



May 23, 2017

The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senate  
393 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Casey:

I am writing to express my strong concerns about the impacts of the Trump Administration's 2018 budget on the residents and businesses of Pennsylvania. In particular, I would like to call to your attention the impact of the proposed cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) will have on important programs my department manages in the commonwealth. Cutting the budgets of these agencies will have an immediate and devastating effect on our ability to ensure that Pennsylvania's air is safe to breathe, our water is safe to drink, and our economy prospers. Put simply, these cuts signal the Trump administration's disregard for its responsibility to protect the health and safety of American citizens. I appreciate that you stood firm against these cuts earlier this month, and ask that you resist them in the next budget.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) relies on federal funding to administer a variety of mandated programs which protect the safety of coal miners, address lead contamination, prevent air pollution which contributes to respiratory diseases, and redevelop contaminated industrial sites. It is important to note that the majority of funding Pennsylvania receives from EPA is payment to the state to administer programs on behalf of the federal government.

The proposed cut in EPA funding would significantly reduce popular, successful, bipartisan programs that protect public health and the environment, and lead to economic development. Specifically, among the broad 31% cut to EPA, these funding reductions will:

- **Risk safe water.** The Trump budget proposal includes a 17% reduction in funding for EPA's drinking water programs and a 30% cut to the Public Water System Supervision Grant – which is funding provided to DEP. In the Safe Drinking Water program, these cuts will mean at least 30% fewer inspections at the commonwealth's 8,500 public water systems, hampering our ability to detect contaminants like lead, water-borne pathogens, and putting Pennsylvania's 10.7 million public water customers at risk.
- **Diminish local water quality.** The proposed cut to the federally funded portion of the Clean Water Bureau budget will mean cutting at least 850 inspections from the 6,144 inspections that ensure that sewage plants, industrial wastewater discharges, and

construction sites are not threatening the water quality of Pennsylvanians downstream. Reductions in federal funds will also lengthen permit issuance timelines, hampering important economic development projects in Pennsylvania.

- **Abandon farmers.** Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay program — which the President recently acknowledged as a model of federal/state partnerships, and is starting to show real results in curbing pollution to the Bay — will have its funding completely eliminated. This program will no longer be able to provide much-needed support to Pennsylvania's small farmers and local governments to improve their local water quality.
- **Stifle job creation.** Pennsylvania's Brownfields program cleans up contaminated properties for redevelopment, directly promoting economic development and preserving green space. Since 1995, almost 5,000 brownfields have been cleaned up, leading to almost 100,000 jobs created or retained. The President's budget proposes a 30% cut to the Brownfields Categorical Grant and another 30% cut to the Hazardous Substance Superfund program, which will inhibit contaminated sites from being returned to productive use for new and expanding business and industry in Pennsylvania.
- **Threatens groundwater.** This proposed budget includes a nearly 50% cut to the Leaking Underground Storage Tanks Program and zeros out the federal funding provided through categorical grants, which could pose risks to Pennsylvania's valuable groundwater resources.
- **Allow harmful pollutants to poison.** The proposed 30% cut to the federal funding provided to DEP's Bureau of Air Quality will limit air monitoring for harmful pollutants such as volatile organic compounds, mercury, and particulate matter, and have a negative impact on the timeline for review of air quality permits which companies need in order to start operations or expand.
- **Expose children to radon gas and other toxics.** This proposed budget includes the complete elimination of funding to help protect residents from radon, the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Pennsylvania has one of the most serious radon problems in the country and the proposed cuts will result in the elimination of public education efforts and distribution of free radon test kits for new parents. The proposed budget also provides for 29% less funding for toxics risk review and prevention, including the zeroing out of the Lead Risk Reduction Program. This valuable program certifies remediators to ensure they are following all safeguards from removing lead from buildings and educates citizens about limiting lead exposure in their home.
- **Suppress environmental justice.** The President's proposed budget will eliminate the EPA's Office of Environmental Justice, which exists to ensure that Americans, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, have meaningful involvement in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws and policies. Closing this program shows a startling disrespect for minority and economically disadvantaged Americans.

Similarly, there will be serious impacts from the proposed cuts to the Department of Energy (DOE) on the families and businesses of Pennsylvania. I am specifically concerned about the proposed elimination of the State Energy Program (SEP), which has had broad bipartisan support for more than 20 years. SEP funds allow DEP's Office of Pollution Prevention and Energy Assistance (Energy Office) to design and carry out energy programs tailored to the needs of our residents and businesses. In recent years, \$1.5 million has been provided annually to

Pennsylvania in SEP funding (leveraged at least 4 to 1), which we have used to boost economic development, save businesses money through energy conservation, and fund new technology. Complete elimination of this funding would limit our project partners' ability to boost economic development within Pennsylvania as well as to lower energy bills and conserve resources.

Great energy-related work is being done in Pennsylvania. Elimination of these critical and valuable programs means we would no longer be able to conduct:

- **Nearly 100 energy efficiency assessments for small and mid-sized manufacturers** with implemented energy saving measures resulting in 2.8 million kWh per year of electricity conserved and \$700,000 in economic benefits. These measures also result in water conservation and reduction of air pollutants.
- **At least 60 energy assessments for small business owners of urban restaurants and corner stores in at-risk neighborhoods**, which result in energy retrofits with estimated minimum annual energy savings of 878,000 kWh per year.
- **Energy efficiency training for building managers to operate schools, local government buildings, state government buildings** at the highest efficiency. Energy savings implemented by those trainees will save estimated \$3.5 million and 30 million kWh per year for schools and taxpayers.
- **Construction and demonstration of new energy security technology** such as the microgrid project at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. This demonstration plans to show optimization of Marcellus shale natural gas through combined heat and power and integration of renewables in the most cost-effective manner.
- **Training of college students**, who benefit from participating in the implementation of these programs to prepare them for tomorrow's energy-related jobs in Pennsylvania.
- **Educational programs that help local governments** to adopt energy-efficient street lighting technologies. It is estimated that approximately 40,000 LED street lights were installed in 2016, representing about 10 to 15% of leased street lights in Pennsylvania.
- **Development and use of tools that support our ability to respond appropriately to energy supply disruptions** caused by weather, cyber security or other events.

The justification provided in the proposed federal budget for reducing funding to states is “to reduce federal intervention in State-level energy policy and implementation.” *In truth, the elimination of these programs does not reduce federal intervention, but instead cuts valuable resources that Pennsylvania families and businesses rely on to reduce energy use and implement an all-of-the-above energy policy.* This includes fossil, renewable, and energy efficiency programs designed to benefit families, businesses, schools and local governments. This funding allows Pennsylvania to work in partnership with the Federal Government to plan for, respond to, and mitigate the impacts of energy supply emergencies.

These budget cuts do not reduce any of the responsibilities that EPA, DOE or DEP have to the people of Pennsylvania, but does decrease the resources available to fulfill those responsibilities. These cuts, if enacted, would harm businesses seeking permits, and harm residents' clean water, air, and land.

Additionally, the Administration's proposed budget will cut EPA's compliance and enforcement efforts significantly. Strong oversight through compliance and enforcement programs are necessary to ensure that Pennsylvania's air and water remain safe for public consumption.

Pennsylvania has benefited from a long partnership with the federal government to address environmental and energy concerns. The result has been great improvements to the health, quality of life, and economic prosperity of Pennsylvania residents. In EPA's nearly 50-year history, the agency has helped to save the bald eagle from extinction by regulating pesticides, reduced corrosive and toxic acid rain, helped to protect the ozone layer, and curtailed tailpipe emissions which contribute to smog.

Significantly reducing federal funding to the states is not cooperative federalism. It is asking states to continue to accept all the responsibility while eliminating the resources to carry them out. We urge the Trump administration and the members of Pennsylvania's Congressional delegation to not turn their backs on the very federal-state partnerships that have produced these many benefits. We hope to continue to work with federal agencies to protect Pennsylvania's public health and support economic prosperity. Thank you for your consideration of our joint responsibilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick McDonnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Patrick" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "McDonnell".

Patrick McDonnell  
Secretary