

May 20, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Murray and Cole, Vice Chair Collins, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of our tens of millions of members and supporters across the country, we respectfully request that you significantly increase environmental funding in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) and exclude any anti-environmental policy provisions from the annual appropriations bills.

Environmental agencies and programs are chronically underfunded. The harmful spending caps imposed by the Fiscal Responsibility Act have exacerbated this problem, compounding a decade of atrophy wrought by the Budget Control Act. These inadequate top-line funding levels harm communities and ecosystems alike. While we recognize the Committees' current limitations, we ask that you designate a 302(b) allocation for the Interior-Environment Subcommittees in FY25 that meets or exceeds the president's budget, which would require a minimum estimated level of \$46.75 billion (pending an official score from the Congressional Budget Office). The interim allocation previewed in the House this month was far below this level, and we urge the Committee to reconsider before formally adopting such an allocation, which would result in further damage to programs and the resources they support. We also urge you to oppose anti-environmental policy riders—including those carried forward from prior funding bills—which have no place in the appropriations process.

While we are thankful that the final FY24 spending package rejected the vast majority of extreme policy riders and protected much of the funding for critical environmental work, we remain extremely concerned about unprecedented efforts within the past year to defund and otherwise debilitate our nation's environmental progress. The House's draft FY24 spending bills were far outside the norm, and were broadly and forcefully opposed by groups across the environmental community.¹ These bills included cuts far deeper than those required by the Fiscal

¹<https://www.lcv.org/media-center/environmental-groups-oppose-fy24-interior-appropriations-bill/>

Responsibility Act, and incorporated an unheard-of number of egregious anti-environmental policy riders. We ask that you take the opportunity in FY25 to restore some normalcy by rejecting these extreme and polarizing provisions and cuts, which are as damaging as they are unrealistic.

The Committees must make significant investments in environmental agencies and programs just to restore funding to historic standards, much less to meet the actual needs of our nation. These necessary investments become nearly impossible as long as budget caps such as those imposed by the Fiscal Responsibility Act remain in place. These caps are harmful for our country and force false choices between critical programs, creating a cruel and wholly unnecessary zero-sum game. Removing the budget caps is necessary to meet the country's environmental needs.

With your leadership, we can—and must—rebuild and equip the crucial agencies and programs that promote environmental justice and protect our health, lands, wildlife, air, water, and oceans. Not only is additional funding necessary to address the climate and biodiversity crises, but these investments can also create good-paying American jobs and revitalize our communities. We thank you for your consideration and stand ready to support you in meeting this request.

Sincerely,

Alaska Wilderness League	Environmental Defense Action Fund
American Hiking Society	Environmental Law & Policy Center
American Rivers	Environmental Protection Network
Animal Welfare Institute	Environmental Working Group
Appalachian Trail Conservancy	Extreme Weather Survivors
Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Forest Unlimited
Chesapeake Climate Action Network	Friends of Acadia
Clean Water Action	Friends of Dyke Marsh
Climate Action Campaign	Friends of the Earth Action
Climate Crisis Policy	Friends of the Inyo
Coalition to Protect America's National Parks	Friends of the Sonoran Desert
Conservation Lands Foundation	Great Old Broads for Wilderness
Creation Justice Ministries	Green America
Defenders of Wildlife	GreenLatinos
Earthjustice	Greenpeace USA
Earthworks	Interfaith Power & Light
Endangered Species Coalition	League of Conservation Voters
Energy Alabama	Lesson Forest Preservation Group
	Los Padres ForestWatch
	Monterey Bay Aquarium

National Audubon Society
National Ocean Protection Coalition
National Park Solutions, LLC
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
National Wildlife Refuge Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness
Ocean Defense Initiative
Oceana
Oil Change International
Partnership for Policy Integrity
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Scenic America
Sierra Club
Sierra Foothills Audubon Society
Sierra Forest Legacy
Sierra Nevada Alliance
Silvix Resources
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
The Conservation Angler
The Earth Bill Network
The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Wilderness Society
Trust for Public Land
Union of Concerned Scientists
WE ACT for Environmental Justice
Western Watersheds Project
WildEarth Guardians

Cc:

Speaker Mike Johnson, U.S. House of Representatives
Democratic Leader Charles E. Schumer, U.S. Senate
Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, U.S. Senate
Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, U.S. House of Representatives
Chair Sheldon Whitehouse, U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget
Chair Jodey C. Arrington, U.S. House Committee on the Budget
Ranking Member Charles E. Grassley, U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget
Ranking Member Brendan F. Boyle, U.S. House Committee on the Budget
Chair Jeffrey A. Merkley, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Chair Mike Simpson, U.S. House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Ranking Member Chellie Pingree, U.S. House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Director Shalanda D. Young, U.S. Office of Management and Budget