

February 12, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman, Appropriations Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives

RE: Interior-Environment 302(b) Allocation

Dear Chairman Cochran, Chairman Frelinghuysen, Vice Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Lowey,

Last week's budget agreement will help address important needs, rejects many of the president's unwise recommendations, and ends the prospect of another government shutdown this year. Particularly crucial are the elements of the agreement that provide emergency assistance to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and states harmed by last year's hurricanes.

Congress should now take this opportunity to redress the chronic under-funding of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by increasing the Interior-Environment Subcommittee 302(b) allocation at least in proportion with the funding increase set under the Budget Caps deal. We recommend **ten** percent over the next two fiscal years (FY18 and FY19).

Over the past four decades, EPA's budget in real terms has fallen **55%**, as our population grew by 100 million and our economy doubled. During that time Congress added at least a dozen major new (and necessary) laws to protect the public— including Superfund to clean up toxic waste, the Oil Pollution Act, the Food Quality Protection Act, as well as updates to laws on safe drinking water and clean water – meaning that EPA has consistently been asked to do more with less.

To begin the reversal of the long-term decline in budget resources available to EPA, we ask that you take this opportunity to initiate immediate corrective action. Congress should raise the base funding for EPA by **ten** percent over the next two fiscal years, separate and apart from any infrastructure funding increase.

Such an infusion of resources will allow EPA the necessary funds to:

- Ensure robust, health-protective implementation of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) reform bill Congress passed just two years ago.
- Carry out its longstanding partnership obligations to the states and tribes, such as providing a full federal share of air quality monitoring funds.

- Accelerate hazardous chemical cleanups through programs such as Superfund, brownfields, and abandoned mine clean-ups.
- Protect children and families by taking forceful action to address nationwide threats from lead, mercury and asbestos.
- Ensure that polluters are brought to justice through a robust enforcement program, and that they pay their fair share of clean-up costs.
- Continue its world-class scientific leadership in identifying threats to public health and the environment, and in designing efficient and effective measures to address those threats.
- Allow the agency to continue its partnerships with states and tribes through the EPA Geographic program to address major challenges in Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Lake Champlain, and many other areas.
- Protect access to funding for water infrastructure upgrades.
- Help the agency address the urgent threat of carbon pollution and climate change.

The bipartisan budget agreement affords Congress an opportunity to re-establish EPA's front-line effectiveness as guardian of the nation's air, land, water and public health. We need to stem the tide of experienced EPA employees who have been departing as their workloads have grown and their contributions have been devalued.

We appreciate the efforts involved in reaching a bipartisan budget agreement, and strongly urge you to put EPA on a path to budgetary and programmatic health by increasing the agency's budget by **ten** percent over the next two fiscal years.

Sincerely,



Joe Bonfiglio, President
EDF Action

Cc: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell; Minority Leader Chuck Schumer; Speaker Paul Ryan; Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi