



March 18, 2026

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
 Chair  
 House Appropriations Subcommittee  
 on Interior, Environment, and Related  
 Agencies  
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
 Ranking Member  
 House Appropriations Subcommittee  
 on Interior, Environment, and Related  
 Agencies  
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
 Chair  
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
 on Interior, Environment, and Related  
 Agencies  
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
 Ranking Member  
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
 on Interior, Environment, and Related  
 Agencies  
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Simpson and Murkowski and Ranking Members Pingree and Merkley:

The undersigned health, medical and nursing organizations strongly urge you to provide robust funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the fiscal year 2027 (FY27) Interior, Environment and Related Agencies bill. From helping the public know what’s in the air they breathe to reducing toxic emissions, the agency plays a necessary and critical role in improving health outcomes. To achieve its mission of delivering clean air and healthy environments, the agency requires \$12 billion or certainly no fewer than FY26 enacted funds.

We greatly appreciate the Committee’s commitment to EPA in the final FY26 Interior and Environment funding bill. The bipartisan agreement recognized the important work that EPA does to deliver clean air for all. Unfortunately, poor air quality still impacts large swaths of the population, and the progress made thus far is under threat. The American Lung Association’s “State of the Air” 2025 report found that nearly half of Americans live in areas with unhealthy levels of air pollution.

Clean air is critical for a healthy population and a healthy economy. We urge Congress to protect EPA and its mission of protecting America's health from harmful pollutants by providing the funding EPA needs to achieve that mission. Within the agency, there are a number of air-focused programs critical for public health that must also receive adequate investment. The programs included in this letter are not an exhaustive list but represent key priorities of the undersigned health groups.

### **Clean Air Program**

EPA's Clean Air Program protects people from the impacts of air pollution, improves health and saves lives. This program provides states, Tribes and localities with resources and support to meet federal air quality standards and protect health from dangerous air pollution. Crucial activities like oversight, testing vehicles to ensure they meet required emissions levels, and mitigating worsening of air quality in polluted places are also funded by this program. **Please provide at least \$915.5 million for EPA's Clean Air Program, with \$694.6 million in Environmental Programs & Management and \$220.9 million in Science & Technology.**

Additionally, we urge the Committee to include the following language requesting more information from EPA on the decision to stop monetizing the health benefits of reducing air pollution in its regulatory impact analyses. This departure in practice undermines the agency's core mission of protecting human health, and will ultimately leave the public in the dark about the true cost of air pollution.

*Health Benefits:* The Committee notes that in recent rulemakings, the Agency adopted a new approach to analyzing the impacts of its actions that excludes monetized costs of reductions in air pollution. The Committee asks the Agency to provide a briefing to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee within 60 days of enactment of this Act detailing the scientific basis for any proposed changes, the anticipated impact on public health protections, and how the Agency intends to maintain transparency regarding air pollution and associated health risks.

### **Categorical Grants for State, Local and Tribal Air Monitoring**

State, local and Tribal air agencies receive grants from EPA to help maintain their air monitoring networks. Federal funding for air agencies carries a high return on investment considering the health threats that come from exposure to air pollution. Congress has consistently failed to meaningfully increase funding for these agencies year over year, which hinders the ability to inform the public about what they're breathing and in finding opportunities to maximize the impacts of investments in pollution cleanup. While the agencies have been successful in utilizing their limited resources effectively, the National Association of Clean Air Agencies and the National Tribal Air Association have demonstrated that the funding need is far higher than what they have received. **Please provide \$500 million for State and Local Air Quality Management and \$85.25 million for Tribal Air Quality Management.**

### **Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program**

The Diesel Emissions Reduction (DERA) Grant program continues to be a cost-effective program that enjoys bipartisan support. According to EPA's 2022 report to Congress, the health benefits of diesel emissions reduction projects are cost-effective, with monetized health benefits estimated to exceed federal funding by a factor of 10 to 1. Still, there are millions of dirty diesel engines that are polluting communities that can be cleaned up. **Please provide \$150 million for DERA grants.**

### **Indoor Air Quality in Schools**

The Indoor Environments Division of the Office of Air and Radiation provides critical resources for improving indoor air quality, including in schools. Exposure to indoor environmental pollution can decrease attendance, negatively impact test scores and worsen asthma symptoms or other health impacts. A 2020 GAO report found that 41% of school districts were in need of HVAC repairs in at least half of their schools. Educators and school personnel need education, training and resources to implement effective prevention measures. Additionally, the Office of Children's Health Protection plays a critical role in researching children's risks and exposures in school and childcare facilities. **Please provide \$100 million for the Office of Air and Radiation/Indoor Environments Division and \$10 million to EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection.**

### **Enforcement and Compliance**

Enforcing EPA's science-backed air quality standards is necessary to truly achieve intended health benefits. EPA must have the resources and capacity to reduce non-compliance, as well as enforce penalties for violations. EPA must also be prepared to respond to civil enforcement actions authorized by the Clean Air Act. Additionally, some communities face higher uphill climbs to achieve clean air. Ensuring that the communities most impacted by pollution are targeted for cleanup not only provides the greatest health benefits, it's also widely supported and cost-effective. **Please provide \$162.1 million for Compliance Monitoring and \$485 for Enforcement.**

### **Wildfire Smoke Preparedness**

Wildfires pose an urgent and increasing threat to public health. We appreciate the Committee's commitment to protecting health from wildfire smoke through the wildfire smoke preparedness grants. The high-profile wildfires that have occurred over the past three years—in addition to the many smaller fires across the country that worsen air quality—underscore the need for robust forecasting, communication, education and other preparedness measures to protect against the impacts of wildfire smoke. **Please provide \$15 million for wildfire smoke preparedness grants.**

Achieving a healthy America is impossible without a strong EPA. Appropriately funding the agency is a responsibility we urge Congress to meet. Please support \$12 billion in funding to EPA in Fiscal Year 2027.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

Allergy & Asthma Network

American Academy of Pediatrics

American College of Chest Physicians

American Lung Association

American Public Health Association

American Thoracic Society

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

Children's Environmental Health Network

Climate Psychiatry Alliance

National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Environmental Health Association

National League for Nursing

OUCH-Int'l (Oncology Advocates United for Climate and Health)

Physicians for Social Responsibility