

ACTION SHEET

December 3, 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 what remains to further corporate interests, especially the fossil fuel industry. Our focus is to strengthen and expand bipartisan support for the EPA 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 both Republicans and Democrats to be active champions for EPA funding. We are asking congress members to speak from the floor to lift up how constituents of faith are calling for strong and robust EPA funding to protect public health and all of God’s creation.

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 30th 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 Congress members to speak from the floor to lift up how constituents of faith are calling for strong and robust EPA funding to protect public health and all of God’s creation. Urge them to publicly declare support for the Senate Fiscal Year 2026 funding levels for the EPA when the House and Senate go to conference.

The High Stakes of Defending the EPA

While there is an incalculable toll to the Trump administration’s efforts to reverse climate progress and accelerate climate devastation, there have been some estimates of the human cost of the administration’s efforts to dismantle and defund the EPA. Former EPA staff at the Environmental Protection Network (EPN) [concluded earlier this year](#) that 12 of the many rollbacks of environmental protections proposed by the head of the EPA would “lead to nearly 200,000 premature deaths through 2050” due to increased air pollution. Moreover, these rollbacks would “cause more than 10,000 asthma attacks every day throughout the United States.” EPN notes that some of the many areas of concern that remain unquantified include

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cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, diabetes, and dementia as well as reproductive and developmental health impacts.

In some ways, what happens to pollution levels during a shutdown foreshadows what would happen under a dismantled EPA. According to one [scientific study](#), during a government shutdown in 2018-2019, coal plants “significantly increased their particulate matter emissions due to the EPA’s furlough.” This form of pollution is linked to thousands of deaths in the United States each year. Jeremy Symons, a former EPA official, [noted](#) the concern that a shutdown can give license for “the worst polluters” to poison our environment without fear of being caught. He observed, “Nobody will be holding polluters accountable for what they dump into the air we breathe, in the water we drink while EPA is shut down.”

Write to Your Members of Congress and Urge Them to Speak Out

Recall the numeric goal your chapter set for writing to members of Congress. Strive to finish the year strong with letters and postcards that urge your Congress members to speak from the floor to lift up how constituents of faith are calling for strong and robust EPA funding to protect public health and all of God’s creation. Urge them to publicly declare support for the Senate Fiscal Year 2026 funding levels for the EPA when they go to conference. Also, ask them to meet with your chapter, so that you can discuss why EPA funding is so important for your district and state.

Ask representatives to give a one-minute speech in the House. Note that when House members want to give extra attention to an issue they can request and schedule a “Special Order”—a block of time reserved for speeches delivered after the House has concluded its legislative business for the day. There is no limit on their length or how many members of the House can speak. House members usually coordinate with colleagues to give a series of speeches, which are broadcast on C-SPAN, highlighting legislation or an issue. In writing to your representatives and meeting with them, ask them to work with their congressional colleagues in requesting a “Special Order.”

Our new ask of congressmembers requires a greater commitment than we have asked of them in our actions thus far. Chances of success for asks of greater commitment often rely upon the quality and power of the relationships we have developed with our congressional offices. We will be continuing this effort through the end of April, so chapters have opportunities to schedule meetings with staff and make their requests in-person as well. When the Fiscal Year 2026 budget passes, our attention will shift immediately to Fiscal Year 2027 and funding for the EPA. We can expect the Trump administration’s assault on the EPA to continue. Efforts to build resistance and increase support on both sides of the aisle will be an ongoing, critical need.

Bolster your communications with Congressional offices by seeking opportunities with local faith communities, environmental organizations, and civic clubs to deliver presentations on our current issue. Conclude each presentation with a postcard writing session. Be sure that our ask is included. Have a few participants read their postcards aloud. Then, invite people to join your chapter by passing around a clipboard with sign-up sheet. Sign-up sheets and postcard templates can be found on our Chapter Resources page: <https://www.ucc.org/chapter-resources>