

November 12, 2020

Senator Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Nita M. Lowey  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Leahy, and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters across the country, we respectfully request that you help protect the environment and healthy communities by increasing funding for key environmental agencies and programs in Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21). A final omnibus conference agreement should meet or exceed the funding levels laid out in the House's FY21 bills, exclude harmful legacy riders, and ensure that COVID-related costs are provided for in emergency titles.

It is imperative that agencies and programs tasked with essential environmental functions have the resources they need to effectively safeguard our wildlife, natural and historic landmarks, oceans, drinking water, air quality, and more. These vital institutions also advance science and research, which provide a guiding light for informed decision making and technologies needed to address the climate crisis. Unfortunately, these agencies and programs have been chronically underfunded for years. Though we recognize this year's budgetary constraints, we ask that you increase 302(b) allocations and provide additional funding for environmental priorities.

We also urge you to remove legacy poison pill riders grandfathered in from previous budget cycles. These perennial legacy riders would restrict the incoming administration from effectively protecting our environment and public health. These provisions do not belong in appropriations bills, and we ask that you exclude them.

Finally, we urge you to include the emergency titles in the House funding bills, in order to cover emergency costs that agencies incur this year. This emergency funding is necessary to ensure that agencies and programs overseeing environmental priorities are able to dedicate, at a minimum, the same resources as last year toward their missions—rather than drawing from those funds to pay expenses related to COVID-19.

Environmental funding is a priority for our groups and our community, including many of your constituents. We stand ready to support your leadership in meeting this funding request. Thank you for considering our views and for your work to meet the country's needs during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Alaska Wilderness League Action  
American Bird Conservancy  
American Hiking Society  
Animal Wellness Action  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Clean Water Action  
Climate Law & Policy Project  
Conservation Lands Foundation  
Defenders of Wildlife  
Earthjustice  
Earthworks  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Environment America  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Environmental Law & Policy Center  
Environmental Protection Network  
Environmental Working Group  
Friends of the Earth

Humane Society Legislative Fund  
Interfaith Power & Light  
League of Conservation Voters  
National Audubon Society  
National Parks Conservation Association  
National Wildlife Federation  
Natural Resources Defense Council  
Ocean Conservancy  
Oceana  
Oxfam America  
Partnership for the National Trail System  
Public Lands Alliance  
Sierra Club  
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance  
The Trust for Public Land  
The Wilderness Society  
The Wildlife Society  
Union of Concerned Scientists