



United States
Conference of
Catholic Bishops

May 14, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Collins, Vice Chair Murray, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, I write to ask that special consideration be given to the environment in the Fiscal Year 2027 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

In the Book of Genesis, God commands humanity “to cultivate and care for” (Gen. 2:15)¹ the Earth and its resources. In the papal encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis affirmed every government’s “inalienable responsibility to preserve its country’s environment and natural resources”.² And in a sign of continuity with the Church’s steadfast support for the environment, Pope Leo XIV has said that, “[i]n a world where the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters are the first to suffer the devastating effects of climate change, deforestation and pollution, care for creation becomes an expression of our faith and humanity.”³

One important way Congress can help fulfill the responsibility of caring for God’s creation is by providing adequate funding for the federal agencies charged with environmental stewardship: the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of the Interior (DOI).

For FY2025, Congress appropriated \$15.251 billion for the EPA and \$18.984 for the DOI. Rather than maintaining these levels for FY2026, Congress instead lowered appropriations, providing \$14.974 billion (\$277 million less) for EPA and \$18.773 billion (\$211 million less) for DOI. **For FY2027 appropriations, we request that you restore the funding levels as they were for FY2025 and that the funding allocation be faithful to the mission and goal of these agencies.**

Notable initiatives from these agencies that foster care for creation and the common good include the

¹ New American Bible: Revised Edition, [The Book of Genesis](#).

² Pope Francis, [Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home](#), (May 24, 2015).

³ Pope Leo XIV, [Message for the 10th World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation](#), (Sept. 1, 2025).

Superfund Program to clean up toxic waste contamination; State Revolving Funds (SRF) programs that provide loans, matched by states, to upgrade aging infrastructure to improve access to clean and safe drinking water, improve the health of our nation's rivers, lakes, and wetlands, and support economic opportunities; and programs that monitor air quality from power plants and industrial facilities, schools, and ports. Adequate funding and staffing is also needed for the agencies to fulfill their responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Clean Air Act, and Clean Water Act.

This request is made even more important after enactment of H.R.1 (the One Big Beautiful Bill Act) in July 2025 which, among other cuts, rescinded funds appropriated under the Inflation Reduction Act originally allocated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote clean energy, safeguard endangered species and wilderness areas, assist Native American tribes and tribal lands management, protect children's health, and create resilient economic opportunities in poor rural and urban communities and communities of color.⁴

Adequate funding for EPA and DOI is necessary for our nation to safeguard our God-given, life sustaining natural resources such as water, air, lands, and wildlife. These investments further promote economic opportunity and healthy environments where people live and recreate. Congress should take care to ensure that these funds address environmental risks to God's creation, especially for the most vulnerable amongst us.

Thank you for your consideration and efforts to support initiatives that protect and restore ecosystems and public health, ensure safe drinking water and clean air, address climate change, and support sustainable livelihoods. The common good requires sound stewardship of the environment and respect for the human dignity of all who share our common home. We look forward to working with you as the appropriations process advances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelton J. Fabre". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name below.

Most Reverend Shelton J. Fabre
Archbishop of Louisville
Chairman, Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development

⁴ United States Congress, [H.R.1 – Public Law No. 119-21](#), (July 4, 2025).