

May 21, 2025

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C 20515

**Re: Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Funding Request for the Environmental Protection Agency and Environmental Justice Programs**

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

We write this letter as organizations accountable to environmental justice communities and allies of our movement. As you begin developing the Fiscal Year 2026 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, we urge you to ensure that the bill **fully funds the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at \$12 billion, including full funding for the agency's environmental justice offices and programs.** Furthermore, we call for **the immediate release of grants Congress appropriated through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)** that have been illegally frozen by the current Administration. Finally, we call for assurances that **the EPA and offices responsible for critical environmental justice initiatives will be reinstated, preserved, and fully staffed.**

**Decades of research has consistently found that low-income communities, communities of color, and Tribal communities are more likely to be exposed to pollution, hazardous waste, toxins, and other environmental hazards.**<sup>1</sup> This disproportionate exposure leads to detrimental health outcomes in these environmental justice communities, such as asthma and other respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular diseases and conditions, cancer, and premature death.

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<sup>1</sup><https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1a110cda3df445aa9bc8cd88d15fa93d>,  
<https://hsph.harvard.edu/news/racial-ethnic-minorities-low-income-groups-u-s-air-pollution/>,  
<https://www.epa.gov/sciencematters/study-finds-exposure-air-pollution-higher-people-color-regardless-region-or-income>

Furthermore, due to historic and systemic underinvestment, these communities are also at the frontlines of the climate crisis, facing extreme heat, natural disasters, and other devastating impacts.<sup>2</sup>

**Over the past few years, Congress and the federal government had begun collaborating with environmental justice communities to address these decades-long injustices across the country.** The BIL and IRA included critical investments such as \$3 Billion in Environmental and Climate Justice Grants, \$27 Billion for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction fund, \$1 billion for Clean Heavy Duty Vehicles, amongst countless other programs. Similarly, environmental justice communities have counted on the EPA to perform its statutorily required responsibility to develop and enforce crucial regulations under bedrock environmental laws such as the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and Toxic Substances Control Act.<sup>3</sup> The EPA must continue to be fully funded and staffed so that it can resume disbursing funds appropriated by Congress, and carry out its lawful role in developing and enforcing environmental regulations vital for the health and safety of communities. Communities deserve to realize the benefits of the cleanup of legacy pollution, advancement of justice and equity, and achievement of economic empowerment in their own neighborhoods.

This administrations' unprecedented attack on environmental justice communities has been cruel, blatantly racist, not based in science or fact, and will lead to hundreds of thousands of people across the country needlessly losing their lives to pollution and toxins.<sup>4</sup> It is basic fairness and justice to restore communities who have borne the brunt of environmental injustice, while simultaneously being intentionally locked out of environmental policy decision making processes. All people deserve clean air, clean water, and healthy environments, regardless of their skin color or where they live.

We urge you to ensure that the EPA is funded at a full \$12 billion, including the agency's environmental justice programs and offices. Furthermore, we call for an immediate release of the funding appropriated by Congress through the BIL and IRA, and now contractually obligated to be dispersed to states, non-profits, and other groups and organizations. Funding that has been illegally frozen includes the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grants, Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, Air Pollution Monitoring Grants, Diesel Emissions Reductions Grants, Clean Ports Grants, Clean School Bus program, funds to replace lead service lines, and numerous other life-saving programs.<sup>5</sup> Finally, we call for assurances that the unlawfully terminated

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<sup>2</sup> <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9363288/>

<sup>3</sup>

<https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/07/24/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-delivers-environmental-justice-with-cleaner-air-clean-water-and-healthier-communities/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/epa-rollbacks-costs/>

<sup>5</sup>

<https://stateline.org/2025/04/14/trump-has-canceled-environmental-justice-grants-heres-what-communities-are-losing/>

environmental justice staff from within the EPA will be reinstated, and critical offices will be preserved and fully staffed.<sup>6</sup> These include the EPA Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights and regional environmental justice offices across the country.

Data shows that repealing IRA incentives would have drastic economic impact, increasing household electricity costs by more than \$110 next year, threatening more than \$500 billion in planned economic investment, and leading to 1 million fewer jobs by 2030.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, reporting has indicated that 85% of the funding from the IRA has benefited Congressional districts represented by Republican Members of Congress.<sup>8</sup> In fact, your Republican colleagues across both chambers have repeatedly called for protections of critical IRA tax credits that have created jobs and protected public health in their respective districts.<sup>9</sup> **Environmental justice communities are your communities and these community members are your direct constituents.** We urge you to stand up for your constituents and end this Administration's relentless attack on our fundamental human rights to clean air, safe drinking water, and healthy environments where we can live, work, learn, play, and pray.

Sincerely,

Environmental Justice Organizations

350.org

350Hawaii

Alternatives for Community & Environment

CEED

Climate Justice Alliance

Climate Trace

Color Brighton Green

CT Roundtable on Climate and Jobs

Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

Earth Ethics, Inc.

East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/06/nx-s1-5289331/epa-environmental-justice-office>,  
<https://summerlee.house.gov/posts/rep-lee-barragan-mcclellan-casten-lead-100-colleagues-demanding-epa-restore-environmental-justice-offices>

<sup>7</sup>

<https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-trump-administrations-cancellation-of-funding-for-environmental-protections-endangers-americans-health-while-draining-their-wallets/>

<sup>8</sup>

[https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/25042572/e2-clean-economy-works-ira-two-year-review\\_august-2024.pdf](https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/25042572/e2-clean-economy-works-ira-two-year-review_august-2024.pdf)

<sup>9</sup>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/four-republican-us-senators-back-biden-era-energy-tax-credits-2025-04-10/>,

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/republicans-seek-protect-green-tax-credits-budget-bill-2025-03-10/>,  
<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/f/?id=00000196-8dcc-dfe3-af9e-adea1310000>

Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform (EJHA)  
GreenLatinos  
Hip Hop Caucus  
JPAP  
Los Jardines Institute  
Micah Six Eight Mission  
Michigan Environmental Justice Coalition (MEJC)  
National Black Environmental Justice Network  
New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance  
Next 100 Coalition  
North Carolina Environmental Justice Network  
Pennsylvania Interfaith Power & Light  
Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania  
PODER  
Protect Our Water, Heritage, Rights  
Puvunga Wetlands Protectors  
SEE (Social Eco Education)  
Sowing Justice  
Sunflower Alliance  
Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
West Atlanta Watershed Alliance  
West End Revitalization Association (WERA)  
Young, Gifted & Green

#### Tribal Organizations

Indigenous Environmental Network

#### Allied Organizations

198 methods  
350 Bay Area Action  
350 Mass  
350 Wisconsin  
350Brooklyn  
AFGE Local 704  
American Friends Service Committee  
Animals Are Sentient Beings, Inc.  
Between the Waters  
Brown People Camping  
Center for Biological Diversity

Clean Water Action  
Climate + Energy Project  
Climate Critical  
Creation Justice Ministries  
Dayenu: A Jewish Call to Climate Action  
Divest NJ  
Earthworks  
Electric School Bus Newsletter  
Environmental and Climate Justice at Columbia Project  
Environmental Integrity Project  
Food and Water Watch  
Friends of the Earth  
Green America  
Greenpeace USA  
Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart  
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Iowa Unitarian Universalist Witness/Advocacy Network  
League of Conservation Voters  
Long Beach Alliance for Clean Energy  
Memphis APRI  
MI Air MI Health  
Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
New York Progressive Action Network  
Nuclear Energy Information Service (NEIS)  
Ocean Conservation Research  
Ocean Defense Initiative  
Partnership for Policy Integrity  
People's Action Institute  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Piedmont Environmental Alliance  
Pipe Line Awareness Network for the Northeast  
Protect PT  
Putnam Progressives  
Rutgers Students for Environmental Awareness  
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council  
Sierra Club  
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy  
Stand.earth  
The Enviro Show  
The Wei LLC

Turtle Island Restoration Network  
Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community  
Visibility Outreach Touch Engage South Arkansas  
Waterkeeper Alliance  
Western Watersheds Project  
Wildlife for All  
Winter Wildlands Alliance

CC: Chair Susan Collins, Vice Chair Patty Murray, Chair Tom Cole, Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries