fully fund the Clean Air and Climate program at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through both the Science and Technology account at \$221 million and the Environmental Programs and Management account at \$695 million, as requested by President Biden's budget. The Clean Air and Climate program provides key funding to the Office of Air and Radiation (OAR), which is the focal point of EPA's important work to reduce harmful air pollution, control radiation exposure, and mitigate climate change.

More than 40 percent of Americans are living in communities with unhealthy levels of air pollution, and that number continues to rise.<sup>1</sup> Air pollution causes serious health problems and disproportionately affects communities of color, fence-line communities, and lower-income communities who are already overburdened by pollution. Robust funding for the Clean Air and

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<sup>1</sup> *State of the Air 2022*, American Lung Association (Apr. 21, 2022), <https://www.lung.org/getmedia/74b3d3d3-88d1-4335-95d8-c4e47d0282c1/SOTA-2022.pdf>.

Climate program accounts will support OAR's mandate, cut climate pollution, and deliver strong public health protections for all communities.

We've enclosed a copy of a letter from EPA Chief Financial Officer Faisal Amin to House Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro describing the concrete, detrimental effects of capping EPA funding at insufficient Fiscal Year 2022 levels. Full funding for the EPA and these critical programs will ensure American families are better protected and the EPA has the resources needed to continue its mission.

Sincerely,

Climate Action Campaign  
Earthjustice  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Sierra Club  
National Wildlife Federation  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Health Care Without Harm  
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments  
Interfaith Power & Light  
Moms Clean Air Force  
AZ Climate Action Coalition  
Elders Climate Action – AZ Chapter  
Georgia Interfaith Power and Light  
Hispanic Access Foundation  
Arizonans for Community Choice  
Friends of Ironwood Forest  
Michigan Sustainable Business Forum  
Poder Latinx  
Black Millennials 4 Flint  
Arizona Interfaith Power & Light  
Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light  
Change the Chamber\*Lobby for Climate  
GreenLatinos  
Kids Climate Action Network  
Elevate  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Earth Justice Ministry at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Phoenix  
PennFuture  
West Michigan Environmental Action Council  
Environmental Working Group  
Sustainable Tucson  
350.org  
Defend Our Future

Unlimited Potential  
Clean Water Action  
Physicians for Social Responsibility, AZ chapter  
Western Resource Advocates  
Friends of the Earth  
Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition  
Gullah/Geechee Fishing Association  
Environmental Protection Network  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Voices for Progress  
Michigan League of Conservation Voters  
Greenpeace USA  
Evergreen Action  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action  
Faith in Place

CC: Leader Chuck Schumer, Chair Patty Murray, Vice Chair Susan Collins

Enclosed:

<https://democrats-appropriations.house.gov/sites/democrats-appropriations.house.gov/files/Environmental%20Protection%20Agency%20-%20Impact%20of%20Spending%20Cuts.pdf>