

May 25, 2017

To Maine's Congressional Delegation:

We are contacting you as representatives of 60 Maine organizations who share a deep concern about the President's proposal to drastically cut the budget and staffing for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the lowest levels in 40 years.

The Administration's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget singles out EPA for the deepest cuts of any agency, cutting its budget by \$2.6 billion (31%) and its staff by 3,200 (21%), and completely eliminating more than 50 EPA programs.

These cuts would cause serious harm nationwide and would be particularly damaging for states like Maine where our environment and economy are tightly intertwined. These massive EPA cuts would hinder efforts to protect Maine's clean air and clean water, achieve economic redevelopment at shuttered paper mills and other former industrial sites, and protect Maine people from toxic hazards.

We understand that you also are concerned about the proposed EPA cuts. We strongly support you in your efforts to do everything possible to protect the EPA budget from these extreme cuts. EPA's budget should be maintained at no less than current levels, to help reduce pollution in Maine, save the lives of Maine people, and strengthen our communities and economy.

The proposed cuts would cause crippling reductions to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which depends heavily on EPA funding. In 2016, DEP received \$11.4 million in funding from EPA, which supported the work of nearly 100 staff members.

If these proposed EPA cuts come to pass, then DEP would be forced to eliminate critical staff members who protect Maine's air, water, and land, and the health of Maine people and our natural resources-based economy. But the real harm would occur in homes and communities across Maine.

- **Maine has one of the highest asthma rates in the nation**, so increased air pollution coming to Maine from upwind sources would pose a serious public health risk.
- **Maine's lakes are worth \$3.5 billion annually to our economy and sustain 52,000 jobs**, so the proposed termination of critical lake protection funding is a grave concern.
- **With the closure of five paper mills in the past three years, Maine communities are seeking EPA Brownfields funding** to clean up those sites for future, job-creating uses. Cuts to such programs would delay economic redevelopment in Maine.
- **Maine also would suffer serious, negative impacts from termination of the following programs:** EPA's National Estuary program, Maine Healthy Beaches, lead paint grants to states, Maine's radon program, and essentially all EPA climate programs.

We recognize the challenges facing you and other members of Congress as you develop a budget for next year, and we urge you in the strongest terms to help build a bipartisan political consensus that rejects the proposed cuts to EPA's budget. EPA's budget should be maintained at no less than current funding levels. The health of our air, water, people, and economy is at stake.

Respectfully,

30 Mile River Watershed Association, Farmington
350 Maine, Portland
Acadia Center, Rockport
Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments, Belfast
Annabessacook Lake Improvement Association, Monmouth and Winthrop
Appalachian Mountain Club, Portland
Atlantic Salmon Federation, Calais
Berry, Dexter, Wilson Ponds Watershed Association, Winthrop
Bicycle Coalition of Maine, Portland
Clary Lake Association, Whitefield
Conservation Law Foundation, Portland
Echo Lake Association, Presque Isle
Environment Maine, Portland
Environmental Health Strategy Center, Bangor
Friends of Acadia, Bar Harbor
Friends of Casco Bay, South Portland
Friends of Messalonskee, Oakland
Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed, Augusta
Green & Healthy Homes Initiative, Lewiston
GrowSmart Maine, Gardiner
Horn Pond Lake Association, Acton
Howard Pond Preservation Association, Hanover
Islesboro Islands Trust, Islesboro
Lake Wesserunsett Association, Madison
Lakes Environmental Association, Bridgton
Little Sebago Lake Association, Gray and Windham
Maine Affordable Housing Coalition, Portland
Maine Association of Conservation Commissions, Manchester
Maine Audubon, Falmouth
Maine Center for Economic Policy, Augusta
Maine Clammers Association, Freeport

Maine Conservation Alliance, Augusta
Maine Conservation Voters, Augusta
Maine Council of Churches, Portland
Maine Council of Trout Unlimited, Manchester
Maine Indoor Air Quality Council, Augusta
Maine Interfaith Power & Light, Orono
Maine Lakes Society, Belgrade Lakes
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association, Unity
Maine People's Alliance, Bangor
Maine Public Health Association, Augusta
Maine Rivers, Yarmouth
Maine Small Business Coalition, Damariscotta
Maine Wilderness Guides Organization, Augusta
Midcoast Conservancy, Wiscasset
Natural Resources Council of Maine, Augusta
Parker Pond Association, Mount Vernon
Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter, Portland
Prevent Harm, Portland
Range Ponds Association, Poland
RESTORE: The North Woods, Hallowell
ReVision Energy, Liberty
Sierra Club Maine, Portland
Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative, Portland
The Wilderness Society, Hallowell
Thompson Lake Environmental Association, Otisfield
Toxics Action Center, Portland
Union of Concerned Scientists, Yarmouth
Upstream Policy Institute, Damariscotta
Worthley Pond Association, Peru