

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 2, 2023

Administrator Michael S. Regan
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Director Shalanda Young
Office of Management and Budget
1650 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Administrator Regan and Director Young:

We write to express our strong support for increased funding for enforcement and compliance staffing and activity at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget request. The request should continue to support funding that would increase and prioritize enforcement and compliance activities in communities of color and low-income areas. Specifically, we urge you to request funding for at least 400 additional full-time equivalents and provide a real increase, adjusted for inflation, across enforcement and compliance programs.

Environmental laws such as the *Clean Air Act* and *Clean Water Act* protect public and environmental health and are enforced by monitoring regulated entities and holding those in noncompliance accountable. These efforts result in significant community benefits through the reduction and remediation of pollution and the protection of important natural resources.

Yet, during Fiscal Years 2018 through 2021, EPA enforcement fell by nearly half from historic levels across a host of activities: inspections, criminal investigations, civil and criminal prosecutions, defendants charged, civil penalties, criminal fines, and cleanup costs paid by polluters. A major factor in the decline has been shrinking enforcement resources, with enforcement staff down by a quarter during the four years of the Trump Administration. Without adequate enforcement and compliance resources, the agency may be limited in its ability to return to full capacity or increase its presence in environmental justice communities.

We appreciate that the Administration is working to reduce pollution and noncompliance from regulated entities. Unfortunately, reports indicate compliance is far from universal and serious environmental violations continue to be widespread. This often is true for the most harmful pollutants, with a handful of the worst polluters causing disproportionate harm, and the brunt of violations often occurring in communities of color and low-income areas. Capacity is further strained by unpredictable and increasingly devastating disasters driven by the climate crisis. Noncompliance and reduced enforcement activity can exacerbate environmental harms from these events, particularly in communities of color and low-income areas. It is critically important that we deliver the resources necessary for EPA to carry out its mission.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of our request. We stand ready to support increased FY 2025 funding for EPA environmental enforcement and compliance.

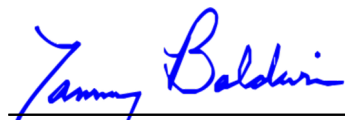
Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



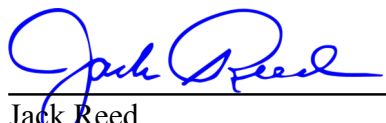
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator