



THE
ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL OF
THE STATES

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PAST PRESIDENT

Alexandra Dapolito Dunn
Executive Director &
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January 12, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
2406 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Re: 2016 Multipurpose Grants to States and Tribes for Environmental Programs

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Rodgers, and Ranking Member Lowey:

The Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) writes to express our appreciation for Congress' creation of the *Multipurpose Grant Program* for states and tribes in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) portion of the *2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act*. ECOS represents the state and territorial agencies with primary responsibility for the programmatic and financial management of the Congressionally enacted, and federally delegated, environmental protection and pollution control programs.

ECOS has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations' Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies for several years on the critical need for flexible categorical grant funding for state environmental programs. In providing \$21 million for EPA to apportion to states and tribes for the implementation of priorities within environmental programs generally, Congress has given states and tribes the ability to direct the funds where they can most effectively be leveraged and deliver tangible results. We are already in discussions with EPA on what elements are needed in a distribution formula to ensure that these funds move quickly, are distributed equitably, and yield meaningful environmental outcomes.

We urge you to include appropriations for this *Multipurpose Grant Program* in future federal budgets, as we believe flexible funds provide states the best opportunity to make progress in advancing environmental goals and protecting human health.

We once again commend Congress on acknowledging and supporting flexibility for states and tribes through this new program. We appreciate the opportunity to share our perspective and remain willing to provide the Committee any needed input in the future.

Sincerely,

Martha Rudolph
ECOS President
Director of Environmental Programs, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Cc: The Honorable Gina McCarthy, EPA Administrator
ECOS Executive Committee