

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 21, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairman Leahy:

We write to express our extreme concern over the drastic cuts President Trump proposed in FY2018 funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). During the President's February 28, 2017 address to Congress, he pledged to "promote clean air and water." Such a pledge is meaningless when the President follows it by proposing a 31 percent cut to the EPA's budget and a 20 percent reduction in its staff. If enacted, this funding cut would effectively eliminate the EPA's ability to execute its core mission to protect public health and ensure citizens have clean air, clean water, and are protected from hazardous waste and contaminants.

As the Senate works to finalize FY2017 appropriations and develop legislation to fund the federal government in FY2018, we urge you to oppose these cuts. The EPA must receive funding and staffing levels that ensure the agency can fulfill its mission to protect the environment, reduce pollution, and safeguard public health.

Unfortunately, instead of maintaining environmental protections, President Trump's FY2018 budget blueprint would simply eviscerate the EPA's core functions and adversely impact state budgets that rely on EPA grants for environmental remediation. President Trump's vision for the EPA includes:

- reducing clean air and clean water grants programs and cutting enforcement against polluters by 23%,
- instituting a 45% cut to core state grants programs which make up nearly 30% of state environmental agencies' budgets and allow them to implement longstanding environmental laws,
- eliminating the Energy Star program, which saved consumers over \$34 billion in utility bills in 2015 alone, and over \$430 billion since 1992,
- cutting research funding by nearly 50% from the Office of Research and Development, whose research safeguards American communities from environmental pollutants
- eliminating the Endocrine Disruptor Screening Program, which allows the EPA to evaluate impacts to human health from chemical exposure,
- cutting funding for Superfund sites by 30 percent, making it harder to clean up and reclaim contaminated and polluted sites across the country
- eliminating climate change research and partnership programs, international climate change programs, and defunding the Clean Power Plan,

- eliminating geographic programs accounts that provide important resources to clean up iconic water bodies that provide millions of Americans with drinking water including the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes, Puget Sound, the Columbia River Basin, the Long Island Sound, and the San Francisco Bay,
- cutting all funding for the U.S.-Mexico border program that support cross-border drinking water and sanitations improvements in the southwest,
- cutting all funding for Alaska Native villages and rural communities that helps provide critical drinking water and sewer systems, and
- eliminating the Targeted Airshed Grants program, which provides tools for local states, governments and tribes to reduce hazardous air pollution.

This is not the vision of the EPA that Americans support. We must ensure that vital public health and environment protections are maintained and funded. We urge you to oppose these drastic and dangerous cuts, and support continued funding for the EPA in the FY2017 and FY2018 appropriations process.

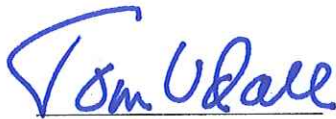
Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



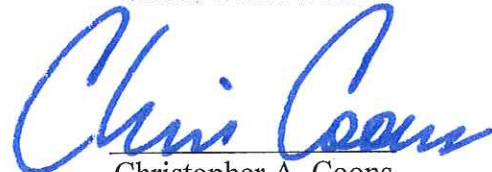
Tom Udall
United States Senator



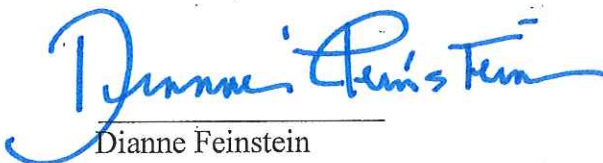
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



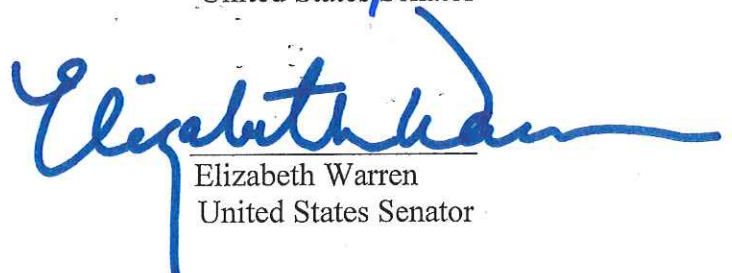
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



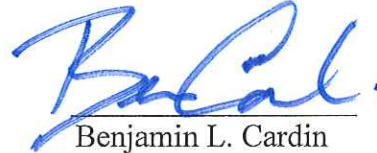
Al Franken
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



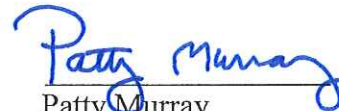
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Mazie Hirono
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



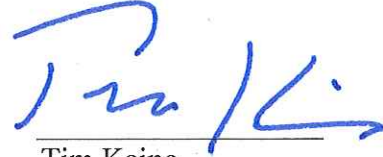
Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator