



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Alexandra Dunn, (202) 230-4247 or adunn@ecos.org
Environmental Council of the States

Statement on the President’s FY2017 Budget

Washington, DC— Responding to the President’s release of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 budget for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Alexandra Dunn, Executive Director and General Counsel of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), said that “ECOS appreciates that the Administration in tight budget times is seeking additional funds for essential State and Tribal Categorical Grants (STAG) which support, in part, states’ carrying out their delegated requirements under the major federal environmental laws.” Dunn added that “states welcome the President’s request for \$77 million more than the enacted FY16 budget for air, surface, and drinking water programs; pesticide program implementation; wetlands program development; and brownfields. We are particularly pleased to see a requested increase for environmental information categorical grants, which help support the critical E-Enterprise for the Environment joint state and federal work to improve regulatory processes for the regulated community and increase data availability to the public.”

Even with the requested increase, however, states are struggling to keep pace with the cost of implementing core and new programs. Dunn emphasized that “ECOS urges EPA to work with states to ensure these requests are ultimately appropriated with maximum flexibility for states to expend funds in ways that make the most sense for their communities and that address state environmental priorities.”

Dunn noted that “ECOS is very supportive of the \$21 million multipurpose grant program that Congress created in the FY16 omnibus budget.” The President’s budget does not include a request to fund this program. “ECOS will work with Congress and EPA to explore possibilities to continue funding for this new grant in FY17,” said Dunn. She flagged the increased request for the drinking water State Revolving Loan Fund as encouraging. “All eyes are on our nation’s water infrastructure right now – and the increase in the drinking water fund request is most appropriate. Notwithstanding this, we will work to ensure Congress meaningfully funds both the drinking water and the clean water programs to respond to the documented needs in our nation,” said Dunn.

Commending the Administration for its second year of proposing no rescissions in prior year STAG funds, Dunn said that “states need every dollar that Congress can give, and rescinding prior year funds is detrimental to achieving environmental progress.” In closing, Dunn said, “ECOS values our partnership with EPA, and we look forward to – together – working to obtain the appropriations from Congress to deliver the clean environment all Americans want and deserve in the most efficient, modern, and results-oriented way possible.”

ECOS is the national nonprofit, nonpartisan association of state and territorial environmental commissioners. For more information, visit www.ecos.org.