

# ACTION SHEET

## October 17, 2025



“A strong, thoughtful bill that can pass the Senate on a bipartisan basis.”

—Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Interior-Environment Subcommittee Chair on the appropriations bill (S. 2431) approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee

### **Summary:**

A top priority of the Trump administration has been to defund and dismantle the Environmental Protection Agency, while repurposing the remnants to further the interests of the fossil fuel industry. Our focus is to strengthen and expand bipartisan resistance to this effort in Congress. While Congress debates how much money to allocate to the EPA for Fiscal Year 2026, our strategy is two-fold: (1) peel away Republican support for Trump’s fossil fuel agenda and (2) encourage Democrats to be active champions for EPA funding. Because the sizeable differences in proposed funding levels for the EPA remain unknown to the public and unreported in the media, our action this month is to write letters to the editor that highlight these differences while supporting the bipartisan proposal from the Senate.

### **Laser Talk:**

There are stark moral differences in our federal government over funding for the Environmental Protection Agency. The Trump administration’s budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2026 includes a 55% cut in funding for the EPA. With a party-line vote of 33 to 28, the House Appropriations Committee put forward a bill that would have cut funding by 23%. By contrast, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed a bipartisan bill with a vote of 26 to 2 that would have cut funding by the more moderate amount of 5%. While a final appropriations bill failed to pass Congress by the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline, the debate over EPA funding continues. This debate is about more than numbers. It is about protecting communities from pollution that has life and death consequences. More Republicans in Congress need to follow the leadership demonstrated by members of their party on the Senate Appropriations Committee, while more Democrats need to speak up with urgency about funding the EPA. Ask your U.S. Representative and Senators to write the chair and ranking member of their chamber's Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies and request strong support for the Senate Fiscal Year 2026 funding levels for the EPA when they go to conference.

### **Contrasting the House and Senate on Funding**

The House and Senate appropriations bills differed in terms of both numbers and approach. In terms of funding numbers for the EPA, the House bill would have reduced the EPA’s Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds by \$662 million, while the Senate bill would have kept funding at the same level. Moreover, the House bill would have eliminated funding for environmental justice programs and grants, while the Senate bill would have reduced it from \$100 million to \$40 million.

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The Senate is also taking a drastically different approach to its relationship with the EPA. An article by *Politico* notes that “the Senate’s bipartisan approach is a major challenge to the White House and is upsetting some conservatives.” Moreover, Senate appropriators are particularly displeased with EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin. A report released by the

Appropriations Committee states, “The Committee is frustrated with how EPA has decided to not have a working relationship with the Committee and to disregard Congressional directives related to staffing and funding.” The Appropriations Committee reduced funding for Zeldin’s office and is keeping his office’s budget in a new account to ensure “transparency in funding.” The committee will grant “targeted increases” if Zeldin’s office “takes its relationship with the Committee seriously.” The Committee was especially “appalled” by the EPA’s announcement that it would close the Office of Research and Development. The EPA is to immediately halt these plans.

### **Help Us Achieve Our Goal of 50 Published Letters from Members in 2025— Write Your Letter to the Editor Today!**

In May, we had our first letter to the editor published by a CHA member. Today, we have had a total of 22 letters to the editor published. Let’s aim to have 50 published by the end of the year!

1. **Find the local newspaper you will write to:** To learn what is required for LTEs, Google the following: “(Name of the paper) letters to the editor submission guidelines.” Note the number of words allowed and how a letter is submitted: Do you submit it on the newspaper’s website, or do they provide an email address to use?
2. **Think about the placement of the piece:** If you are writing a letter to a larger, daily newspaper, find an article or editorial that provides a good angle for discussing the clean energy tax credits. If you are writing a smaller weekly paper, you don’t have to reference an article, just write in a way that makes it clear why local readers would care about this issue.
3. **Write your letter:** Share what values or experiences move you to care about funding for the EPA. Use (a) the newspaper’s guidelines, (b) information from the laser talk, and (c) if writing a daily newspaper, start by making reference to a recent article or editorial in the newspaper.
4. **Make sure to include the ask:** Urge readers to call upon their U.S. Representative and Senators to ask their U.S. Representative and Senators to write the chair and ranking member of their chamber's Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies and request strong support for the Senate Fiscal Year 2026 funding levels for the EPA when they go to conference. Also, invite readers to join us at <https://www.ucc.org/climatehope>.
7. **Report back and share:** Share your published letter on social media. Send it to your congress members and call their aides to make sure they saw it. If it’s not published, consider editing it as appropriate and sending it to another newspaper. If your letter is published, let us know by using our online tracking page: <https://www.powr.io/form-builder/i/39544676#page>