

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies, Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies, Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies, Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies, Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives

Re: Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025) Funding Request for the Environmental Protection Agency and Environmental Justice Initiatives

Dear Chair Merkley, Ranking Member Murkowski, Chair Simpson, Ranking Member Pingree,

We are leaders within and allies of the environmental justice movement and write to underscore the importance of fully funding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as you begin developing the FY2025 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. **We urge you and your colleagues to continue the ambitious work of protecting communities and the environment by appropriating funding that meets or exceeds the \$10.994 billion, especially the \$1.5 billion to support environmental justice efforts, requested for the EPA in President Biden’s FY2025 budget.¹ In addition, we ask that the FY2025 bill restores the word 'implementation' to the Environmental Justice appropriation language.**

Americans living frontline and fenceline to industry and polluters rely on the EPA to ensure their health and quality of life aren't compromised by pollution and to remediate in instances where public health harms and environmental degradation occurs. We count on the EPA to develop and enforce critical regulations such as the Safe Drinking Water Act, Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act and Toxic Substances Control Act. Also, at this moment, the EPA is serving as an important instrument for ensuring that resources from the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) and other once-in-a generation legislation reach communities, cities and states across the U.S. as we rebuild, restore and revitalize the nation. Our communities hope to see a continuation of a range of programs and research coming out of the EPA that can result in clean up of legacy pollution, advance justice and equity, and achieve economic empowerment in low-wealth communities, communities of color, and Tribal communities across the nation.

¹ Office of Management and Budget. (2024). *Budget of the U.S. Government, Fiscal Year 2025*.
https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/budget_fy2025.pdf

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 includes historic investments in climate and environmental justice such as \$3 Billion for Environmental and Climate Justice Grants, \$27 Billion for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction fund, and \$1 billion of investment in replacing fossil-powered heavy-duty vehicles with clean, zero-emission vehicles, among many others.² The EPA has swiftly developed these programs and these investments are beginning to reach communities. At this junction, it's critical to increase the topline funding of the EPA in service to preserving and enhancing the staff, systems, and other critical resources required to continue the efficient and equitable implementation of these spending bills.

Additionally, funding the EPA at or above the level requested by President Biden is urgent and needed to remedy the significant funding cuts the EPA currently faces in the FY2024 appropriations allocations. The nearly \$1 billion cut³ in funding to the EPA will certainly impact critical activities and programs that protect public health and the environment. For example, the Superfund program faces the largest cut despite the outsized impact that it had in communities last year. The agency spent \$1.1 billion to clean up 84 Superfund sites - toxic waste sites which are excessively and extremely polluted - protecting the 900,000 people living nearby.⁴ Remediating Superfund sites is a priority for many environmental justice and Tribal communities that confront the public health crisis driven by legacy pollution. We request additional appropriations in FY2025 to supplement the income generated from the Superfund taxes instituted by the IRA and IIJA. In addition, instead of cuts, we want to see increases in appropriations for environmental justice enforcement, which face a nearly \$8 million cut in FY2024.⁵ Congressional extremists targeting the EPA's budget to score political points are playing politics with peoples' lives.

Finally, we were pleased that the Committees did not preserve the harmful riders from the House Interior and Environment FY2024 bill. We urge you to continue rejecting all harmful riders that may be proposed during the FY2025 appropriations process.

Decades of research has revealed that low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal communities are more likely to be exposed to pollution and other environmental hazards. It is well documented that environmental justice communities face the worst and increasing cases of asthma and early death as well as extreme heat and natural disasters from the climate crisis. This reality underscores the urgency of advancing environmental justice in this country, which requires significant federal resources to combat the challenge. President Biden has rightfully

² Environmental Protection Agency. *Advancing Environmental Justice*.
<https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/advancing-environmental-justice>.

³ U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations. (2024). *Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 Explanatory Statement*. In (p. 222).
<https://docs.house.gov/billsthisweek/20240304/FY24%20INT%20Conference%20JES%20scan%203.1.24.pdf>

⁴ Environmental Protection Agency. "Superfund Enforcement FY 2023 Annual Results."
<https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/superfund-enforcement-fy-2023-annual-results>.

⁵ U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations. (2024). *Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 Explanatory Statement*. In (p. 214).
<https://docs.house.gov/billsthisweek/20240304/FY24%20INT%20Conference%20JES%20scan%203.1.24.pdf>

placed environmental justice at the forefront of his administration's agenda. We applaud this focus, and advocate for appropriations increases to make this a reality.

Thank you for your consideration and efforts to secure a better future for our communities.

Sincerely,

Environmental Justice Organizations:

Peggy Shepard, Co-Founder and Executive Director, **WE ACT for Environmental Justice**

Pamela Miller, Executive Director, **Alaska Community Action on Toxics**

Aaron Mair, EJ Coordinator, **Arbor Hill Development Corporation**

Peggy Berry, Executive Director, **Between the Waters**

Jane Williams, Executive Director, **California Communities Against Toxics**

Atenas Mena, Executive Director, **CleanAirNow**

Moshe Kornfeld, Executive Director, **Colorado Jewish Climate Action**

Hilton Kelley, Founder/Director, **Community In-power & Development Association Inc**

Monique Harden, Director of Law/Public Policy, **Deep South Center for Environmental Justice**

Bobby Jones, President, **Down East Coal Ash Environmental and Social Justice Coalition**

Mary Gutierrez, Director, **Earth Action, Inc.**

Chris Kocher, Co-executive Director, **Extreme Weather Survivors**

M. Miaisha Mitchell, Executive Director, **Greater Frenchtown Revitalization**

Council/Tallahassee Food Network

Donele Wilkins, CEO, **Green Door Initiative**

Lee Anne Williams, Co-Chair, **Green New Deal Virginia**

Irene Burga, Climate Justice & Clean Air Director, **GreenLatinos**

Heather McMann, CEO, **Groundwork USA**

Dawud Shabaka, Co-Executive Director, **Harambee House, Inc./Citizens for Environmental Justice**

April Peebler, Executive Director & Program Director, **Heirs To Our Ocean**

Dr. Charlotte L. Keys, Founder, **Jesus People Against Pollution**

Richard Moore and Dr. Sofia Martinez, Co-Coordiators, **Los Jardines Institute**

Katharine Burgess, Vice President, Land Use & Development, **National Brownfields Coalition**

- Environmental Justice and Public Health Committee

Jodi Lasseter and Connie Leeper, Co-Executive Directors, **NC Climate Justice Collective**

Jim Warren, Executive Directors, **NC WARN**

Mariel Nanasi, Executive Director, **New Energy Economy**

Melissa Miles, Executive Director, **New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance**

Diana Bohn, Co-Coordinator, **Nicaragua Center for Community Action**

Jerry Rivers, Environmental Scientist, **North American Climate, Conservation and Environment (NACCE)**

Matt Malina, Director & Founder, **NYC H2O**

Cheryl Johnson, Executive Director, **People for Community Recovery**
Matt Nelson, Executive Director, **Presente.org**
Russell Chisholm, Co-director, **Protect Our Water, Heritage, Rights (POWHR)**
Marquita Bradshaw, Founder and Executive Director, **Sowing Justice**
Timothy Edward Duda, Founder, Former Director, **Terra Advocati**
Juan Parras, Executive Director, **Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services**
Chris Murawski, Executive Director, **The Clean Air Coalition of Western New York**
Rev. Brendolyn J Boseman, Executive Director, **The Imani Group, Inc**
Amanda Bonam, Interim Network Manager, **The National Black Environmental Justice Network**
Kristin Kusanovich, Founder/Director, **tUrn Climate Crisis Awareness & Action**
Paddy McClelland, Cofounder, **Wall of Women**
Ayo Wilson, Director of Clean Energy & Climate Justice, **West End Revitalization Association**
350 Seattle
350 West Sound Climate Action
Bergen County Green Party
Center for Earth Energy & Democracy
CT Coalition for Economic and Environmental Justice
GreenFaith
Mothers Out Front
South Bronx Unite
The People's Justice Council
Tishman Environment & Design Center at The New School
Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community

Tribal/Indigenous Organizations:

Dr. Crystal Cavalier, CEO/Executive Director, **7 Directions of Service**
Asa Wright, Executive Director, **Indigenous Peoples Power Project**

Allied Organizations and Groups:

Drew Hudson, Founder, **198 methods**
Nora Privitera, Federal Team Chair, **350 Bay Area Action**
Alan Weiner, Chapter Lead, **350 Conejo / San Fernando Valley**
Stephanie Robinson, Co-Executive Director, **350 Wisconsin**
Sarah Stewart, President, **Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.**
Camden Weber, Climate and Energy Policy Specialist, **Center for Biological Diversity**
Tama Becker-Varano, Lead Organizer, **Change Begins With ME (Indivisible)**
Sean Jackson, National Water Campaigns Coordinator, **Clean Water Action**
Janet Cox, CEO, **Climate Action California**
Rose Garr, Senior Government Affairs Director, **Climate Action Campaign**

Ted Conwell, Executive Director, **Climate First!, Inc.**
Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, **Delaware Riverkeeper Network**
Raul Garcia, Vice President of Policy and Legislation, **Earthjustice**
Isabel Gonzalez Whitaker, Director, **EcoMadres**
Tara Thornton, Deputy Director, **Endangered Species Coalition**
Ann Mesnikoff, Federal Legislative Director, **Environmental Law & Policy Center**
Michelle Roos, Executive Director, **Environmental Protection Network**
Dani Hupper, Campaigns Director, **Evergreen Action**
Belinda Williams-Collins, Co-Chair, **Florida Brownfield Association - Environmental Justice
& Public Health Committee**
Shannon Smith, Executive Director, **FracTracker Alliance**
Edward Maibach, Professor and Director, **George Mason University Center for Climate
Change Communication**
Anna Linakis, Executive Director, **Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility**
Elaine Chiosso, Executive Director, **Haw River Assembly**
David Phillips, Executive Director, **International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island
Institute**
Wendy Seligson, Co-Director, **Jewish Climate Action Network NYC**
Gene Karpinski, President, **League of Conservation Voters**
Kermit Moore, President, **Memphis APRI**
Cheryl Nenn, Riverkeeper, **Milwaukee Riverkeeper**
Almeta Cooper, National Manager, Health Equity, **Moms Clean Air Force**
Erik D. Olson, Senior Strategic Director for Health, **Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)**
Julie Tighe, President, **New York League of Conservation Voters**
David Kraft, Director, **Nuclear Energy Information Service (NEIS)**
Tim Judson, Executive Director, **Nuclear Information and Resource Service**
Sally Jane Gellert, Member, Committee of Correspondence, **Occupy Bergen County**
Pamela Richard, Office Admin, **Peace Action WI**
Marj Plumb, Executive Director, **Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine**
Tonyehn Verkitus, Executive Director, **Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania**
Lynn Ringenberg, MD, Co-Founder & Board Officer, **Physicians for Social Responsibility/Florida**
Dianna Cohen, Co-Founder & CEO, **Plastic Pollution Coalition**
Chance Cutrano, Director of Programs, **Resource Renewal Institute**
Sally Roberts, Chair, **Rise Up WV**
Jeremy Cherson, Senior Manager of Government Affairs, **Riverkeeper**
Robert M. Gould, MD; President, **San Francisco Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility**
Jack Eidt, Co-Founder, **SoCal 350 Climate Action**
Marj Plumb, Executive Director, **Texas Physicians for Social Responsibility**
Hannah Story Brown, Senior Researcher, **The Revolving Door Project**
Joanie Steinhaus, Ocean Program Director, **Turtle Island Restoration Network**
Jean Ross, Board Chair, **Vote Climate**

James Moschella, Climate and Health Program Manager, **Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility**

Cortney Koenig Worrall, President and CEO, **Waterfront Alliance**

Jacqueline Esposito, Advocacy Director, **Waterkeeper Alliance**

Dorian Fulvio, Steering Committee Member, **350NYC**

Sherry Pollack, Co-founder, **350Hawaii**

Nicole Cantello, President, **AFGE Local 704**

Pablo DeJesús, Executive Director, **Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice**

Maura Stephens, Cofounder, **Coalition to Protect New York**

Patricia J. Popple, Project Outreach, **Frac Sand Sentinel**

David E Gibson, Staff Coordinator, **Peace, Justice, Sustainability, NOW!**

Roberta Stern, **Therapists for Peace & Justice**

Kimi Wei, CEO, **The Wei LLC**

Jane Lapiner, Artistic Director, **HUMAN NATURE**

AFGE Local 3428

Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Children's Environmental Health Network

Environmental Defense Fund

Health Care Without Harm

Interfaith Power & Light

Medical Students for a Sustainable Future

National Wildlife Federation

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Putnam Progressives

Sierra Club

Smart Growth America

SWIM Coalition

The Nature Conservancy

The Wilderness Society

Union of Concerned Scientists

Voices for Progress

CC: Senate Majority Leader Schumer, House Minority Leader Jeffries, Chair Granger, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Murray, Ranking Member Collins