



April 3, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
304 Russell SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
437 Russell SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior & Environment  
522 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Udall, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior & Environment  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Murkowski and Ranking Members Leahy and Udall:

On behalf of the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE), I am writing to request funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Fiscal Year 2021 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill. The Council urges robust funding for the EPA offices of Air and Radiation, the Enforcement Division, and the Office of Transportation and Air Quality, related to international climate change programs, climate change research and partnership programs, the Renewable Fuel Standard, water management, and the ENERGY STAR program.

BCSE is a coalition of companies and trade associations from the energy efficiency, natural gas and renewable energy sectors. It includes independent electric power producers, investor-owned utilities, public power, manufacturers, commercial end users and service providers in energy and environmental markets. Founded in 1992, the coalition's diverse business membership is united around the continued revitalization of the economy and the creation of a secure and reliable energy future in America.

As a business group working to advance clean energy policies, BCSE has seen first-hand the importance of the federal role EPA fills in sharing information about new technologies and practices to help speed adoption of clean energy, and to allow consumers to make more informed decisions about energy usage. EPA initiatives help businesses manage environmental issues, foster transparency and best practices in emissions and water management, and leadership in environmental stewardship and sustainability. EPA also provides transparent, standardized and independent data and expertise that cannot be replicated with the same credibility by private sector or non-governmental organizations.

### **Maintaining America's Status as an Energy Leader**

Through regulatory and voluntary initiatives, EPA helps foster the US leadership role in clean energy and transportation technologies globally. Many EPA programs, including the **CHP Partnership**, **Green Power Partnership**, **Natural Gas Star**, **Methane Challenge**, **AgStar**, **Center for Corporate Climate Leadership**, **SmartWay Transport Partnership**, and others, embody longstanding public-private endeavors that benefit American businesses and help them continue to compete on a global scale.

For example, the Natural Gas Star program brings companies together to voluntarily conduct projects to reduce methane emissions and share lessons learned on innovative, cost-effective best practices. The Methane Challenge program (within Natural Gas STAR) provides a credible platform for partner companies to transparently report the

voluntary methane reduction measures they are implementing company-wide and to be publicly recognized as leaders in methane reduction. Both programs help companies share technology innovations that modernize and improve the efficiency of the country's energy delivery system.

These EPA initiatives provide market transparency, encourage voluntary action, and identify companies that are leaders in businesses and in environmental protection. Additionally, EPA's laboratories lead the world in capabilities that make the United States preeminent in research and analysis which supports private sector capabilities to enhance economic growth and emissions reductions simultaneously.

### **EPA Programs Provide Value to U.S. Taxpayers**

Federal investments in programs implemented by the EPA have multiple benefits including reducing air pollution, saving consumers money, and achieving energy independence and security. Programs like **ENERGYSTAR** have proven track records of success and are extremely cost-effective. Through brand recognition, information and positive publicity, the ENERGY STAR program has provided the catalyst for many consumers, homeowners, businesses, and state and local governments to invest in energy efficiency. The Council opposes moving to a fee-based funding model for ENERGYSTAR, which would erode the integrity and effectiveness of the program.

The **Renewable Fuel Standard**, which is implemented by the **Office of Transportation and Air Quality**, has enabled the biomass and biogas industry to help meet lower carbon energy needs. The Council encourages funding for EPA for the processing of pathways and applications to enable biomass, biogas, renewable natural gas (RNG), and waste-to-energy projects to produce RINs for electricity. Electricity derived from biogas, RNG, renewable biomass, and solid forms of biomass, is currently being used as a transportation fuel and should be credited accordingly under the RFS program. Congress should appropriate \$2 million to fund administrative expenses for EPA to take final action within 90 days on any registration application pending for more than one year to participate in the Renewable Fuels Pathway II Rule.

### **EPA Programs Provide Critical Support to States, Tribes, and Localities**

Many state, local, and tribal efforts to improve the environment are dependent on the information and resources provided by federal programs. The EPA provides valuable technical assistance, analytical tools, and outreach support to state, local, and tribal governments that enable the states to administer robust clean energy and energy efficiency programs. Investing in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and environmental policies and programs is an important way for state and local governments to improve air quality and to improve people's health, and to save money. For example, EPA's **State and Local Climate and Energy Program** offers expertise about energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate change policies and programs to interested state, local, and tribal governments. By providing these resources, EPA removes barriers that would otherwise prohibit action at the local level due to resource constraints or lack of information on best practices.

### **The Federal Role for Air Quality and Climate Change Programs**

EPA can address barriers to the adoption of emissions-reducing technologies – such as a lack of reliable information, inconsistent regulatory environments, and workforce training gaps – through activities that include providing objective information, creating networks between the public and private sector and providing technical assistance. These efforts can help energy consumers in all sectors. Through its programs on renewable energy, renewable natural gas (RNG), natural gas, combined heat and power and energy efficiency, EPA encourages the use of clean, efficient, and market-ready technologies that can lower costs and improve resilience in addition to lowering emissions.

EPA also has an important role to play as an international leader in climate science and emission reduction frameworks. EPA is engaged in a variety of international activities to advance climate change science, monitor our environment, and promote activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. EPA establishes partnerships, provides leadership, and shares technical expertise to support these activities.

The Council wishes to work with members of the Appropriations Committee to maximize the value of limited federal dollars, particularly this year, when the country is addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the situation we are in with remote working arrangements, we recognize that an in-person meeting is not feasible. However, BCSE members continue to work together as a group and would be pleased to arrange a conference call with your staff. Please contact Ruth McCormick at [rmccormick@bcse.org](mailto:rmccormick@bcse.org), if you are interested.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Jacobson".

Lisa Jacobson, President