

October 17, 2017

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The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cochran and Leahy:

As the Senate prepares to consider FY 2018 appropriations legislation, the members of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA)\* wish to emphasize the importance of adequate grant funding for state and local air pollution control agencies under Sections 103 and 105 of the Clean Air Act (CAA), which are part of the State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program under the budget of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). **Specifically, NACAA requests that Congress, at a minimum, continue to fund these grants at the FY 2017 level (\$228.2 million).** This funding would be the minimum commensurate with the authority delegated to state and local agencies by EPA. We were gratified that the U.S. House of Representatives' FY 2018 appropriations bill (H.R. 3354, adopted on September 14, 2017) maintained FY 2017 funding levels for state and local air grants in FY 2018 and we recommend the final bill do so as well.

The funding that is allocated to state and local air agencies for their efforts by your Committee has the opportunity to have a tangible positive effect on the health of your constituents, and all Americans. EPA works closely with the state and local agencies to implement and enforce the Clean Air Act. Agencies authorized to manage federal programs must have enforcement authorities that are at least as stringent as federal law. Maintaining funding for state and local agencies will not only protect public health, but will also allow them to continue to provide services to the public and the regulated community, such as more expedited permit processing, compliance assistance and streamlined regulatory operations. These services, if adequately funded, contribute to economic development and administrative efficiencies. In partnership with EPA, our local and state officials are expanding activity in program management, priority-setting and measurement of results.

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\* NACAA is a national, non-partisan, non-profit association of state and local air pollution control agencies in 41 states, 116 locals, the District of Columbia and four territories.

NACAA believes that the level of federal support to state and local agencies that are implementing federal programs, policies and standards should be calibrated to the scope and complexity of federal requirements that state and local governments must achieve in order to assume or continue implementation responsibility. Since grant levels have essentially remained flat in recent decades, taking inflation into consideration, the purchasing power of the funding from EPA to our agencies has actually decreased by nearly 17 percent since 2000. State and local agencies share the goal of an increased role in carrying out programs under EPA's jurisdiction. The investment of federal dollars in state and local agency activities enables us to be effective in work of vital importance to Americans.

We believe it is important that state and local air quality agencies be funded at levels sufficient to accomplish our requirements and mission and we support, at a minimum, the funding invested in FY 2017 – \$228.2 million. We thank you for your support in previous years and your ongoing recognition of the importance of healthful air quality for all Americans.

Thank you for your assistance. If we can provide additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us or Mary Sullivan Douglas of NACAA at (202) 624-7864 or [mdouglas@4cleanair.org](mailto:mdouglas@4cleanair.org).

Sincerely,



Sam Rubens  
(Akron, Ohio)  
Co-President of NACAA



Bart Sponseller  
(Wisconsin)  
Co-President of NACAA

cc: Senate Appropriations Committee