

Open Letter to Members of the 119th Congress

March 18, 2025

Dear Member of Congress:

We are former Senate-confirmed officials and Regional Administrators who served in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency during Republican and Democratic administrations. We adhere to EPA's long-held core principles that the agency should be apolitical, professional, transparent, and dedicated to following the law and science.

We are greatly alarmed by President Trump's recent comments that his administration is seeking to [cut EPA by 65 percent](#). We share the concerns expressed by former EPA administrators who recently [wrote](#) that "such cuts would render the agency incapable of protecting Americans from grave threats in our air, water and land."

We are writing to urge Congress to ensure that EPA has sufficient staff and funding to effectively implement the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and other bedrock environmental laws for the good of all Americans.

Deep cuts to EPA threaten more than 50 years of bipartisan progress under Republican and Democratic Congresses and presidents. Actions that diminish EPA's capabilities will place at risk the quality of the air our children breathe, the water we all drink, and the waterways we swim, fish and play in. They would jeopardize EPA's responses to toxic chemical spills and other disasters as well as basic compliance with America's environmental laws.

Policy changes are to be expected from one administration to the next, but not the dismantling of EPA. When we served as administration appointees across Republican and Democratic administrations, we all looked for efficiencies. Some of us have worked in the private sector and have administered downsizing initiatives there. We would welcome the chance to share our experiences to make meaningful efficiency gains that do not gut programs authorized and appropriated by Congress.

If the administration does not agree with the laws Congress has passed and the programs it has funded, it should work with Congress to seek changes, not unilaterally and recklessly freeze, delay, or eliminate funding.

EPA's work to protect public health and the environment is worth the investment. EPA's budget accounts for only two-tenths of a penny for every dollar in federal spending. One-third of EPA's budget goes to states and Tribes to support clean water and wastewater improvements, air quality

monitoring, brownfields cleanups, and many other programs. Drastic cuts in EPA's budget will inevitably undermine states' ability to implement their own environmental programs.

[Between 1970 and 2019](#), emissions of common air pollutants decreased 77 percent while our economy more than tripled. These pollution reductions prevented more than 2,300,000 premature deaths, 200,000 heart attacks, millions of cases of respiratory problems such as acute bronchitis and asthma attacks, and 135,000 hospital admissions. They also prevented 17 million lost workdays and 5 million lost school days.

A [report](#) issued by President Trump's Office of Management and Budget in 2019 estimated the range of annual benefits of EPA regulations to be between three and twelve times greater than the costs. Another credible [analysis](#) found the benefits of the Clean Air Act exceeded its costs by more than 30 to one.

Deep cuts to EPA would send harmful ripples across America's economy by creating regulatory confusion and delaying or cancelling clean water infrastructure and clean energy projects throughout the nation. Over time, more and more Americans would face lost work days, lost school days, and expensive medical bills for avoidable health problems such as asthma attacks, cancer, lung disease, and heart disease.

The American public does not support these actions. According to a November 2024 [nationwide poll](#) of voters, 86% of the public oppose attempts to weaken EPA. Republicans and Democrats depend equally on EPA to safeguard their families from pollution. When they turn on the tap, they want to be able to count on the safety of their drinking water regardless of who is in charge.

Now more than ever America needs Congress to step up. Regardless of which side of the aisle you sit, we ask you to stand up together for the health and well-being of your constituents and save EPA from reckless attacks.

We stand ready to assist in any way we can.

Signed:

Linda J. Fisher

Former EPA Deputy Administrator

A. James Barnes

Former EPA Deputy Administrator

Michael McCabe

Former EPA Deputy Administrator

Bob Perciasepe

Former EPA Deputy Administrator

Janet G. McCabe

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Cynthia Giles, Former Assistant Administrator, EPA Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

David G. Hawkins, Former Assistant Administrator, Office of Air, Noise, and Radiation

David W. Cash, Former Regional Administrator, EPA Region 1

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Felicia Marcus, Former Regional Administrator, EPA Region 9

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H. Christopher Frey, Former Assistant Administrator, Office of Research and Development, and EPA Science Advisor

H. Curtis Spalding, Former Regional Administrator, EPA Region 1

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