

June 7, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Udall  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Murkowski and Calvert and Ranking Members Udall and McCollum:

The undersigned leading academic and other research organizations across the country write to thank you for your efforts in ensuring enactment of the FY 2017 Omnibus Appropriations legislation and for sustaining reasonable funding levels for science and technology programs at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). As you begin the appropriations process for FY 2018, we urge you to provide the EPA Office of Science and Technology (S&T) with \$754 million, which would help restore funding for important research across the Nation.

We are deeply concerned by the severe cuts proposed for EPA S&T in the President's Budget Request. EPA S&T funds an array of scientific research and technology development that is critical not only to informing public health policy and the public itself, but also to developing technologies and strategies to enable more cost-effective solutions to environmental and public health challenges. It is vital to ensure that the best available technologies and information are available to support national, state, and local environmental goals and to enable government to more efficiently, judiciously, and effectively allocate expenditures on mitigation, protection, and remediation.

Programs within EPA S&T are essential to developing the talent and workforce that agencies and industry will need for the future. To list a few specific examples, the competitively awarded Science to Achieve Results (STAR) research grants and graduate fellowships, funded by EPA S&T, provide critical support for research and education in environmental science and engineering that sustain our Nation's expertise in many essential areas of environmental science. EPA's National Risk Management Research Laboratory (NRMRL) works with universities to provide research and training opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Under this program, award recipients work on-site at NRMRL conducting collaborative research with EPA scientists, allowing them to receive valuable experiential training. Ultimately, such programs

greatly benefit the U.S. by developing a skilled workforce capable of mitigating risks to our drinking water, air quality, and natural ecosystems.

EPA S&T supported research can yield benefits that are immediate and local. For example, sensing technologies and data collection projects can provide early detection of catastrophic air or water contamination, whether natural, accidental, or deliberate (such as an attack on our water supply systems) as well as a better understanding of how to mitigate them.

Another example of local impact involves research on measuring various pollutants and their impacts with greater precision and accuracy, which enables better informed, more cost-effective decisions on mitigation within urban communities. STAR grants have supported research that enables cities to more precisely locate and quantify levels of particulate pollution that can adversely affect vulnerable citizens. Local officials can use that information to alert citizens to the conditions in their neighborhoods so that they can adjust their activity levels and exposure, reducing potential harms to their health. Additionally, it helps local leaders understand where capital investments in new technologies will have the greatest impact on air and water quality, or whether they are likely to have any impact, given other factors such as weather effects or pollution that is transported from outside the region.

On a broader scale, the EPA's Air, Climate and Energy (ACE) program supports cutting edge interdisciplinary research involving dozens of researchers at several leading academic institutions across the U.S. to investigate energy-related transitions. Their goal is to better understand how these changes affect regional and local differences in air pollution and public health today and in the future, and to identify factors like power generation, transportation and land-use that could be modified to affect these impacts. This research is designed to provide information to help policy makers develop the most efficient and effective decisions to protect human health and the environment.

EPA S&T funded research is also essential for ensuring health and environmental quality in the future. For example, by examining and comparing morbidity and mortality data over time, researchers can provide the necessary evidence base for air and water quality policy decisions that will affect our children for generations to come.

We recognize that you face difficult choices in enacting this year's budget. However, deep cuts in the EPA's research budget will have a profoundly negative effect on the continuity of a large body of critical research as well as on the careers of scientists and student researchers who work to ensure that there is sound and advancing science to underpin environmental and public health policy. Such drastic reductions will cripple the EPA's ability to ensure the long-term health of our country's ecosystems as well as its citizens.

As a Nation, we cherish our abundant natural resources and take comfort in the knowledge that we are safe from environmental and public health hazards that are far more prevalent in many other parts of the world. These accomplishments rely on a legacy of consistent investment in scientific research, technological development, and workforce training. As such, we urge you to provide robust support for EPA S&T.

We look forward to working with you further and hope to serve as a resource for you as the FY 2018 appropriations cycle progresses.

Sincerely,

Carnegie Mellon University  
Duke University  
Florida State University  
Harvard University  
Michigan State University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
New Mexico State University  
Stony Brook University  
The State University of New York  
University at Buffalo  
University of California System  
University of California, Berkeley  
University of California, Irvine  
University of California, Riverside  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
University of New Hampshire  
University of New Mexico  
University of Oregon  
University of Rochester  
University of Washington  
Yale University  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Cc:

Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Thad Cochran  
House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Senate Appropriations Committee Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy  
House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Nita Lowey  
Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies  
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies