



Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3160 • WWW.USCCB.ORG

May 10, 2024

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chair
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
2084 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Merkley, Chairman Simpson, Ranking Member Murkowski, and Ranking Member Pingree,

As Congress considers the fiscal year 2025 appropriations, we write to ask that special consideration be given to the environment. In his encyclical *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis affirms every government's "inalienable responsibility to preserve its country's environment and natural resources" (no. 38). One important way that you can fulfill this responsibility is to provide adequate funding to those federal agencies charged with care for the environment.

FY 2024 appropriations awarded \$9.2 billion for the Environmental Protection Agency and \$14.8 billion for the Department of the Interior, in both cases significant cuts from prior years.¹ Funding levels should be increased for FY 2025. These two agencies are instrumental in conserving and caring for our nation's most precious natural resources, promoting public health, and securing environmental justice.

In FY 2025, federal appropriations for the EPA must take special care to promote environmental justice, support superfund programs, upgrade water infrastructure and replace lead pipes, as well as maintain cleanup standards for harmful per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). DOI appropriations must continue to invest in tribal programs, reclamation of abandoned mines and wells, mitigation of wildfires, climate adaptation, resilience, and development of clean energy in public lands.

¹ See: CRS, *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency FY2024 Appropriations*, Apr. 4, 2024, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12626>; CRS, *Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies: Overview of FY2024 Appropriations*, Aug 8, 2023, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47664/2>

The EPA and the DOI rely on robust funding to administer many important initiatives that reflect the integral ecology called for by Pope Francis in *Laudato si'* (no. 137), which recognizes the human and social dimensions of the environmental crisis. Thank you for your commitment to caring for our common home and advancing the common good.

Sincerely,



Most Reverend Borys Gudziak
Archbishop of Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia
Chair, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development